To Build A Home

by midnitekween

Summary

Stiles is pregnant, Lydia, Isaac, and Cora meet their mates, and Stiles decides to take in a stray were and his human friend.

***YOU HAVE TO READ PART 1 FIRST. Sorry :( 

Notes

All of you were so wonderful with PART 1, that I decided you deserved a PART 2 ;)

PART 2 is inspired by LAST TO KNOW by Never_Says_Die. Please check it out if you haven't already :)
“You are indeed pregnant, Mr. Stilinski-Hale,” Marin says with a bright smile.

Despite the wolves and Deaton telling him he was, hearing it from Marin’s own lips makes it feel like the first time. Tears fill his eyes as Derek pecks his cheek.

“But unfortunately, I am not an OB/GYN, therefore, not equipped to handle your pregnancy and the delivery of your baby. So you will need to find a doctor immediately, preferably one that deals with male pregnancies, or high-risk pregnancies.”

Derek’s spine manages to stiffen just a little bit more than usual whenever the words ‘high-risk pregnancy’ are strung together in his presence.

“Now, all your test look great so far, but I still need to give you a list of referrals you should check out. Other than that, congrats, you two! You’re going to be parents!”

Derek’s posture waivers enough for him to smile proudly and pull Stiles close when tears run down his cheek.

Derek and Stiles come in. Derek punches in the alarm code, locking the door.

The sound of clicking heels grows immediate, and Lydia is suddenly in the foyer. Before Stiles can utter a word, she snatches the stack of pamphlets Marin gave him out of his hands and disappears further into the house.

An intelligent, “Uh...,” is all he manages before following Lydia’s trail. She’s sitting at the counter in the kitchen, neatly organizing the pamphlets in her ‘Stiles Pregnancy Binder’. “Uh, Lyds. What are you doing here?”

“How was your appointment with Marin?”

“She, uh, confirmed that I am pregnant--”

“How far long are you?”

“Almost 4 weeks.” Stiles takes notice of Lydia writing down everything he’s said so far.

“What did she say about your test results, your blood work? Anything abnormal or needs to be kept an eye on during the pregnancy?”
“Uh, no. No. Everything’s good.” Stiles looks to Derek for help, but Derek’s got a grin on his face at Lydia’s pushy involvement. Great. They’re going to be allies during this whole thing.

“She give you a list of referrals for high-risk pregnancies?”

“Yes.”

Lydia holds out her hand for the list. Derek has it. He hands it over to Lydia. Stiles watches as she cross checks Marin’s list with her own. “Okay. Lydia, you didn’t really answer my first question—” She bothers not to look up from her binder and merely points toward the sectional in the adjoining family room. Luggage. **Expensive, designer luggage** with ‘LM’ monogrammed on every piece.

“Oh, no! Lydia, we need to have a serious talk about th—”

“Marin’s list isn’t bad, but he has only 5 out of my ten doctors on his list, so we’ll start with them. I’ll book you an appointment with Dr. Baskin for next Monday. At the latest. Derek can you take my bags up to my old room, please? I’m going need to go to Kinkos.”

“Sure,” Derek answers.

**Traitor.** Allies, like he suspected. “Lydia,” Stiles starts.

“I shouldn’t be long. You should eat something then get some rest. I had that healthy living, organic meal delivery place Erica’s ‘friend’ works for, send over some premade meals for the rest of the week until I can do a proper grocery shop.” She grabs her purse and her keys. “I’ll be back soon. Tell Derek to listen out for the others while you take a nap.” She pecks his cheek. He can do nothing but be astounded as he watches her walk out in a bounce of long, red locks.

Derek’s already taken half her suitcases upstairs to her to her old room, winking at Stiles as he trots up the steps with a bag under each arm.

**Judas.**

Stiles would have fight extensively with Lydia on her overbearing behavior, going so far as to move back in with him and Derek, but she had mentioned food and a nap. Both those things sounded like heaven to him, so he figured he’d eat one of the premade meals Lydia had bought him and take a ‘cat nap’ before having a long discussion with the banshee about taking his pregnancy hostage.

That was until a cacophony of voices interrupted his sleep... He awoke with a grimace, hearing voices argue with one another.

He sat up, yawning. The expansive window in the room let him know that it was late afternoon. He checked the clock on the nightstand. **It’s three o’clock?! Jesus! Why did Derek let me sleep all day?!**

The distant voices flooded his ears again, making him roll out of bed and toward the door. He opens it; the voices louder. Familiar. He walks down the hall toward the noise... Sounds like, Scott. And Jackson.

Sure enough, Scott and Jackson are barking at one another in the hallway. Stiles whistles, gaining their attention! They quiet. “What the hell could you two be griping about now?”

“Shit, dude. Did we wake you,” Scott asks, looking a little frightened.
“If we did, don’t tell Lydia,” Jackson adds.

“Please,” Scott begs.

“Answer my question. I have a headache and I’m not allowed to take aspirin, so I’d like to get to the bottom of this so-- Wait a minute. What are you two doing here?” Stiles then takes notice to the suitcases and old Beacon Hills High Lacrosse Team gym bags around their feet. “LYDIA! DEREK!” He knows Derek can hear him at normal tone, but wants to express the complete aggravation he feels at the moment in a yell.

Lydia gets to him first, rushing from her old room, further down the hall. She ignores Stiles and turns to Scott and Jackson. “Did you two ass clowns wake him up?! I told you to let him sleep!” Scott and Jackson appear too terrified to answer. “I said move your things in quietly--”

“About that--” Stiles attempts to interrupt.

“--but no, you go and make a ruckus and wake him up! So now, he’s cranky and stressed, the very last thing we’re supposed to be making feel like!”

Derek takes the opportunity to finally show his face.

“What the hell’s going on?! Why does it look like--”

Cora appears, happily skipping into the hallway from the stairs. “I know I’ve been in your house a million times, but I’m really regretting the fact that I didn’t live here with everyone else at the time. Can’t even tell you how awesome it is not having to got to the laundromat with a sack of quarters.”


Lydia punches both Scott and Jackson in their arms before following.

“I know that shouldn’ve hurt, but it did.”

Jackson nods in agreement.

Derek and Lydia follow Stiles inside. Lydia closes the door. “What the hell is going on,” Stiles shouts.

“Honey, please don’t stress.”

“How can I not when it looks like the pack is moving into my house, without telling me first!” He turns to Derek, “And you seem pretty okay with it all. I wonder who gave them permission.”

“Stiles--”

“Oh, my God, you did! Why?!”

“Stiles, you’re pregnant. Your betas are excited, and protective, and feel the need to be closer to you while you’re carrying the baby. So, yes, Lydia and Scott asked to move back in. Then Isaac wanted to. Then Erica. So I said ‘fuck it’ and let them all come back home. Because that’s what our house is to them, their home.”

“Wow. That was really beautiful. You know what else is beautiful? That nice, quiet house we had when everyone moved out 6 years ago.”
“Stiles. I promise you that we will try very hard not to drive you up the wall. We just want to be close to you. I can’t explain it, but... I just feel like we need each other right now. I need to be with you,” Lydia tries to reassure him.

“My parents told you that a pack can strengthen a pregnancy. That’s what they’re doing, Stiles,” Derek reminds him.

“You sure it’s not 7 werewolves, a computer hacker, a hunter and very invasive banshee babysitting me for 9 months?”

“That...might be a part of it,” Derek says hesitantly.

“I will kill the both of you in your sleep.”

“We just want to be around to make sure you’re safe,” Lydia offers in a soft tone so unlike her.

“It’s just wolf instinct. Cora and I did the same thing to Laura and Val.” Derek approaches and puts a gentle hand on Stiles’ face. “Baby, please try and understand that this is just because we love you a lot.” Oh, he’s a dirty fighter. Derek knows full well that Stiles has a hard time saying ‘no’ to him when he uses pet names, and sincere ego-stroking.

Derek places a chaste kiss on Stiles lips. Stiles’ favorite kind of kiss.

Derek deepens the kiss and Stiles falls into it hard with a whimper.

Derek waves Lydia off. She quietly sneaks out of the room, smiling to herself. She had no idea Derek was so good at playing Stiles when he needed to.

Lydia cleared the house and sent everyone to the pool area on the roof when she heard Stiles moaning and Jackson complained about smelling sex.

Derek and Stiles were still in their room when the rest of the pack all came inside to shower the chlorine off their skin.

Lydia showered, and changed into more comfortable clothing. She sauntered into the kitchen to find Stiles cooking dinner. She opened her mouth to protest when—“Dinner’s almost ready. Set the table.” The oven timer rings gaining Stiles’ attention. She doesn’t want to fight with him, but she does want to talk calmly about everything. Because like it or not, there are some things she knows she needs to take control over from Stiles. So she grabs the plates and silverware and sets the casual dining table.

The rest of the pack, showered and dressed, file into the room in their usual clamor. Boyd and Cora carry the food to the table, while Allison grabs two bottles of red wine.

Derek takes a seat at the head of the table. Stiles joins them, sitting at the other end, with their betas in the middle, happily eating the gourmet beef stew and red wine sauce Stiles cooked for dinner.

Despite Stiles’ objections to the pack moving back in, he’s missed this. He missed breakfasts and dinners with everyone. He missed Scott and Jackson fighting over seconds, Lydia and Allison doing more talking than eating, Boyd discussing the latest book he’s read with an interested Isaac, and Erica and Danny talking animatedly about whatever new reality TV show they were obsessed with now. Cora being in the house now allows her uninterrupted access to her brother, who talks
pack business with her regarding their bordello and sex club downtown.

It’s a shame he has to ruin such an endearing, family moment… “Okay. I get it.”

The table quiets at Stiles’ talking.

“You guys feel the need to be here. I get that. I understand it, and I appreciate it. And to be honest, I’ve missed all of you, too. More than I realized until sitting here with you now. I love you. All of you. I’m glad you’re here. I just wish you told me you wanted to do this.”

“For you to say ‘no’ to, and refuse,” Lydia asks rhetorically.

“I don’t want to spend the next 9 months with all of you treating me like an invalid or precious glass that needs to be handled with kid gloves.”

Derek fingers the stem of his wine glass, with a scrutinizing look on his husband. He remembered the sheriff’s advice to him when they revealed to him and his parents that he and Stiles were mates: …He’s as stubborn as a mule sometimes, but you probably already know that. But the thing that sets his teeth on edge is being seen as weak, or inferior. He’ll let you know when he wants you to take care of him, but for the most part, Stiles likes to be seen as his own man, with strong capabilities, physical or otherwise, but that doesn’t mean let him go off half-cocked into danger, even though he’d argue you to death to let him.

The sheriff have no idea. By that point, Stiles had already accompanied Derek and his betas into dozens of dangerous, life-threatening situations. And each time Derek tried to stir him away, Stiles fought harder to be involved. He loved his mate’s bravery, but knew sometimes it was merely pride and stupidity that made Stiles eager to jump in. in the moments, he always made sure Stiles couldn’t get involved, despite the ensuing fight waiting for him when it was all over.

“Stiles, the moment we found out you were pregnant I felt this need to be with you. To protect you. At all cost,” Erica confesses.

“We all did, dude. You’re my best friend, and my Alpha-mate. I just want to keep you safe. I feel this desperate need to make sure you’re alright,” Scott adds.

The table nods at Stiles, agreeing with Scott.

“It’s a baby. The first baby of this pack. Of course we’d want to be by you, and make sure you’re okay,” Boyd says.


Stiles’ eyes float around the table at the pleading eyes swimming back at him, hoping he understands, and lets them stay. They need this. They need him. To be near him, and the baby.

He loves his little family. Years ago, in high school, he’d never thought he’d have this. Sure, he had people in his life who loved him-- his father, Scott, Lydia, Melissa, Malia-- and who he loved right back, but he had spent so many years as a young boy, then teenager, with no respect from other people. Other people who ignored how smart he was, how loving he was, how caring, and giving he was, or could be.

He’d known Jackson for a good while, on account of him being Lydia’s boyfriend during their formative, teen years, and not once had he taken the time to know Stiles, really know and appreciate him, until he was turned into a werewolf by Derek, then spent a frightening amount of weeks as a kanima. Boyd, Erica, and Isaac were just familiar faces he knew from high school until
they were turned and crossed paths with him at Stanford. Danny was a fun acquaintance, but just merely that, seeing as how he was only around when Jackson was. Cora was a year ahead of him in high school and objectively ignored all of them like the ‘Queen Bee’ she was. And Allison hadn’t become apart of their group until after Scott was bitten and they struck up a romance that had its share of roller coaster moments. She didn’t go to Beacon Hills High with them. Chris shipped her off to boarding school in France after her mother was killed. She came back to California after her graduation and attended Berkley with Jackson, Cora, and Kira.

Its part of the reason Derek being his mate was so terrifying, and important. He didn’t know Derek, but felt as though he had, over many lifetimes with the same connecting souls. Derek saw him. Knew him. Inside and out, within only a few shocking moments of their eyes meeting. There had been people in his life who’d breezed by him without a thought, people he’d known for years, who didn’t bother with him in the slightest, but this man, this wolf, could capture him completely in an instant. Not even Malia had dug that deep past his surface. Later he found out she couldn’t, because he was never hers, and she was never his.

But it hasn’t been until now, this very moment that he’s really seen, really acknowledged that these people, the ones at his table, know him. Love him. Appreciate him. It’s taken them awhile, but they’ve gotten there, and probably have been there for a long time. He just hasn’t noticed it. He was too busy caring for them, ‘mothering’ them that he didn’t see when it had all came together and he became more to them than just the breakable human that cooks, and cleans, and bandages them. ‘Pack mom’ wasn’t just a goofy title, it was exactly who he was to them, their ‘mother’. And they were here, excited and scared and worried and happy, all together, for him and needed to be near him to keep him safe.

Tears threaten to swell in his eyes, and he sweeps a look to Derek who half-smiles at him as though he knows exactly what it is Stiles has figured out: he’s loved. Wholeheartedly and completely, he is loved.

Stiles sniffs, and clears his throat, forcibly blinking the tears to stay in his light brown eyes. Lydia squeezes his hand. “Um... There’s no need for you two to fight over seconds. I made enough for everyone to have another bowl. There’s another baguette, too.”

“Is there dessert,” Scott asks.

“Yes. I made a crumble. Blackberry. With vanilla ice cream.”

“I’m allergic to blackberries,” Danny reminds him.

“That’s why I made you lemon-glazed angel food cake.”

“Ooo. Can I have some of that instead,” Scott asks.

“No. It’s for Danny and Danny only.” Stiles lets a small smile grow on his face at Scott’s childish pout.

March 2016

Derek lied to Peter, and was surprised his uncle couldn’t pick up on it. He did tell Stiles that their kiss was the last time, and made it clear to him that they could never do it again. But it wasn’t the night in the warehouse with Roman. It was two months earlier, in New Orleans. In Derek’s hotel suite...
Stiles opens the **balcony** doors, needing some fresh air, having been cooped up in the **room** most of the afternoon and well into the night.

The doors opened to a wrap around walkway guarded by decorative, black wrought iron, held above the busy, nightly streets of the **French Quarter**. Stiles closed his eyes a moment, soaking in the sound of jazz music and the smell of fried oysters and powered sugar on Beignets.

He opened his eyes, and turned his head back into the room. Derek. Going over Stiles’ research and notes intently.

He’d been fighting it since they met. The ever so strong magnet that kept pulling him closer and closer to the werewolf. His presence alone was enough to get his mind reeling and heart racing. He didn’t know what to make of it, this crashing wave, this bolt of lightening that shocked him the very moment their eyes had met. It took everything in him to not wrap himself around Derek and kiss the life out of him. And it’s taken that much out of now, and every day since that day.

Derek lifts his head and catches Stiles staring. Their eyes lock, like they’ve done so many times since meeting, with so much being said between them without a word spoken. He hates this. He hates the long, meaningful stares and wide distances between them, when all he wants to do is touch, and confess. Confess that for 5 months it’s been torture to hold back. That for 5 months it’s been aching, and painful, how much he’s kept everything inside. How dark, cold nights in bed, picturing Derek’s hands on his body and lips against his ear, whispering the filthiest encouragements aren’t enough. How relaying research through Scott and Malia boil at the back of his throat, and how short, blunt text messages about pack business-- and only pack business-- tear at him from the inside, like a thousand knife wounds, at their silent agreement to avoid one another. And how Malia has suddenly become not enough for him. He hates this.

Stiles moves from the balcony and into the hotel room, closing the doors behind him. Derek’s eyes don’t leave his. Stiles leans against the doors, the muffled sound of brass horns from the street below roll into the silent room. “Find anything?”

“No. Not really. Short of starting a cross-country pack war, I think I’m going to have to either go down there myself, or get a hold of the Alpha that runs the whole south.”

“**Adelaide** didn’t want it to go that far.”

“It’s either that or she uses her magic to get rid of the Mexico City pack.”

“How dark is her power?”

“Very dark. It’s old, black magic. Ancient, really. A really powerful voodoo that’s been in her family for centuries. Once she uses it... It wouldn’t just kill them, it’ll eviscerate them.”

“Thus, starting a pack war. Maybe that’s what they want. For her to use her power, igniting a war. For territory and power.”

“I don’t know. They’d lose. They have to know that. Adelaide’s magic is ancient; they can’t fight against it.”

“Unless they have an equally powerful witch of their own.”

“A burja. Aztec magic is just as ancient. Maybe...”

“This is getting deeper than I thought. I assumed we’d just be down here to scare a couple of wolves away, out of her territory. Now, it’s looking like Gandalf versus Saruman.”
Derek smiles. He knows Stiles made some sort of nerdy, pop culture reference he doesn’t get, it’d just that he made it. That he boiled down an epic witch battle that could blow Louisiana off the map to the fictional fight in a...video game? Movie? ...Book?

“You have no idea what I just referenced, do you?”

“Not a clue.”

It’s Stiles’ turn to smile.

And then it happens again. That long, silent look that explodes like an Atom bomb.

Derek’s the first to flinch; his eyes return to the scatter papers he hovers over on the coffee table. “We need to keep digging. Get some intel. We don’t know if that’s what they’re after; we’re just assuming. And I hope we’re wrong.” He stands, gathering up the papers, putting them in a nice, neat pile. “Why don’t you go out tonight? With the others. It’s an incredible city. You shouldn’t be locked up in a hotel room with me with it being your first time here--”

“What the hell is going on between us?”

Derek’s head twist toward Stiles, lips slightly parted, eyes a little wide. He wasn’t expecting that. “W-What,” he asks, his mouth suddenly dry, heart beating like crazy.

Stiles crosses the room to him. “I know you feel whatever this is. And I know you know what it is. So tell me. What’s going on between us?”

“N-Nothing, Stiles. There’s nothing between us.”

“You’re lying. I can feel it. I can feel everything. It comes off you in waves sometimes.” He takes a closer step toward Derek. “Malia says she can smell me when I’m turned on. Can you smell me? Can you smell me right now?”

Derek can’t breath. Being this close to Stiles, finally addressing what they’ve been trying like hell to ignore... His claws draw a bit and Derek closes his hands into a fist, poking deep into his palm. Blood drips from the cracks of his fingers onto the carpet.

Stiles takes notice. “You can smell me. And you’re fighting it.” Stiles’ hand hesitantly comes up, cupping Derek’s face.

“Stiles...”

“I want you to kiss me. So bad it hurts all over.”

Derek emits a low growl that rumbles through his chest.

Stiles’ eyes wander all over Derek’s face, searching. “There’s something here. I feel it in my chest. In my spark. It’s practically choking me. I wake every morning and can’t breathe. Because for some reason I miss you. Like you should be there with me.”

Derek lets out a wrecked breath like a shudder.

Stiles pulls Derek to him, close, their foreheads touching. Derek nuzzles Stiles’ neck. Stiles sighs at the gesture. He’s near tears, being so close to Derek with their skin touching intimately. Stiles knew nuzzling was a sign of affection with werewolves. Malia nuzzled him all the time. But this was different. Derek’s touch, his skin, was different. It was burning hot, and needed. Stiles doesn’t
want Derek close to him. He needs Derek close to him. Like this. Touching and close.

Stiles let out a soft moan when Derek’s lips grazed his neck. The soft sweep of lips turn into slow licks, then gentle nipping, and tender sucking with fangs gliding along his pulse point. Stiles knees turn weak. He grabs hold of Derek, tighter. A hand finding the wolf’s ink black hair and carding through it. “Jesus, Derek...,” Stiles whispers in a hot breath against Derek’s ear.

Derek suddenly pulls off him and backs away, leaving a gap between himself and a confused-looking human. “We shouldn’t,” he says, shaking his head. “I’m sorry I let that get out of hand.”

No. No, he doesn’t get to do this. He doesn’t get to back away and make apologies. Not when Stiles has spent the last 151 days waking up in a cold sweat over him. Not when he’s spent the last 151 days trying hard not to think about Derek’s face, or his strong hands and wet mouth on his body whenever he makes love to Malia. Not when Scott and Lydia keep asking him what’s wrong whenever he and Derek are in the same room, and Stiles can’t help the nervous way his hands shake, dying to touch, to run his fingertips down that broad, hairy chest and rippled stomach and past his navel, dancing in the hairy trail right below it.

He’s wrecked. In shambles. Over a man he met 5 months ago, and doesn’t know why. He doesn’t know why Derek’s green eyes bore into him and leave secrets only they know. Or why the sound of his voice makes his spine stiffen and blood rush to his cock. Stiles needs to know, but more than anything, he needs Derek to keep touching him. To put his hands and mouth back on his body that feels like a dwindling fire without them. “I know we shouldn’t. But I can’t help it. None of it. I want you.”

“I want you, too, Stiles. Jesus, I do. But--”

“In the first 60 seconds of us meeting I wanted to get down on my knees and bare my neck to you. I don’t know what that means, but I bet you wanted me to, too.”

Derek is paralyzed with raw emotion. He can’t move. Can’t speak. He can barely breathe. All he can do is think in primitive fragments: Stiles. On his knees. Baring his neck to me. Stiles on his knees. Eyes looking right at me, neck long and exposed. Stiles on his knees. Submitting. He wants to submit. To me.

Derek’s eyes turn a deep, hungry red. His fangs drop.

Stiles licks his lips habitually, a blistering hunger pouring off his skin that smells like a bushel of mint leaves. Derek attacks! In one quick move, he’s got Stiles wrapped around him, their lips pressed together in a kiss so hard and desperate it’s devout.

Derek knocks everything off the coffee table and falls atop of it with Stiles beneath him!

They tear at each other with an urgency so ravenous, and so dangerous...

Derek pulls his mouth from Stiles’, and pins his wrist above his head. He growls. Stiles immediately stops wiggling, trying to get his lips and hands back on the wolf. He doesn’t know what it is about that violent purr that made him know what Derek wanted and why he listened so obediently...

Derek uses one hand to hold Stiles in place the way he wants, while the other smoothly lifts his shirt up and over his head.

“Let me touch you,” Stiles begs.
Derek bends down, his lips just barely grazing Stiles own, teasing him, knowing he’s shaking with desire for him--

A familiar, electronic tune makes Derek pause.

“Ignore it. Kiss me.”

Derek takes Stiles advice, and lowers himself closer onto the eager young man, grinding their cocks against each other, making Stiles moan--

The tune won’t stop. Still playing the same basic noise.

“Derek, come on.”

“It might be Adelaide.”

“It’s not. It’s Scott drunk-dialing me.”

The cellphone won’t stop.

“See what he wants then turn it off.” Derek lets go of Stiles’ wrist and sits up.

“I’m going to fucking kill him--” Stiles says, pulling his cellphone from his back pocket. But it’s not Scott.

Stiles’ blank face tells Derek exactly who it is. He climbs off the table and puts his shirt back on.

“Answer it.”

“Derek--”

“Answer it.”

He doesn’t want to, but knows he should. The look on Derek’s face tells him whatever they were starting is now finished. Over. A sign that they shouldn’t be doing this.

Reluctantly, Stiles answers, “Hey, coyote-cutie,” he says, turning away from Derek, not wanting to look at him referring to his cousin by his pet name for her. “No, I’m fine. I was, um, in the bathroom. Sorry.” Stiles hates himself for lying. And the look on Derek’s face says he hates the both of them right now for it.

Derek takes a seat on the sofa, his elbows on his knees.

“Yeah, the city does feel like magic... Yeah... Uh-huh... Yeah... With Derek. In his room... Research... Well, Adelaide is important to him. She’s his godmother... It’s late... I...” Stiles takes a deep, resigned breath. “Sure... Yeah... Of course. We’re in New Orleans, right...? Okay... Okay... Alright... I...I love you, too. Bye.” He quickly hangs up, refusing to meet Derek’s eyes.

Neither of them say anything for a minute. Letting the lies and awkwardness hang in the air between them.

Finally, Stiles breaks the silence, “They’re at a bar on a riverboat.”

“The Creole Queen probably.”

“Yeah. That’s what she said.”
“...You should shower before you go. So you don’t smell like me.”

And it all comes crashing down on him like a hailstorm. He cheated on Malia. With her cousin. And he liked it, wanted more. Which shames him further.

Stiles stands, the heaviness of what just happened suddenly on his shoulders.

“We can’t ever do this again.”

Stiles nods slowly, grasping what Derek’s saying. And a part of him is hurt at not having Derek ever again.

“At least not with you dating my cousin.”

“I know...”

But Stiles can’t help it. He has to. At least once more. He’s an addict and he needs a quick fix. His lips met Derek’s, in one swift, hard kiss. He feels Derek give a little, letting himself be kissed by the younger man before Stiles pulls away from him and walks out the door.

The last couple weeks of the month pass by in vignettes of referred doctor visits and consultations, beginning with the cross-referenced list from Lydia’s selection of OB/GYNs with Marin’s list.

After meeting with the highly specialized and sought-after, Dr. Morgenstern-- and not really caring for his ‘holier than thou’ attitude-- Lydia insisted on coming to their doctor’s visits with them. Both Derek and Stiles flat-out refuse, leaving Lydia to do nothing but show her anger in the frequent text messages of verbose questions she wants answered at the exact moment she knew they’d be consulting with the physician. “I swear to God, I’m going to block her number from our phones,” Stiles threatened.

Derek snorted. As pushy and involved as Lydia was being, he knew Stiles was only making vague threats. She and Scott were Stiles’ oldest and most trusted friends; he couldn’t go a day without speaking to either of them. Sometimes he understood that, given how close he and Laura were, and how often they talked on the phone. Especially now that Stiles is pregnant, and he’s scared, with each doctor they see, telling them how high-risk Stiles’ pregnancy is, and the low birthrate of babies born from males. Stiles on the other hand, didn’t seem as worried. He was confident they were going to beat the odds with flying colors and look back at all the naysayers and laugh. Derek at first thought he was just masking his worry with the blind happiness of being pregnant, but he could smell the self-assurance seep off Stiles’ skin. Stiles really believed things would be okay. Which allowed Derek to relax a bit more, seeing as how Stiles was always the one flailing about like he was ‘Chicken Little’, but was now the unflappable one, and full of optimism.

They had just ended their last consultation on the list, a bit bummed at not liking, or feeling comfortable with any of the doctors on their list.

Derek could see the crack in Stiles’ hopefulness appearing and decided to take Stiles to lunch to cheer him up, and let him order anything he wanted off the menu. Stiles got cheese ravioli, a Cesar salad, and a giant slice of Tiramisu, which Derek watched him eat with an amused smile on his face. Stiles had been denied anything greasy, fatty, sugary, salty, and seafood-related since finding out he was pregnant. Sitting across from Derek and stuffing his face full of such terrible (but delicious food), and humming The Imperial March happily to himself with marinara sauce all over his mouth, made Derek forget his anxiety for the time being, and enjoy his ridiculous husband’s
Stiles always did that; take his mind off whatever thing that had him worried, or fearful, just by simply being himself. And when he did, Derek could focus more on the task at hand, the thing needling him and making him sweat, suddenly coming in clear, allowing him to focus and find a solution. Stiles always did that. He had a way of clearing away the cobwebs and turning on the light, opening more space in the cluttered room, so that Derek could see better.

Lydia called when they were leaving the restaurant, telling Stiles she found a doctor in Silicon Valley, near Stanford’s campus, that not only specialized in male pregnancies, but supernatural pregnancies. She already made them an appointment for Friday.

Stiles was in no mood for another let down, or the 40 mile drive there, but figured ‘what the hell’ and agreed to meet with him...after Lydia demanded he do so or suffer her consequence.

They get a little lost, looking for the place, but eventually find it, high in the hills and attached to an exquisite, contemporary farmhouse. It’s warm and inviting, beaming in the sun on 10 acres of immaculate green grass. Stiles is quickly taken in by just the look of it. A sign denotes that all patients drive around to the back of the house to park. A breezeway connects the main house with the “guest house” used as the physician's office.

As Stiles and Derek climb out of the car and approach the office, a pregnant man and his boyfriend exit, passing by them. They look happy and content, rubbing the man’s swollen belly with wide smiles. In all their consultations with supposed “experts,” not once did Stiles, or Derek, see a single pregnant male patient. So neither of them couldn’t help but gape a bit at the couple as they headed toward their Tesla.

“Excuse me,” Stiles heard himself call. The couple turned to Stiles and Derek. Stiles jogged over them. “Um, I don’t mean to be intrusive-- I get enough of that at home and wish it on no man-- but I was just wondering if I could ask you two something.” Derek appeared just then at his side with a protective arm wrapped around Stiles’ waist. “It’s our first time here, and we were wondering if you liked the doctor and the rest of the staff.”

“I’d say so. Given this is our third pregnancy with Dr. P,” said the pregnant man.

Stiles froze and Derek’s grip on him tightened at the nonchalant way he answered Stiles’ question. Three kids. They have three kids. They beat the odds. With this doctor.

“He’s delivered all of our children. Speaking of which, we’re so sorry, but we have to go. School lets out in 20 minutes,” said the pregnant man’s partner.

“Oh, yeah, uh, right. Sorry. Thank you. Both of you.”

“You’re welcome. Good luck.”

“Thank you,” Derek offered. The couple climbed into their car and pull toward the front of the house. Before Stiles could even open his mouth, Derek spun toward him, “I’m not going to say I’m impressed, but I am eager.”

“You? Why wasn’t this doctor at the top of our list? Thank God for Lydia and her obsessive research skills.”
Derek takes Stiles’ hand and leads him toward the office.

They’re greeted by a bubbly, blonde girl in Snoopy scrubs at the reception area who offers them both Reece’s Peanut Buttercups from the candy dish atop her desk. Stiles makes to grab one, but Derek growls and he puts it back, grumbling under his breath about “bossy sourwolves.”

The reception nurse tells them the doctor will be with them in 10 minutes. They take a seat in the tiny waiting area.

“They were wolves,” Derek whispers to Stiles.

“Who?”

“The couple outside. Well, the pregnant man was. His husband was human.”

“Interesting...”

Derek rolls his eyes. “Stiles, we’ve discussed this. Alphas don’t carry children, even if they have the ability to do so.”

“Still sounds like just preference to me.”

“Yes. I prefer not to carry our children.”

“Making me do all the hard work, huh?”

“Don’t act like you don’t love the idea of having my baby. In fact, I know you do. You’ve told me you do...at night...when we’re alone...and naked,” Derek whispers in Stiles’ ear.

“Stop. You’re turning me on, and I don’t want to meet our new doctor with an erection. Plus, the receptionist can probably hear you.”

“She can’t. She’s human. Speaking of which,” Derek says, changing the subject, “It smells a lot like weres in here.”

“It does?”

“Yeah. A few wolves. About four of them. Two kitunes, and a panther.”

“That’s an impressive nose you have there.”

Their attention draws upward at the attractive, young man with a stethoscope around his neck. He’s tall, and lean, like Stiles, but with an adorable, sweet face and angelic smile.

“Sorry. I didn’t mean to sneak up on you. Hi, I’m Dr. P,” the young man extends his hand.

Derek stands, taking it. Then Stiles.

“I can barely pick out my own smell half the time.”

“You have to hone in more; let your wolf track it first, then lead you to it. Helps you to detect feelings and emotions better that way, too.”

“Okay. Thanks. I’ll try it.”

“I’d hate to interrupt the wolf-bonding, but we’re kind of here for me.”
“We’re here for the baby, Stiles. Not you.”

“Since said baby is gestating inside me, I’m going to take all ownership of baby related matters until birth.”

The doctor laughs. Derek turns to him, “Don’t encourage him. It only makes it worse and then he can’t turn it off.”

“He’s only saying that because he’s still upset he wasn’t born with a sense of humor.”

“See?”

The doctor laughs again. “Well, you two are certainly my funniest couple of the week, which I thoroughly appreciate. Please come on back.”

Stiles and Derek follow the doctor to the back, into his private office.

Stiles and Derek immediately like Dr. P. Despite his age, he’s confident but not cocky, and knowledgeable about everything relating to weres and were pregnancy. Derek takes the reigns during the conversation, asking question after question, with Dr. P answering every single one, truthfully and direct; which does nothing short of earn Derek’s absolute respect. Derek had even asked a few personal questions about Dr. P being a werewolf and where he was from and what pack did he belong to.

He claimed he was from Palo Alto, born and raised. His birth father died when he was just a child, and his mother remarried to a werewolf from Chicago who turned out to be her mate. His sister and brother were both born wolves, and he had decidedly wanted to remain human, until he was bitten one night by a rouge were on the way home. Derek found that part of his biography interesting and tried to dig for more with his questions, but Stiles stopped him with a subtle kick to his ankle, believing Derek was suddenly becoming a bit too nosy on the subject.

Derek had already asked the doctor nearly every question Stiles had floating in his own head, even questions regarding their sex lives. Stiles was the first to ask sex related questions weeks back with their first doctor consultation. By the fourth doctor they went to go see, Derek had jumped in with the topic of ‘sex while pregnant’, shocking the hell out of Stiles for a brief moment, until he shook it off, figuring Derek had just simply become more comfortable with asking such questions due to the exhausted process of trying to find a good obstetrician.

Dr. P didn’t sugar-coat anything, and didn’t profess to being a miracle worker either. He just knew what it took for supes, or those married to a supe, to delivery a happy, healthy baby, even if the odds were stacked against them. And he expected nothing short of utter commitment from the parents of the unborn child. Stiles and Derek had no issue devoting to Dr. P’s way of practice if it meant a healthy baby and Stiles would be okay.

He told them right off the bat, what devotion required of them. The first was weekly visits all the way out to his office for checkups.

Stiles nearly exploded with excitement when they scheduled an appointment for his first ultrasound in two weeks.

Next, was a strict list of ‘yes’ and ‘no’ foods Stiles could and couldn’t eat that Dr. P expected Stiles to follow to a T. Stiles promised he would, and Derek knew Stiles’ promises were always kept. He had also made Stiles promise to take his prenatal vitamins regularly.
Thirdly, they needed to take Stiles off his Adderall. Though he’s rarely taken it since high school, it was still medication in his system that could complicate his pregnancy. Stiles immediately shot off a text to Lydia, telling her to dump all his Adderall down the toilet. She Snap Chat-ed him a picture of the pills in the toilet bowl when his ask was complete.

Next, Stiles was not to do any strenuous activity, and try to alleviate any excessive stress from his daily routine. He’s a mob boss, pack mom, and about to become an actual ‘mom-mom’. He lived off stress like it was air. But he knew Derek and Lydia would see to it personally that he didn’t have much to worry about. But without the Adderall, Stiles wasn’t so sure... He asked if he’d be allowed to continue with daily chores-- which created a low, disapproving growl from Derek-- to keep himself busy, and Dr. P told him that cooking, laundry, etc. were fine. Just so long as he wasn't lifting the couch to vacuum under it.

He also didn’t think it was a good idea for Stiles to be driving back and forth from San Francisco to Beacon Hills. He understood that their families lived there, and wanted to know how he was progressing, but the first trimester was always the most crucial one, and he didn’t think weekly, two-day trips back home, on the road, or on a plane, was good for his pregnancy: it would cause improper sleep patterns, which would in turn cause stress, which is harmful to the baby and his own well-being. They had a hard time saying ‘yes’ to that request, but did so, and knew their family would understand if it meant keeping the baby safe and healthy.

Dr. P handed them a list of about four books he found helpful and recommended them to his patients to read. Derek took the list and Stiles already knew what Derek was going to spend the rest of the week doing: devouring said books and dumping fact after fact atop Stiles’ head whenever he might’ve done something Derek didn’t think he should be doing. Dr. P shook both their hands and told them to also have fun and enjoy Stiles’ pregnancy. Having a baby is a scary/wonderful experience, and they should relish in it completely. That would also keep them stress-free.

Stiles liked Dr. P, a lot. As did Derek. But Stiles felt something with him. Something close, like family. As though he’d be far more important to their lives than just their OB/GYN...

Dr. P sent them off with a reminder card about their next appointment and prescriptions for Stiles’ vitamins, then congratulated them once again when he walked them back to the Camaro.

Once they pulled away from the house/doctor's office. Stiles called Lydia. “That guy is amazing, Lydia. We loved everything about him, and his practice.”

Lydia squealed on the phone, ringing in Stiles’ ear, “Oh, great, Stiles! I’m so so glad! He was the only name I had left!”

“Where’d you find him?”

“I didn’t. Talia did. She called to tell me I left a pair of boots at Hale House then she asked how everything with the consultations was going and I told her. So she gave me the address to a were-doctor that she said specialized in both human and supe pregnancies.”

Of course it was Talia Hale to the rescue. It’s one of the many reasons Stiles loves her; always a trick up her sleeve somewhere.

“Hey, she never gave me a name, or I was too desperate to recall it. What was it? What’s the doctor’s name?”
“Parrish. Dr. Jordan Parrish.”

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter will be posted next week. Hopefully by Monday night :)
Stiles woke up buzzing, itching. And completely on fire. His skin hot, and melting. Mouth dry and his breath ragged. It’s been happening for the last couple nights and he can’t control it.

He turns over, the sun barely up, hardly light out. Derek should be up soon for his morning run. But right now he’s asleep, naked beneath a thin bed sheet, lying on his back, arm under his head. Christ.

Stiles pulls the sheet down, off Derek, exposing his nakedness to the open air, and Stiles’ mouth is no longer dry. He’s salivating actually.

He maneuvers further down the bed until he’s at Derek’s knees. He bothers not with being subtle and pushes Derek’s knees further apart, settling in between them. He lies flat on his stomach and buries his face in Derek’s crotch. Stiles gives long, slow laps to Derek’s testicles before easing upward and swiping his tongue along Derek’s cock and wrapping his mouth around the head. Derek stirs, and Stiles keeps at it, sucking at his head, taking him down more and more with each bob on his head.

Derek stirs again sleepily, and Stiles grabs his dick, hard, forcing Derek awake completely, with his hot, wet mouth still working up and down on the werewolf’s cock. “Stiles...” Derek lets out, half sleepy, half aroused. Stiles doesn’t stop sucking, actually making his movements faster and harder with Derek now paying full attention. Stiles’ eyes meets Derek’s half-lidded ones, and Derek can see the orange ring glowing in them. It’s enough to make Derek throw his head back and moan loudly.

Stiles’ hand finds Derek’s balls and massages them gently while sucking hard on Derek’s dick, gripping it at the base. Derek squirms, fisting the bed sheets. His fangs drop with a growl.

Stiles pulls off Derek’s cock with an obscene, wet pop and flicks his tongue over Derek’s head, tasting his precum. “Fuck my mouth.”

Derek opens his legs wider to let Stiles settle in between them more comfortably. Stiles’ mouth closes over Derek’s swollen, red cock again. Stiles loops his arms under Derek’s thighs while Derek holds Stiles in place with a tight hold on the back of his neck. Already he misses Stiles’ long hair with being able to pull and tug on it when they’re like this.

Stiles squeezes Derek’s thighs with each lewd moan. His mouth drools, causing Derek to feel the saliva slip from it and slide down his cock, and drip on his balls. He loves it. He loves the raw, dirtiness of them, accidental or on purpose. He was never really for, or in tuned, to graphic, wet, sloppy sex, but Stiles’ depravity had opened him up to certain things. He knew he must have really
trusted Stiles to be able to be so open with him sexually, and follow his lead, appreciating the perverse acts they performed when turned on by each other.

He loved that sex with Stiles was not only fun, but primal. It was as though Stiles knew exactly what to do, or say, to make his wolf howl and beg for more. Stiles forced Derek to use all his senses when they were in bed, and it drove his wolf crazy with desire. And it drove Stiles crazy making Derek crazy.

Derek stopped thrusting into Stiles’ mouth and tapped him urgently on his shoulder, but Stiles ignored the signal and kept his mouth working overtime on Derek’s hard dick. “Stiles, baby, come on. You can’t.” Since discovering Stiles was pregnant, Derek had forbid Stiles from swallowing his cum when he gave him head. Despite Dr. Parrish assuring them that there should be little to no problem with Stiles doing so, but Derek was skeeved out by it and refused to let Stiles do it.

Reluctantly, Stiles pulls from Derek’s cock. He jerks him off in three hard strokes that has Derek coming in long, thick stripes on his own belly with Stiles’ name in his mouth.

Stiles quickly gets rid of his clothes. “Finger me.”

Derek is still in a muddled haze when Stiles lies on the bed naked and pulls Derek, still dripping with cum, atop him. He manages to focus enough to recognize what Stiles wants. Or more like demands. Derek reaches toward the nightstand for lube--

“Use your cum.”

Derek swipes two fingers through the wetness on his stomach as Stiles opens his legs, overeager and breathless. He spreads Stiles’ cheeks apart with one hand, then uses his cum-soaked finger to circle around his puckered hole-- Stiles fists the sheets and comes all over Derek’s chest with a long, loud moan!

“Fuck, Stiles. I barely touched you!”

Stiles tries to recover his breath. His eyes seep into their soft brown color as he licks his lips. “I know. I just... God, Derek, I was crawling out of my goddamn skin for you.”

“Yeah,” Derek kisses him. Stiles nods, his lips still on Derek’s mouth.

“I woke up needing you so bad.”

“That’s been happening a lot lately.”

“I know. I think it’s my hormones. I can’t get enough of you.”

Derek climbs off the bed with Stiles wrapped around him, kissing his neck.

“You’re covered in cum,” Stiles says with a proud smirk.

“Which is why we’re going in the bathroom to take a shower.”

“Will you fuck me in the shower?” Which isn't really a question. He knows Derek will.

“Depends. Are you going to last more than 10 seconds?”

“Probably not...asshole.”

“You sure you’re not possessed by a lechery daemon again.”
“No. Why? You miss the little guy?”

“Sometimes.” Stiles smacks Derek’s arm. “But I like your pregnancy hormones more.”

“Stop talking and fuck me against our shower wall.”

Derek walks them into the adjoining master bathroom.

Stiles has never been so turned on in his life, and takes every opportunity he can to take his overactive hormones out on Derek. Whether it’s making out with him in the kitchen while Stiles (tries to) cooks breakfast, shower sex after Derek’s run, sex on the kitchen table after the pack leaves for ‘work’, mutual handjobs on the couch when Derek gets back home, making out again in the kitchen while Stiles (tries to) cooks dinner for everyone, sex again after dinner and ‘pack bonding’, then sex again before bed. And it’s not just when Derek’s around is Stiles aroused. He keeps waking up to hot and heavy sex dreams and needing to finish off his desire by sucking off Derek until he wakes up.

And if it’s not the dreams, it’s him masturbating when everyone’s finally left the house or sexting Derek during lunchtime.

He’s a ball of overt sexual energy, which has Derek euphoric and keen to get home as quickly as he can. It’s not as though their sex life is lacking by any means, but Stiles being so excited and wanting Derek at every minute, every day has his ego boosted and chest full of primitive pride; he’s a king, and his husband is a sex god. They’re Hercules and Himeros. Even though Derek knows it’s mostly hormones, he can’t help the swell of Alpha hubris he has in regards to it. His husband is constantly hot for him; phone sex at one in the afternoon hot. Wet dreams hot. I-barely-touched-you-but-you’re-coming-all-over-yourself hot. He can’t help-- refuses actually-- but not to enjoy it while it lasts.

Their betas, however, could do without. They’ve taken to disappearing in their rooms and locking their doors if Stiles and Derek are both home together, not wanting to witness anymore of the amorous foreplay, or smell the peeked, minty air of their mutual arousals; only surfacing for breakfast, dinner and a couple of hours of pack bonding until their Alphas’ make-out sessions turn a little too heavy and make them uncomfortable.

Lydia is the only one who addresses their behavior, but not with spoken words, instead with pointed glares in their direction as she disinfects communal spaces like the sofas in the family rooms, and every flat surface in the house. Stiles and Derek get it, and make it a point to try and keep all sexual activity in their own room.

Stiles finally brings it up to Dr. Parrish who tells him it’s perfectly normal, but it’s affecting Stiles so strongly because he’s human, possibly pregnant with a werechild. His body and emotions are shifting ten fold, not only because he’s with child, but because he’s probably with child and taking on the strong, magnified emotions of a supe.

“I don’t think you understand, Dr. Parrish. I could barely make it on the drive here. We fucked in front of your house in the car.”

“Stiles,” Derek grounds out sternly, with a hint of embarrassment.

Dr. Parrish laughs. “Well, you wouldn’t be the first. I actually had the privilege of busting two of my patients once.”
“Look, I’m not complaining. Really, I’m not. Sex 5 times a day--”

“5 times a day,” Dr. Parrish asks, eyes blown wide.

“Six, really,” Derek corrects.

“Six? Are you counting phone sex,” Stiles asks, turning to Derek.

“Why wouldn’t I,” Derek asks incredulously.

“Okay, well, uh, that might, um, be a lot, but like I said, it’s normal and doesn’t last the whole pregnancy.”

“You sure,” Derek can’t help but asks with a bit of disappointment in his voice.

“I don’t know a man or wolf who wouldn’t,” Dr. Parrish smiles.

That feeling comes over Stiles again, like Dr. Parrish is familiar to him. Family. Like he belongs close to them. Like pack. “Would you like to come over for dinner one night,” Stiles asks. “I don’t know how much distance you try to keep, or should keep, from your patients, but I’d really like for you to come over.”

“A personal connection with my patients is perfectly okay. It’s how I stay in business. I don’t like for my relationships with my patients to end as soon as they reach the door.”

“Great. We should set up a time.”

“I very busy currently, and may not be free for a long while, I’m afraid.”

“You are welcomed to dinner whenever you are free and available.”

“Thank you, Mr. Stilinski-Hale.”

“Stiles’ is fine.”

“Derek’ is okay, too.”

“Thank you. I would, however, like it if you two still referred to be by my professional title while at the office if that’s okay?”

“Of course. 8 years of school and $150,000 of student loan debt-- you’ve earned it,” Stiles says.

Dr. Parrish laughs.

They’re sitting on the sofa in the upstairs living room when it happens. Stiles leans comfortably against Derek on the sectional, surrounded by the rest of the pack while they watch Derek’s movie pick, North By Northwest, and Stiles feels it. Right in the pit of his stomach. Then a sudden wave of dizziness, and suddenly he can smell everything. And it reeks, making him gag.

Derek’s attention turns from the movie to Stiles. “You al--”

Stiles bolts from the sofa, jumping over Scott and Allison! He’s not going to make it to the half-
bath downstairs, so he zips into the kitchen, hovers over the sink, and vomits violently! Derek’s there in an instant, rubbing Stiles’ back in soothing circles as seemingly endless bile revolts from Stiles’ body and into the stainless steel sink.

Lydia opens the fridge and takes the cap off a bottle of soda water. “I need a hand towel,” she says. Allison moves first and grabs Lydia one from a cabinet on the other side of the kitchen.

Stiles finally stops vomiting enough to take a breath and accept the bottle of soda water from Lydia. Derek continues rubbing Stiles’ back as he turns on the faucet, trying to spray Stiles’ throw up down the drain.

Stiles guzzles half the bottle before sitting it on the counter. He takes the hand towel from Lydia, finally noticing the rest of his pack standing behind her with looks of concern on their face. Except Scott. Who looks downright disgusted. Stiles smiles a bit, happy his best friend is the only one not freaking out like a teenage girl.

“That was a lot of puke,” Boyd says finally.

“Clearly, the term ‘morning sickness’ is a misnomer,” Stiles says.

“Clearly,” Erica says, her nose scrunched up to her eyebrows. “Smells so bad.”

“Well, next time I’ll try to make sure my vomit smells like roses and powered sugar just for you, princess.”

“You okay,” Allison asks.

Stiles nods. “Yeah. I’m not dizzy anymore. I think that’s all folks.”

“Lydia can put you to bed. I’ll clean the sink,” Derek tells Stiles.

_Oh, thank God. Rest sounds amazing right now. Who knew puking your brains out could exhaust someone?_ Stiles nods, letting Lydia take his hand and lead him from the kitchen. Stiles knows he didn’t want to be treated like a invalid baby, but after spewing his stomach into the kitchen sink, being treated to some heavy TLC is all he wants at the moment.

Stiles spends the entire night, and well into the morning, hovering over the toilet in the master bathroom, throwing up. After the third or fourth time, he’s got nothing left to puke, so it’s all just spit and the Ginger Ale Lydia went to go get him at Walgreens around two in the morning.

Derek leaves his side not once, making Stiles want to renew his wedding vows because Derek always gives the very best bedside manner. Anything single thing Stiles wants when he’s not well, Stiles gets. Derek never falters, never hesitates. When Stiles had the flu last winter, Derek read half of _A Dance with Dragons_ in the _Game of Thrones_ series to him until his voice was sore and Stiles fell asleep in his lap.

After the 8th time--_Eight times!_-- Scott comes in the room and hands him a box of saltine crackers and a two liter bottle of Ginger Ale.

Scott asks Derek if he minded if he stayed in their room with them while Stiles slept, feeling the need to be close to his best friend who was feeling awful. Derek said ‘yes’ and the two of them played cards until Stiles woke up three hours later to puke again.
This baby is not kind.

Stiles’ ‘morning sickness’ tapers off from the horrific eight times a day, to just three, but always at the most inconvenient times. Once, while he was taking a bath, forcing him to lean over the tub and spill his guts all over the floor, which Derek cleaned up after dressing Stiles in comfortable clothes and putting him to bed with a cold cloth on his head and a sleeve of crackers. And once in the middle of the grocery store with Cora and Isaac.

After that particular incident, Derek had decided to let Boyd and Danny run operations on their own until Stiles was better. Stiles would have protested if he didn’t desperately want Derek home with him all the time.

He felt bad that one minute his hormones wouldn’t let him keep his hands off Derek, and the next, the patient Alpha was cleaning up puke and buying Costco palates of ginger ale for his sick mate.

Stiles jokingly had asked Dr. Parrish if he could possibly take a potion, or perform a spell that would make his morning sickness end, but the good doctor assumed Stiles was serious and adamantly refused Stiles’ “suggestion.” “A potion could backfire and harm the baby, and spells always had fine print attached to them; there is no telling what could happen. Instead of making your ‘morning sickness’ disappear, something horrible could happen and you could end up making the baby disappear.”

Stiles would never, but he couldn’t help the protective arms he wrapped around his stomach. He’d do anything for this child, including puke his guts out 3 times a day.

Derek emails his parents, John, and Melissa that Stiles was due for his first ultrasound on Friday. He immediately received three emails back saying they would all be in San Francisco by Thursday night.

John cracks up laughing at his son lying in bed, groaning in pain. His last round of ‘morning sickness’ really kicked his ass.

“The entire time your mother was carrying you, she threw up not once. Guess you had to make up for her luckiness.”

“The universe is a cruel mistress.”

“You going to make it to your doctor’s appointment?”

“That I would not miss for the world. Even if I wasn’t getting my first ultrasound.”

“So your doctor is good? He’s a good guy?”

“Yeah. Talia pulled his name out of a hat and he’s perfect.”

“I’ve never known Talia Hale to be that lucky.”

Stiles chuckles. His dad is right. Talia Hale is the type of woman that has enough willpower to make her own luck. “Scott get you settled in the guest house?”
“I gave the guest house to Melissa. I’m staying in Scott and Allison’s room. They’re going to sleep in the downstairs family room. God, this house is a maze.”

“Gorgeous though.”

“Very.”

“How sour were Theo and Talia that you and Melissa won out on being here instead of a hotel?”

“Very sour,” John laughs, “I may not have werewolf hearing but I’m pretty sure Theo cursed.”

Stiles laughs. “I’ve missed you.”

“I’ve missed you, too, kiddo.”

“We really need to work something out with you guys on being here. I need you. All of you. I didn’t realize how much until now.”

John lifts the folded cloth from Stiles’ forehead. “You need another one; this one’s warm.” John pats Stiles’ shoulder and goes into the master bathroom to get him another cool cloth.

The entire pack comes. All except Derek’s sisters, Peter, and Peter’s “betas”, but Kira makes Stiles promise to video chat with her right after.

They have to pull over twice so Stiles can throw up before getting to Dr. Parrish’s house/office.

Lydia organizes a plan of action in which sections of the pack will go in at a time to see the ultrasound with Stiles and Derek. First, John, Talia, Theo, and Cora will go in because they’re blood-related family. Then, Lydia and Scott because they’re practically blood-related family. Then, Boyd, Isaac, Erica, and Jackson. After them, Allison, Danny, and Melissa.

Stiles doesn’t like the set up, given it feels as though Lydia basically made a list of who is most important to he and Derek in pack, to who is least important. Neither Stiles, nor Derek had ever seen it that way. They’re a family, and wanted to experience this together as such. Lydia may be able to compartmentalize people and emotions in her life, but Stiles doesn’t. Or at least he tries not to.

He readies to protest, but Lydia holds up her hand, already knowing what he’s going to say. “How big is the exam room?” He doesn’t know. “Exactly. Most Exam rooms are no bigger than your bathroom. Do you think 17 people can fit in said room, including heavy pieces of medical equipment and machinery? No. Didn’t think so. Second, yes, I know this appears as a list of your pack from the closest to the least close to you and Derek. Why? Because it is. I know it seems mean to do so, but a) no one but you has noticed that, b) I made the list so all fault and blame may fall on my shoulders and mine only if someone is offended, which they are not, and c) if you have such an issue with my list then I suggest you become closer to certain betas so the list will render obsolete in the future. Now, excuse me, I left my binder in my car.”

Lydia’s red hair twirls like she were in a hair dye commercial as she turns on her heels and heads out the door to her car before he can get a word out. He may need to have a serious talk with the Red Queen later about her sometimes nuclear level of apathy.

Dr. Parrish emerges into the **lobby**. “Wow. Full pack.”
Talia approaches him. “Hello, Jordan.”

“Hello Talia. How are you?”

“Wonderful. I’m going to see the ultrasound of my grandchild. How is your mother? I unfortunately haven’t spoken to her in a few weeks.”

“She’s good. You should visit her while you’re here.”

“I just may do that.”

“Good.” Jordan turns to the rest of the pack, “So, everybody ready? I’m afraid we’ll have to do this in pieces. I don’t believe my exam rooms can hold 16 bodies.”

“Seventeen,” Jackson corrects. “The Red Queen is in her car.”

“Ah, well, let’s get started. Stiles. Derek. And the first group.”

Stiles, Derek, their parents, and Cora follow Dr. Parrish to the back.

Stiles hops up on the exam table. John closes the door behind them all.

“So, we ready for this?”

“Like you wouldn’t believe,” Stiles confirms.

“Good.” Dr. Parrish adjust the table so that Stiles can lie flat on his back. He puts on a pair of gloves and wheels a stool over by Stiles, then he tilts the LCD screen so Stiles and Derek can see it better. Derek clutches Stiles hand while Stiles raises the hem of his shirt up, exposing his even stomach.

Dr. Parrish squeezes the sticky gel on Stiles’ belly and moves it around with the transducer with a smile. He can feel the anticipation rolling off of everyone in the room, especially Stiles. He presses down hard, searching… And then-- “That, right there, boys, is your baby.”

It definitely doesn’t look like anything, no bigger than a raspberry really. But Stiles stops breathing, staring intensely at the screen and pulsating little white spot.

Derek’s hand tightens around Stiles’ and he can hear the soft, ragged breath his Alpha lets out as he watches the screen.

“Do the grandparents and aunt want to come around and take a look?”

Without hesitation, their parents and Cora move closer and stare at the screen. Cora and Talia start with the waterworks, and Theo pulls Derek close in a congratulatory embrace. Derek bothers not to let go of Stiles’ hand as he hugs his father happily. And John’s eyes turn misty with both a happiness, and sadness; a bit of melancholy for his deceased wife not being there with them.

“Huh...”

And everything freezes. They all draw their attention to Dr. Parrish.

“I, um…”

“Doc! You better tell me now!” Stiles’ overwhelming joy is pushed aside for worry and panic and fear.

“Stiles, I need you to relax.”

“Oh, my God. What is it?”

“Just breathe. It’s nothing bad. It just took me by surprise. Please take a deep breath, and I’ll tell you.”

Derek leans into Stiles’ ear, “Baby, please. Calm down. Okay. Breathe. I’m right here.” Derek is just as worried, but what always calms him down, is a clam Stiles. Stiles needs to not panic, so he doesn’t panic.

Stiles nods. He tries to breathe but anxiety is making it difficult.

“In...and out... In... Out...,” John tells his son. Stiles listens, remembering his breathing techniques. “That’s good. Just like that. One more. In... Out... Perfect.” John runs an affectionate hand over Stiles’ head. He smiles at him. A warm, fatherly smile that Stiles could dive into and swim in for hours. “Better?”

Stiles nods, “Yes.”

“Good, kiddo. Doc?”

“I apologize. I didn’t mean to scare everyone. Especially you, Stiles. I was just a little stunned at what I saw.”

“What is it,” Stiles asks as calmly as he can.

“Okay. This, is your baby’s heartbeat,” he moves the transducer wand a little further from the previous spot, “and this, is your other baby’s heartbeat.”

The silence in the room is so deafening, you could hear hair growing.

For a long while, no one-- not even Dr. Parrish-- says anything...

Banging on the door interrupts their catatonic silence.

“Ever string icks blind, Mott,” Stiles says. Was that Klingon?! Let’s try that again... “Everything’s fine, Scott.” Because who else would it be?

“The room is soundproof,” Dr. Parrish informs him.

“Oh, uh, right. Okay. Um, dad? Can you tell Scott everything’s fine, please?”

John is still frozen, staring hard at the screen. At the second little white ‘raspberry’.

“Dad. Dad?”
“Huh? What? Oh, uh, yeah. Scott.” John finally snaps to and approaches the door, opening it a crack. “We’re fine,” is all he offers before closing the door and returning to his spot, eyeballing the screen in disbelief again.

“Lydia,” he tells his father.

“What?”

“Lydia. She’s hovering by the door.” Stiles doesn't have to see her to know that.

John walks back to the door, opening it a peek, “Stiles says stop hovering.” Then closes it. John moves back to his dedicated spot.

Stiles turns his focus back on Dr. Parrish, “Say that one more time.”

Dr. Parrish turns on the volume of the ultrasonography machine. A steady whoosing sound fills the room in time with the pulsing spots on the LCD screen.

“Oh, my God... Derek, it’s our baby’s--”

“Heartbeat.” Tears fill Derek’s eyes.

Talia gasps. Cora clutches her mother’s hand.

John’s hand covers his mouth as tears threaten to fall from his bright, blue eyes.

“Everything looks good. Great even. You’re almost 8 weeks, and since you know the date of conception, it’ll be easier to pinpoint a due date. I’m also happy to tell you that you’ve made it past the 7 week mark.”

“Why is that a milestone,” Theo asks.

“I don’t like to tell my patients anymore because I used to see them become unhinged, or depressed when I did, but 7 weeks is the cut off for miscarriage. If you make it past 7 weeks, with a clean bill of health, and the heartbeat is normal, than miscarriage is highly unlikely.”

“So everything looks good? The baby is fine,” Stiles asks.

“Yes. Your babies are good.”

“Babies. Derek, we have babies!”

Derek bends down to kiss Stiles’ forehead. “I know. Thank you,” he whispers with his lips grazing Stiles skin. If ever Derek loved Stiles with a passion so deep it was indescribable, now was that moment.

"Thank you, too.”

“Oh, wait. Laura told me to Skype her,” Cora says, breaking out her cellphone. “She’s going to shit a brick.”

“Cora,” Talia admonishes for her language.

“Okay. I got it. Laura you there,” Cora asks into her phone. Laura’s voice sounds into the room through Cora’s speakerphone. “Okay. I’m going to turn to the doctor. Ready for this?” She turns her cellphone, Laura on the screen, at the doctor. “Go ahead, doc.”
“Congratulations are in order to your brother and his mate. They’re having twins!”

Laura’s cheerful scream fills the room!

Lydia paces back and forth in her black leather, ankle boots, up and down the small space.

“Lydia, for Christ’s sake, please,” Jackson pleads with her. “You’re making everyone even more edgy.”

“Something is going on in there. I don’t like it.”

“I’m sure it’s fine, Lyds,” Allison says in a soft tone of voice, trying to mask her own worry.

Lydia stops, toes pointed right at the former hunter. “Oh, it is not fine! The wolves felt it,” she points to Scott, “He said ‘panic’, ‘worry’, ‘fear’, and ‘shock’. Those are not good emotions!” Lydia resumes her pacing.

“We all felt it, but it’s gone now. I don’t feel them stressing,” Boyd says.

“Me, either,” Erica affirms.

Lydia stops once more. “You don’t?”

Just then, John, Talia, Theo, and Cora come into the lobby from the exam room. Lydia immediately rushes them. She readies to fire off a million and one questions, but John merely holds up his hand in protest, signaling her not to speak. “Stiles said for you and Scott to come in, and that is all he wanted us to say.”

Lydia grabs her binder and Scott’s arm, dragging them toward the back of the office!

John and Theo chuckle at the redhead girl’s eagerness and worry.
Chapter Summary

Lydia meets someone special at a very odd time...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Stiles has never seen two souls meet before. Both Derek and Melissa had and said it was a sight to behold. Nothing overtly magically happens necessarily, but the magnetic force that pulls a supe and their mate together is consuming, and so full of raw emotion that those around the event can’t help but feel the aftershocks a bit.

Stiles remembers the feeling vividly when he met Derek. He remembers looking into sea foam green eyes then falling to the ground to his knees, clutching his chest as thought someone had reached in and squeezed his heart. He couldn’t breath, and the pain was making him tremble with tears burning his eyes. His hands were in tight fist as he tried to regain some sort of composure, but he couldn’t move.

He remembers Scott being beside him, an arm draped over his back, trying to hoist him upward, but Stiles was dead weight, unmovable. Scott said he talked to him, calling his name, but Stiles didn’t answer. Didn’t even look at him. He couldn’t. He couldn’t hear; Scott’s voice, deaf on his ears. All sound gone really. He heard nothing, and could only see him. Him. With the light eyes and hair the color of midnight. Him, who lain on the ground in front of Stiles, face planted in the cold, autumn dirt, one red eye on the human as he shuddered in pain, with a strong hand at his chest. Right where his heart should be.

And then, just like that, the pain was gone, and the tears that burned in his eyes had fallen into droplets on the crisp leaves under him. His breath given back to him and all sound restored. His body was light, no longer heavy and pulled to the earth. But his eyes. His eyes wouldn’t leave the man. The beautiful man who let out a harsh breath, as though he had just surfaced from under water, gasping for life. He, too, had a wet face made by tearful pain, and an amalgam of other emotions.

Stiles saw him, and knew him. Knew not his name, his favorite color, or greatest fear, but felt as though he could cut out the man’s heart and piece it back together to find those answers. He wanted to know the answers to every one of those questions and then some, but felt as if he had already had them, stored somewhere inside chest, waiting to be ripped out by a clawed hand.

Stiles felt the man’s hard stare in his bones, passed through burning hot skin and warm blood, and dug deep into his marrow. Yes. He knew this man. From many lives lived long ago...

So he knew what they had felt, and brightened to see it unfold before him. He knew what she saw when her eyes met his, and his hers. He knew the crippling pain through her porcelain body hurt like hell, but only because she was recalling a long life spent as his, somewhere inside her. And the heavy weight pulling her down was really just all her fears and worries trying to tell her to let go. Make yourself light and forget all that brings the weight of the world on your shoulders. Let go,
He watched her slide against the wall, falling to the cold, linoleum floor, with pink painted nails clasp ing at her chest, lips quaking, and eyes swimming in tears. Stiles couldn’t stop looking at her, the girl he once loved, paralyzed with emotion and turmoil. Helpless, but so strong. Her dark green eyes wide and focused on the wolf’s electric blue ones, seeing him, and what he could be for her: the love she thought she’d never have. The love she thought she didn’t understand. The love she thought she didn’t deserve. Stiles couldn’t look away from his gorgeous girl being proved wrong before his eyes. She now has love. She knows love. She deserves love. Just like he had told her that night when her eyes filled with tears that fell on his shoulder.

Then, she breathed in deep, and sharp; coming up for air after having the boyish-faced man pull her deep into an abyss. The tears fell down her flushed cheeks, and Stiles could see her become light, lifted by the raw emotion that had wrecked her, and drug her to the floor.

“S-Stiles,’ Lydia manages. She extends a shaky hand, eyes still boring into Dr. Parrish.

Stiles slides down off the exam table and crouches before the shaken redhead, taking her hand. “Lydia. Are you okay,” he asks with a smile.

“I-I-I don’t know. W-What happened? D-Did I have a heart attack?”

“No,” he chuckles.

“A stroke?”

“No. You’re not ill…but you are in love.”

“With him,” she says, nodding to Dr. Parrish; Derek beside the doctor, trying to console the just as shaken obstetrician. “I don’t know him.”

“Yes, you do. You’ll find out you do.”

Dr. Parrish’s eyes find Lydia’s terrified ones. His beta eyes brighten into a highlighted cobalt and fangs drop. “Come here,” he growls out in a command.

Lydia’s breath turns rapid, and hot. Her chest burns and skin feels like fire at his demanding voice. A harsh, growled voice telling her to come to him. Not a plea, or an ask, but an order. Something pools in her. In her head, her heart, and between her thighs. His voice hitting her right there and making her wet. Making her fingertips and toes numb with a shiver through her whole body. He can smell her. She knows he can. So she says the only thing she can think to say, “Come get me.”

Dr. Parrish lunges for her, but Derek and Scott hold him back as he snarls and growls for her!

Lydia stays in place, still seated on the floor, her head tilted up, looking at the werewolf doctor fighting against Derek and Scott for her. Stiles sees the prurient look on her face as she stares at Dr. Parrish with pouty lips and blown wide eyes. In true Lydia fashion, she’s getting off on this. On the wild beast that’s held back at taking her apart, and claiming her here and now. At giving him what he wants. Of course she is. Lydia is always the cat bouncing the mouse between her paws.

She wets her lips, catching her bottom lip between her teeth, and Dr. Parrish nearly drags Scott along the floor. Lydia’s erotic teasing with her apparent mate is going to end dangerously if he doesn’t do something.

Stiles opens the door and calls for Erica and Cora. They rush to the exam room. “Get Lydia out of
here now!” Erica and Cora come into the room and grab Lydia, still enthralled with the hyped were, who grows ever more unhinged at her leaving.

Stiles closes the door.

“Bring her back to me!”

“I don’t ever remember you being this wolfed-out and crazy,” Stiles says to Derek.

“Affects people differently. Depends on what you want, or need from that other person.”

Stiles turns to Dr. Parrish, “I love Lydia, but I doubt you needed her mind games.”

“I know what she was doing. You forcing her to leave stifled my attempt at putting an end to it.”

Stiles is admittedly stunted at Dr. Parrish’s statement. Lydia Martin is a lot of things, but easily controlled she is not one of them, and the idea that Dr. Parrish thought he’d be able to put an end to her toying with him makes Stiles snicker. “I don’t mean to belittle you, but Lydia could, and would, eat you alive.”

“I’m not as dormant as you might think.”

Stiles looks into the cover of blue in the doctor’s eyes. *He killed an innocent.* Only wolves with those color eyes are perpetrators of the ‘rules’. Dr. Parrish took a life, a blameless, unsuspecting life. It gives Stiles pause, but also makes him curious of the good doctor’s mysterious past. He remembers cutting Derek off during their first visit when Derek began asking far more personal questions than Stiles thought was acceptable. Maybe Derek knew, or felt something Stiles didn’t…

“Would you like me to bring Lydia back in here?”

“Yes.”

“Then calm down. Find your anchor.”

“She’s my anchor.”

“She’s your anchor now. What was it before,” Derek asks.

“My family. My friends. My job,” Dr. Parrish answers roughly through his fangs.

“Good. Find those, and calm down. Then we’ll bring Lydia back. Can you do that?”

Dr. Parrish swallows hard, then nods. He lets his eyes drift close, and takes a deep, concentrating breath. Then another… And another… His eyes open, returned to their normal, light color. His claws recede and his fangs ascend into human teeth. Slowly, Derek and Scott let him go.

Stiles steps closer to Dr. Parrish. “What I’m going to say now stays within this room, thereby alluding to it being something you should listen very closely to and is not to be repeated. There are lots and lots of people that are very vital to my life, as you can see by the bandwagon of that have posted in your lobby. And that’s not all of them. Tell you the truth, we’re missing at least 13 more, maybe,” Stiles tells him. “Lydia Ashley Martin is many, many things to me, but even describing her as ‘vital’ would be an understatement. She and this guy here,” he nods to Scott, “occupy a very singular part of my heart, that’s only for them. And this guy,” he nods to Derek now, “owns my soul.”

Derek can’t help the proud smirk he poorly tries to hide.
“And there are no words for how I feel about my father. But even still, there is no distance, no route I will not take, to protect anyone in this family. From any type of harm. You know Talia. You know our pack. So you are well aware of the fact that our reputation does not precede us. We are very true to our loyalties, and very thorough in ridding ourselves of those that aren’t. This, is your first, and only warning about Lydia. Understand?”

Dr. Parrish nods, a bit terrified, but also in admiration and respect. “You, and Derek, are her Alphas. I would never do anything to hurt your betas. Especially Lydia.”

“We know that. But we need to hear it. Lydia is a beta in a pack. If you want her, you know what you have to do first.”

“Yes,” Dr. Parrish says.

“But first, Derek and I need to be a little selfish.”

“I’ll finish the ultrasound,” Dr. Parrish says, catching Stiles’ drift.

“Thank you. Then you can see Lydia.”

Dr. Parrish nods with gratitude.

“Am I going to get to see that baby,” Scott asks excitedly.

Stiles literally hops up on the exam table, eliciting a rumbling growl from Derek at his physical antics, “Yes, Scottie-boy. You get a front row seat.”

Scott enthusiastically wheels Dr. Parrish’s stool toward Stiles, turned to the LCD screen with buzzing anticipation. Stiles smiles wide, loving his best friend’s eagerness. It hadn’t even been 6 months before he and Derek met that Stiles told Scott and his father that he found both men and women attractive. And despite Scott’s blasé shrug of ‘It’s cool. As long as you’re happy’, Stiles had always worried that his friend never really committed to accepting Stiles’ sexuality, and only said so because, well, they’re best friends. But for the past ten years, Scott was nothing if not supportive of his relationship with Derek, especially the ups and downs in the beginning.

Scott was there beside Stiles the day he and Derek met. Scott saw him rocked to his core with love at first sight, and not once did he shame him for it, even with Stiles being with Malia at the time. He listened and gave the best advice the optimistic, sentimental, romantic wolf could give. And Stiles loved him all the more for it. Even when said support and advice felt like lines from a Katherine Heigl movie.

Dr. Parrish squeezes some more gel on Stiles’ stomach and picks up the transducer, but stops, just a hair above Stiles’ abdomen. “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have lost control like that.”

“Dude, are you really apologizing for meeting your mate,” Stiles asks.

“No. Just…”

“Just nothing…at least I hope.”

Dr. Parrish nods. It’s all he feels he can do, knowing Stiles and Derek’s position, and the not-so-subtle threat/warning Stiles gave him a moment ago. He presses the transducer down and points to the screen, showing Scott the baby. Then turns the volume up, allowing the heartbeat to sound within the room again.
Stiles doesn’t think he’ll ever tire of hearing it.

Then Dr. Parrish slides the transducer a bit, showing Scott Stiles and Derek’s other baby.

It takes them a good 2 minutes to wake Scott up after he passes out…

Boyd, Erica, Isaac, and Jackson come in next, after a dazed Scott exits the exam room, still stunted into shocked silence when he takes a seat next to Allison in the lobby.

Erica cries her mascara off and hugs the hell out of both of them, promising to be the very best aunt she can be.

Boyd smiles wide at Derek and they embrace in a brotherly hug that warms Stiles’ heart. Derek doesn’t have many friends outside the pack. There are one or two guys he’ll go have a beer with every now and then, but no one he’s ever brought over to the house for dinner, or invited over for holidays. So the closest thing he had to a best friend was Boyd, and vice versa. And Stiles liked their choice in friends. They complimented each other well, and shared so much in common and were so alike, a few times Stiles caught himself slipping, calling Boyd by Derek’s name.

Jackson gave Derek the most bro-ish/dude-ish mix of a hug and back slap, congratulating him on ‘knocking up Stilinski times two’, that Stiles rolled his eyes so hard he thought he’d get a headache. But then Jackson looked at Stiles softly for a brief moment before leaning in and giving him a tender hug, whispering how happy he was for him. It might have shocked Derek and the rest, but Stiles was none too thrown by the endearing gesture. He knew over the years he had worn Jackson down, crashing through his walls and reaching the other side where he kept only his most trusted allies and secrets. Jackson let him in, and he never betrayed his fragile trust. And never would, knowing how hard it was for Jackson to let his guard down and give Stiles a chance. So he was rewarded, with shoulder squeezes and trips to AT&T Park whenever the Giants played the Mets, and late night phone calls about things that kept Jackson up at night sometimes.

Isaac, on the other hand, had been floundering between overwhelming excitement and nervous curiosity, like a toddler told he has a new brother or sister on the way. It did nothing short of amuse Stiles when Isaac rattled off interested question after question when Dr. Parrish told them Stiles was having twins. And like any good doctor would indulge a young child, Dr. Parrish answered every one, and even handed Isaac a few pamphlets on multiple births that were sure to make it into Lydia’s binder.

Allison couldn’t stop crying and hugging Stiles. It got to the point that Stiles and Derek became worried, and wondered if they should go and get Scott to settle her. Danny handed her tissues as she explained that she was just so happy for her ‘mother’ and her Alpha. Stiles found himself letting tears fall from his eyes at Allison’s casual mention of him as her ‘mother’. He knew Allison losing her real mother was like a foreign experience to her, given how young she was, but she did have memories. And however he, or anyone else, felt about Victoria Argent, those few memories were good. He’d never take that from her. He’d never soil what good she did have left of her mother with his truth; Allison knew a different one. She knew her mother to be a different woman than the one Stiles was told—and believed—she was. And just like he’d never ruin any of that for her, he’d never attempt to replace her either.

Yet, Allison called him ‘mom’ and cried happy tears. It was enough to finally open the floodgates and let the dam break. He cried with her, holding her close, petting her long, brown hair, and she squeezed him tight and kissed his cheek. He hoped his children loved him half as much as he knew Allison loved him in that moment.
Danny hugged him hard, and kissed his cheek, too. Stiles swore he saw a flash of red in Derek’s eyes as he looked on in a scowl until Danny had done the same to him, and offered any and all full-time babysitting services in the future. Danny loved kids, and couldn’t wait to have his own. Stiles got the impression Danny could rival Lydia in exaggerated excess of spoiling his kids before having any of their own.

Melissa hugged Derek tightly before they spoke lovingly to one another in Spanish. Stiles hated it when Derek spoke in another language because of how much it turned him on. It was number three on his list of ‘Things Derek Hale Can Do That Will Make Me Get Down On My Hands and Knees Begging for Mercy’. Derek could speak seven languages—eight if you counted English—and could read Old English and Latin. Derek being a full-on polyglot turned him on completely, and watching him converse with Melissa in Spanish was making the blood in his body travel southward, between his legs.

Melissa wrapped up their conversation when Derek said something to her in Spanish that made her turn around to Stiles and give him a naughty smile. Stiles’ eyes narrowed at his husband before Melissa hugged Stiles with tears in her eyes and told him to convince Scott to give her another ‘grandchild’.

Melissa had at times referred to Stiles as her ‘son’ or Scott as John’s ‘other son’. It was natural, a given, seeing how close Stiles and Scott were nearly all their lives. Stiles found it weird at first, thinking if he allowed her to continue doing it, it would somehow erase the memories of his mother.

He walked over to Scott’s one night to talk to her about it, but she was rushing from the house, trying to head over to Beacon Hills General for her graveyard shift. Stiles walked with her to her car, trying to find the right words to bring it up to her without hurting her feelings. He liked Melissa. Loved her, but he couldn’t let her continue calling him her ‘son’.

He readied to speak but was cut off by her telling him there were two plates in the oven for he and Scott, so they don’t order pizza again…for the 7th night in a row. She upgraded the Netflix like Stiles had suggested, so now they can live stream movies, and order movies to be delivered. She asked him to clean up after himself and try to be quiet for the neighbors. She kissed his cheek, told him she loved him and pulled away from the house and toward the hospital.

After that day, Stiles no longer felt the need to speak with her about her embellished relation to him. He knew where he stood, and he believed his mother’s essence would win out, never to be forgotten, no matter how many times Melissa called he and Scott ‘my boys’ when she spoke with other people.

In this moment, though, Stiles feels forever privileged to have her call him ‘son’. After all, Derek did have to answer to both his father and Melissa when they confessed to them that Stiles and Derek were mates.

Scott and Boyd stood protectively on opposite sides of Lydia’s car. Lydia was inside, in the driver’s seat, looking very antsy. Stiles had never seen her so rattle. So nervous.

Lydia’s attention turned to Stiles approaching her car. She rapped frantically on the rolled up window at him.

“She okay?”
“She threatened to rip my balls off and make me eat them if I didn’t let her out of the car,” Boyd answers.

“And she tried to escape through the trunk,” Scott adds.

“How? The backseats don’t come down,” Stiles asks, confused.

Scott simply shrugs. “It’s Lydia. She would have found a way.”

Lydia is now smacking the window and yelling for Stiles. Stiles nods to both Scott and Boyd. They head back to the office.

Lydia swings open the door—her werewolf bodyguards gone—and tries to make a run for the office. Stiles holds her back, sitting her back in the driver’s seat. “Lyds, I can not let you back in there like this. For a number of reasons.”

“Stiles, Dr. Parrish is my soulmate! He wants me!”

“I know, and I want you two to get a chance to spend some time together, but not with you like this. You’re not a were, so you don’t have an anchor. So, I need you to take a deep breath and count to ten before I let you go.”

“Why?”

“Because with you like this, it’s going to stir his wolf and he won’t be able to control himself.”

“Maybe that’s what I want.”

“No. Not like this. He could hurt you, Lydia.” He stands at full height, then raises his shirt, showing her the faded claw marks along his side. “That’s Derek, after a full moon. I thought I could handle him unhinged, too. And I did for a while, but then, one night…” He pulls his shirt back down and crouches in front of her. “You will get more than enough opportunity to spend time with him, but right now you need to be relaxed and your usual, poised self. There’s a process to all this. You know that.”

Lydia nods. She knows there is. She helped Stiles study it, digging and looking for all the information on were mating they could get their hands on when Stiles wanted to find something that he could use to obligate Derek into breaking up with Braeden. Through their research, they found he and Derek were going about their mating all wrong, and how it was supposed to properly be handled within a large pack. Lydia remembered being actually surprised with how formal it all was and found it just as interesting as Stiles had.

It was too late to go about it properly with them, and Scott and Allison, but they knew the next time one of the betas met their mate they would have to go about it officially. So Lydia was the first to enter their new phase of proper pack dynamics.

“Okay. I can be calm. I have control. Just like a wolf.” She takes a deep breath… Then another… She closes her eyes and counts to ten slowly…

“Feel better?”

She nods. She does actually. Now that she knows what has to happen next.

“Good.” Stiles takes her hands into his. “Do you want to see the baby?”
Lydia gasps. *The baby.* She forgot why she was even there. Her best friend was having a baby and she forgot. She knew she had a legitimate excuse for forgetting, and that Stiles would completely and utterly understand, but she still felt horrible. Her favorite person in the whole wide world (until today he had held the number one spot) was going through the most wonderful/scary experience of his life, and she forgot. “Stiles. I’m so so so sorry. I can’t believe—I’m so stupid—You were sitting…and then the doctor… Please please please forgive me. Please.”

Stiles laughs. He’s never seen her stumble over anything coming out of her mouth, let alone an apology. To get one from Lydia Martin was rare, but when you did, it was sharp and short like a paring knife. “I think the circumstances you found yourself in unexpectedly today can be labeled an ‘exception’ in regards to forgetting I was with child.”

“I really want to see the baby. I do.”

Stiles stands and extends his hand to her. “Then come on.”

Lydia’s hand clasps around her mouth as tears run down her face. If she were any closer to the screen her vision would blur. With a tentative hand, she traces the two tiny beings with her well-manicured finger. “Two of them…”

“Yup. Derek and his super werewolf sperm.” Derek rolls his eyes at his husband.

“They’re beautiful.”

“They don’t look like anything yet.”

“Yes, they do. They look like family. They look like pack,” she says.

Jordan’s eyes don’t leave the wonder and happiness on Lydia’s face. He’s sure Derek can smell the affection he has for her at this moment rolling off him in waves. She’s stunning. Even more so when she’s crying happy tears for her Alphas. She’s genuinely happy for them. But there’s something underneath her joy. Some tinged within it, like a tampered down sadness. She’s not masking it; just putting it aside. He’s curious about it, wondering what it is that she’s trying to let go, but has a slight grip on her…

“Stiles… You’re going to be a daddy. You’re both going to be daddies…” She turns to her Alphas, “These kids are so lucky.”

And it makes Dr. Parrish’s wolf roll around, hearing the honest pride in her heart.

“Come here, Red Queen.”

Dr. Parrish removes the transducer off Stiles’ belly. He wheels himself away from his patient when Lydia slides over and hugs the hell out of Stiles. They stay like that for a moment, before Lydia reaches up, grabbing Derek’s shirt collar and pulls him into the embrace as well.

Lydia breaks apart from them and reaches into her designer purse. She pulls out a tissue and dabs her wet eyes with it, before reapplying her make-up. She turns to Derek, and with no pretense: “I know my relationship with Stiles can be a bit much for you, especially given you’re mated. I feel invasive and overbearing at times, and I am, but it’s only because I’ve never really loved anyone before, except Stiles,” she glances a looks at Dr. Parrish, “until today. It may not be the fawning, faultless love that he initially wanted all those teenage years ago, but it is love. Genuine, pure love that I have for him. He’s more than a friend, and something deeper than family. What I’m saying is
that you are my Alpha, my family, and I love you, and I respect you, but I can not break myself away from, or pull back even just a little from the goofy, sweet boy that holds me when I cry and knows my greatest fears and deepest secrets. Especially now. He and Scott may not be my soulmates, and I am definitely not theirs, but we do have a bond. I know them, and they know me. I am asking that you please understand that, or try to,” she’s tearing up again, “because, like I said, I know him, and I know that if you asked him to—because he loves the hell out of you, and only wants you happy-- he’d pull away from me, and even the slightest hint of that would break me in half. And the thought of not having Stiles completely in my life, or not being a first hand witness to your children growing up, is something I can not bear.” She shakes her head, pushing her hair from her face and fighting back the threatening tears.

Stiles’ eyes flood. He grabs her hand, and squeezes. She squeezes right back, looking up at Derek.

Dr. Parrish holds his breath, waiting for the Alpha to reply…

Derek tenderly runs his knuckles down Stiles’ face. Stiles turns into his large palm and kisses the center of it. Derek kisses Lydia’s forehead, then scent marks her cheek with his own. “Please tell everyone we should be leaving in a few minutes. They’re more than welcomed to come back to our house, the pack house. This one,” Derek says, his hand still on Stiles with his thumb rubbing against his jawline, “is looking a little exhausted and still needs to video chat with Kira. Not to mention, Val wants a phone call immediately, too.”

“Oh, okay,” Lydia says easily. It's all the confirmation she needs. Derek's not one for big speeches, but says plenty in his actions, and a forehead kiss is just enough for her to know he heard her, understood her, and is giving her what she needs, because it's also what Stiles needs, too. And he'd do anything and everything for his husband, the father of their unborn children.

“And please give Dr. Parrish our address and your phone number. He’ll be having dinner with us tonight.”

Both Lydia and Dr. Parrish turn wide-eyed at Derek’s matter-of-fact statement. Stiles gives him a smirk.

“He needs to ‘declare’ himself,” Derek reminds them both.

Dr. Parrish drops the transducer on the floor as it slips out of his hand nervously. Yet, Lydia, true to form, merely flicks her hair with an easy toss and walks out of the exam room to carry out Derek’s instructions, despite Stiles knowing she’s internally having a conniption, which has Dr. Parrish’s hackles raised, sensing it.

All Stiles can do, is laugh.

Chapter End Notes

August chapter of this fic was getting looooong. So I had to break it up into 4 sub-parts. Good news: fic will be longer! Yea!!! LOL

August (c) will be posted next week :)
The first thing Stiles does when he gets in the house is throw up…on the floor…in the **foyer**. He couldn’t make it to the bathroom. The second thing he does is throw up. This time he makes it to the **master bathroom**.

Stiles refuses to take a nap; he has to call Valerie and Skype with Kira. Nevertheless, Derek carries him to bed anyway. He sets an alarm on Stiles’ phone to wake him in an hour and a half. Enough time for Stiles to sleep and rest off the exciting day, and enough time to make Derek happy that he’s not overexerting himself. Stiles reluctantly agrees when a big yawn escapes him in the middle of his argument with Derek over said nap.

When his eyes flutter open at the annoying sound of the alarm on his phone, he sits up with a yawn, smelling his own gross breath. He startles, taking note of Lydia perched on the edge of his **bed**, shaking her leg nervously with her hands clasped so tight her knuckles are turning white. “Oh, good, you’re up. Tell Derek to tell Dr. Parrish he can’t come over.” She stands, ready to make her exit when—


She sits back down. “What? Why?”

“Because he’s your soulmate, and you’re his mate. He needs to declare that before he can claim you and mark you, then you have to submit to him.”

“I don’t want to.”

“Why?”

“Because I don’t want him. He’s not my soulmate.”

“Uh… Yeah, Lyds. He kind of is. Was standing right there when you were literally lovestruck.”

“I was having an anxiety attack because I was nervous about the baby.”

“Don’t try and use my children as part of your terrified denial.”

“I am not in denial.”

“You’re not?”

“Nope. Nor am I scared.”
“Scott,” Stiles says in a normal tone. In 10 seconds his floppy-haired friend is in the room.

“Yeah?”

“Close the door.” Scott closes the door. “Lydia is freaking out about Dr. Parrish. She needs an intervention.”

“I do not do freak-outs, Stiles,” she tells her friend.

“What’s going on,” Scott asks sitting on the bed with them.

“She doesn’t want Dr. Parrish to come over. She says they’re not mates.”

“I saw the whole thing, Lyds,” Scott says. “You’re totally mates. It was the same thing that happened to me and Stiles. It’s like you’re having a heart attack, but you feel it deeper inside you somewhere. You can’t breath, and you’re in pain.”

“It’s your soul recognizing the were it’s connected to. And vice versa.”

“I told you. It was an anxiety attack.”

“Lydia. It’s just us. Just me, you, and Scott. What’s really the problem?”

“Nothing. I just don’t see the point of inviting him over for dinner to ‘declare’ himself when I don’t belong to him.”

“What is this? I don’t understand. You threaten to rip Boyd’s balls off and make him eat them if he didn’t let you back into the office, and now, you say the doctor isn’t your mate…,” Scott says, confused.

“Like I said: she’s freaking out,” Stiles tells his friend.

“I am not freaking out! I just don’t see why he has to come here and meet the entire pack in one night!”

“And there it is,” Stiles says with a grin.

Lydia purses her lips together tight, afraid of what else she might spill. She doesn’t do this. She’s more careful about her feelings and what she chooses to show or say in regards to them, but today, after meeting Dr. Parrish, she’s become unpredictable, and doesn’t like it.

“This is about Lydia Martin feeling intimidated and powerless. The last thing she wants to be in front of her entire family. I’m so sorry you can’t control your destiny, Lydia,” he says sarcastically. “But why don’t you do what we mere mortals do, and succumb to the fact that life is out of our control. Things happen that we can’t manipulate to our advantage and we have to unfortunately understand that. It’s why bad things happen sometimes. But if the worst of it you have to deal with is that you’ve found your soulmate, the person you’re to live happily ever after with, then take it from me: don’t run from it. Grab hold and never let go. Give it everything you have in you and never stop.”

“I did with Allison. And yeah, we hit a few snags—”

Lydia scoffs. That’s putting it lightly.

“—but I wouldn’t trade a single moment of it for anything. Open yourself up to him,” Scott tells her.
“Do you two know who I am? What goes on in this head every day? Have we not spent the last 22 years attached at the hip? I don’t do ‘open’. I don’t willing give myself over to another person that freely. I assess, then manipulate, devour, then discard when I done and bored. That’s how I work.”

“And what we’re trying to tell you, Lydia, is that you can’t do that this time. Your heart and soul won’t let you. Try as you might, you’re going to eventually give in. This isn’t directing traffic like your other relationships; you can’t push and pull and bend Dr. Parrish to your will, then dump him when you’re finished. And trying to, is only going to make things worse,” Stiles advises.

“…That feels like a challenge. And I accept.”

Stiles and Scott groan in frustration as Lydia saunters out of the bedroom with a newfound ‘confidence’ in her.

“Is it horrible that I feel bad Dr. Parrish is mated to Lydia,” Scott asks.

“In this moment, no.” Stiles flops down on the bed with a bothered sigh.

Scott pulls his feet inward, sitting cross-legged. “His eyes were blue…”

“I know,” Stiles says with a tint of concern in his tone.

“Would he hurt Lydia?”

“Would you hurt Allison?”

“No. But I know it doesn’t mean I’m incapable of doing it.”

“Yeah. I know that, too…” Stiles doesn’t want to think about that. But it’s the only thing swirling around in his head now; the possibility Dr. Parrish could hurt Lydia. He’s hurt an innocent already, apparently, and Lydia’s taken it upon herself to see their mating as some sort of experiment in dominance and control. He doesn’t like the direction any of this is taking anymore. Not at all.

“You smell worried.”

“Don’t smell my emotions. It’s bad enough when Derek does it.”

“We’ll look out for Lydia. We’re her family. Her pack. That’s what we’re about. That’s what we do— protect. And tonight we’re going to grill that dude and find out everything we want to know about him before we let him have Lydia.”

Stiles nods. Scott’s right. That’s what tonight is for. He has to prove himself worthy of Lydia before he’s allowed to ‘declare’ her. Then the rest is up to Lydia herself to decide. “Right. You’re right.”

“You feel better now?”

“Yeah. A little bit. Thanks.”

“You can thank me by brushing your foul-ass teeth. Holy Jesus, Stiles.”

Stiles frowns and throws a pillow at Scott’s face before going into the master bathroom to brush his teeth.
Stiles sits in Derek’s office at the desk before Derek’s massive iMac. Kira and Ethan are on the screen at Peter’s house. Braeden is in the background, lying on the couch, with her face in a magazine, looking very disinterested in what her fellow betas are doing.

“Did you get it?”

“Okay, wait…” Kira tells him. The moment her face lights up and her mouth forms the perfect ‘O’ shaped surprise, he knows she got it. She got his email of the sonogram. “There’s two…”

“I’m so confused,” Ethan says looking at the picture. He puts on his eyeglasses. Kira points out the twins on the sonogram. “Holy shit! Twins?! I can’t wait to tell Aiden.”

Everyone’s attention shifts to Braden throwing down her magazine and storming out of the room in the background! Stiles can’t help but feel like slime. He’s the bane of that poor girl’s existence, and the shame she must have felt having to crawl back to the very pack he made her run from in the first place...

“She’s just tired. We were out pretty late last night,” Kira says, covering for her angry, heartbroken friend. It only makes Stiles feel even more gross and despicable, having Kira lie for Braeden, a victim herself of heartache caused by mates.

Stiles simply nods, trying to mask his guilt.

“So everything’s good? The babies are fine,” Kira asks, changing the subject with a bright, reassuring smile. And in that instance, he misses her presence in the house even more. Stiles was completely upset when Kira decided to ‘change houses’ when Scott and Allison got back together. Scott wanted Allison to be brought back into the pack, forgiven and renewed, and Stiles lost his shit all over his best friend. He didn’t understand why the nicest guy he knew was suddenly so callous and uncaring. He knew Scott was oblivious to Kira and Isaac’s feelings, but he didn’t think it was so bad he would ask Derek permission to let Allison back into pack with both his exes still there.

It had been Kira’s final straw. She couldn’t believe Scott’s obliviousness and his gall. She told Derek she couldn’t be her best self around Scott, or Allison, and needed to be sent elsewhere. She didn’t want to leave the pack, just Scott.

And that’s when Stiles unleashed a fury so hot on his best friend that it was white fire. It had been the first time Derek had seen Scott bow his head in shame at Stiles’ tirade. Stiles wasn’t even physically in the room. He called from London and Derek put him on speaker phone as Stiles admonished Scott for the way he treated both Kira and Isaac. Allison was in the room, too, sitting silently beside Scott, staring guiltily at her shoes.

“The babies are great according to Dr. Parrish.”

“You got names yet,” Ethan asked.

“No. Not yet. We don’t even know the sex yet.”

“When do you find that out,” Kira asked excitedly.

“Not until I’m about 5 months, so… November.”

“Can we come up when you find out the sex,” Ethan asks.

“Of course, puppies.” Kira and Ethan hi-five happily. Stiles laughs. He can’t help but love how
happy and supportive everyone was of him being pregnant.

Well, almost everyone...

Kira and Ethan’s attention was drawn to something off screen, sounding like a person entering the room. He hoped to hell it wasn’t Braeden. He didn’t want to log out of Skype like a coward. How could he have been so fearless in breaking her and Derek up, but so insecure and gutless in regards to her afterward? He knew such a thought needed more exploring. He just hoped it wasn’t now.

It wasn’t thankfully. It was Malia. With Peter.

“What are you guys doing,” he heard Malia say. Then her bright face was on his screen. “Hi, Stiles.”

“Hi, Malia.”

“How are you,” she asked nicely.

“Good. You,” he asked.

“How is she?”

“Hippie-ish as ever,” Peter answered off-screen.

“She gave Dad a jar of fireflies…for whatever reason.”

“They’re good at detecting danger. They congregate around weird smells, like blood,” Stiles informs her.

“Oh. Makes sense now. Why are you Skype-ing with Kira and Ethan?”

Stiles sees Kira and Ethan stiffen a bit, not knowing what’s going to happen next. Malia’s attention turns to them a moment, curious…

“I was, uh, showing them pictures…of my, uh, ultrasound.” Stiles can see even Peter straighten just a little too tautly at Stiles’ admission.

Stiles remembers the day Malia found out he and Derek were engaged. Peter called Stiles, yelling at him about how Malia locked herself in her room, refusing to come out, or eat. He demanded Stiles and Derek come to Fresno and talk to her, so they drove out to Peter’s farm the next day. It took Stiles 3 hours to convince her to let him in to talk. She finally let them in, and for the third time since he broke up with her, Stiles sincerely apologized to her for breaking her heart. She said she had forgiven them both, but on the day of their wedding, Stiles noticed her drinking a little too much wine and her sudden disappearance after he and Derek’s first dance as husbands.

“Oh… Can I see,” she asked, interested.
Peter, Kira, and Ethan turn wide-eyed at the coyote.

“Uh…yeah. Sure,” he said. “I emailed it to Kira.” Kira pointed out the ultrasound in her email, minimized on her computer screen. She pointed to two white circles and Stiles watched Malia’s eyes grow as big as saucers.

“Stiles… Twins,” she asked with bemusement in her voice, still staring at the ultrasound.

“Looks like it,” he said with a smile. He couldn’t help it. The thought of his babies growing inside him creates an automatic smile on his lips. Especially when Peter makes a mad-dash to the computer from across the room to see for himself.

He scowls at Stiles through the web cam, “So, that perfect little lithe body is going to be ruined by these two werecubs gestating inside you now? Sounds wonderful. A true miracle,” he remarks with his typical snark.


“You’ve been broken up for 9 years, and clearly she’s finally over it,” Peter scoffs before he walks off-screen into another part of the house.

“Still creepy, Peter,” Ethan tells him.

“Very,” Malia adds. She looks thoughtfully into the camera at Stiles. “I am though. I’m very happy for you two.”

“Really,” Stiles says, hope dripping from his tone.

“Yes…and no. But more yes than no. That’s progress, right?”

“I think so,” Stiles says with an encouraging smile.

“Us, too,” Kira says to Malia with the same proud smile.

“You guys smell cheerful and gross,” Stiles hears Peter say off-camera.

Stiles rolls his eyes. “I think it might be time we end our Skype-ing session. Peter might say something that truly pisses me off.”

“Like the fact that I can hear Braeden in her room crying?”

“Peter,” Malia, Kira, and Ethan growl at him.

“Yeah. Something like that, asshole. I’ll keep you guys posted. And please make sure he’s nowhere near next time…if you can help it.”

“We’ll Skype at my place next time,” Kira offers.

“Okay. Sounds good,” Stiles says.

“Bye, Stiles,” Malia says with a wave, then suddenly gone from the frame.

“Tell Danny I said ‘Hey’, and talk to the babies about us,” Ethan says.

“Of course.”
“Love you. Miss you,” Kira says, blowing a kiss at him. He blows her one back.

The screen goes black, their session ended.

Stiles hands rub his stomach. “That was your aunt Kira, uncle Ethan, and cousin Malia. And regrettably, your great-uncle Peter. He’s the biggest asshole, but deep down in his Grinch-like heart, there’s love…somewhere.” Stiles shrugs, not so sure if even he believes that. “Alright. Time to call your aunt Valerie.” Stiles grabs his cellphone off the desk.

Boyd, Jackson, and Cora loiter in the kitchen. Stiles walks in and grabs his apron off the hook by the pantry. “Get out of my kitchen,” he says coolly as he ties the plain blue apron around his waist. Without hesitation, the three wolves make to disappear. “Jackson stay.” Jackson stays put. “Wash your hands,” Stiles tells him as he takes pots and pans out of their hiding places.

Jackson rolls his eyes. He loves Stiles’ cooking, but he’s non-too-fond of helping him out in the kitchen. Stiles can be a bit bossy when he’s in his domain, but Jackson’s irritation simply boils down to him being lazy rather than slave-driven. He’d much rather eat the food than make it.

Jackson washes his hands and puts on the other apron in the pantry.

“Dinner’s going to be simple, but there’s a lot of pack here so I need help peeling potatoes.” Jackson extends his claws at the mention of ‘peeling potatoes’. “No,” Stiles says, “Use the peeler.”

“That’ll take forever, Stiles,” Jackson whines.

“Not if you quit whining and get to work on them taters,” Stiles says in a mock southern accent. Jackson gives a frustrated sigh and grabs the peeler out of the drawer Stiles points to. “Wash them first,” Stiles tells him.

“Seriously,” Jackson whines again.

“Yes, seriously. They’re dirty and have been in the ground.”

“It’s not like a bunch of weres are going to get sick or something…”

“No, but your pregnant, human Alpha-mate might,” Stiles says casually. Jackson’s mouth opens and closes the like a fish out of water, stunted at forgetting not only is Stiles human and could get sick, but so could his babies.

“Quit gaping and wash those spuds, Jackson!”

Jackson closes his mouth and drops the sack of potatoes in the sink. He opens the bag and washes each one at a time under warm water.

They keep in silence as Stiles chops onions while turning the burner on under a large pot...

“I forget you’re human sometimes,” Jackson says breaking the quiet.

“How can you forget that when all anyone does is remind me,” Stiles asks rhetorically.

“Because you don’t act like it a lot. You seem more and more like a wolf all the time now.”

“Hormones. Carrying werecubs…maybe.”
“No. You’ve seemed that way before you were pregnant. Like being in this pack, being with Derek, being a Hale, has turned you into some sort of quasi-pseudo werewolf.”

“You have no idea. Is that a bad thing?”

“I don’t think so…sometimes.”

“When is it?”

“When you forget you can get hurt. Or got to jail.”

“Derek put you up to this little conversation? Lydia?”

“No,” Jackson said shaking his head. “These are my own thoughts. Things that’ve occurred to me of late.”

“Right,” Stiles nods. “Right. I’m sorry… I’m sorry that that happened. That I let that happen. Especially after you tried to stop me.”

“Derek fell apart when you went to prison.”

“I know. I wasn’t in the best shape either.”

“I know. I heard you tell him at Hale House,” Jackson says. “And yes, I meant to eavesdrop, but it’s not exactly like you two were whispering either.”

Stiles stares hard at the back of Jackson’s head. He doesn’t know if he should apologize to his beta, or wring his neck for the audacity in his tone about spying on a private argument he had with Derek.

“You’re strong like a wolf. Not physically, but… You take on a lot and keep going. And you like a challenge. You’re good at getting your opponent on our side, of breaking them down and making them vulnerable. In a good way.”

“You talking about anyone in particular,” Stiles says sarcastically with a smirk.

“I wasn’t nice to you at all in high school. Neither was Isaac. And now he’s attached at your hip and goes to you for everything.”

“Derek made you wolves and you were scared. Thought I could help,” Stiles says with a shrug.

Jackson finally turns to him, looking at him, “But you didn’t have to. You could have said: ‘Fuck you, Whittemore. Lean on someone else’s shoulder’.”

“Didn’t we have this particular talk a few years ago,” Stiles asks with a bit of mockery. “I could have sworn we did. Yeah, you apologized for being a giant asshole to me all through middle school and high school, and then thanked me for being there for you during college… We don’t need to rehash this every few years, Jackson. My forgiveness doesn’t have an expiration date.”

“I just meant that you’re selfless. It’s the most human part about you. That’s why it’s a bad thing if I forget you’re human sometimes.”

“I’m not entirely selfless. There’s a coyote in Fresno that’s needed 9 years to get over me breaking her heart, and a mercenary that would probably like to see me dead. I’m only selfless when it suits me.”
“Which is a lot more than most people would be. Most weres even.”

Stiles simply shrugs, batting away the tears forming in his eyes at the ripe mound of chopped onions at his fingers. He can’t agree to that. Not when every selfish moment he’s ever had is swimming around in his brain making Jackson a liar.

“Change that then if you don’t agree. Make things better. Make you better. Now would be the perfect time. For them,” Jackson says, nodding to Stiles’ stomach.

Jackson’s right. His children are a new beginning. He should embrace that in every way possible. He shouldn’t bring them into a damaged or fragmented pack. They were neither of those things, but they could end up being them if Stiles didn’t set a few wrongs right. Namely Braeden. Other, smaller troubles he’d have to wait on to fix after he tackled the biggest one. He was scared, but knew it needed to be done. The happiness of his babies depended on it. As did his well-being. Not to mention, it was only the right and inevitable thing to do.

Stiles sniffs back tears. Onions again. He dumps the chopped vegetable into a large bowl then opens the fridge, takes out a stick of butter, and throws it into the pot. It sizzles and melts. “Do you know Lydia’s found her mate,” Stiles asks. Stiles knows Jackson does. Everyone in the house is in a buzz over it. However, Stiles didn’t know how else to segue into the subject gently. So he thought he’d start with an obvious question.

“Oh course I did.” Jackson smirks at Stiles, “Is this why I’m in here helping you with dinner?”

Stiles moves about the kitchen now, quickly and expertly as he cooks. “Partially. And partially because it’s your turn.”

“I’m glad Lydia found her mate. She should be happy. And I should be happy watching her skin him alive.”

“You’re horrible,” Stiles teases.

“I have no misgivings about who Lydia Martin is, and just how terrifying that makes her.” Jackson washes the last potato in the sack. “I love Lydia. She was my first…everything. But she’s not my last. And I’m not hers. Evidently.”

“You sure?”

“We fooled around a bit, but it wasn’t like when we were teenagers. I didn’t feel as though I was missing something when she wasn’t around. Is that fucked up,” he asks Stiles.

“No. Just means you’ve moved on. And there’s nothing wrong with growing up.”

“Right,” Jackson nodded. He picks up the peeler and looks at it with disdain. He throws it back down on the counter. “No, Stiles. I can’t.” Jackson snaps his claws out.

Stiles gives him a leveled glare…

Jackson rolls his eyes and retracts his claws. No one—no one—in this house (aside from Talia and Theo) could work against such a threatening stare from the Alpha-mate. Jackson picks up the peeler and begins shredding a potato over the sink, grumbling angrily to himself.

Stiles smirks to himself.
Erica opens the door with a vixen-y smile on her red painted lips. She leans against the frame, with her eyes running up and down the good doctor holding a bouquet of flowers. “Well, hello, Dr. Parrish. Nice to see you’ve made it to dinner.”

“And why wouldn’t I have,” he asks, his tone not in the least intimidated by Erica’s odd mix of flirting and threat.

She shrugs. “Pack this size, this…significant. Most people would run off screaming. Not a bit too much for you?”

“No.”

She smiles wide, having listened to his heartbeat. He’s not lying…but he’s not telling the truth either. “How long have you been a wolf?”

“Why?”

“There seems to be certain things you forget,” she says with a tilt to her head.

“Like?”

“Erica.” Erica turns her head into the house at the voice calling her. Stiles appears at her side in the open door. “You going to invite Dr. Parrish inside or continue annoying him with your obnoxious teasing?” It wasn’t really a question to be answered, seeing as how Stiles steps to the side, pulling her with him to let the doctor in.

“Thank you,” Dr. Parrish said, steeping into the house.

“You’re welcome. Thank you for coming to dinner.”

“Of course. This is for you,” he hands Stiles an unlabeled bottle of white wine. “Well, not for you, but for everyone else to enjoy.”

“Thank you. I appreciate it. And I appreciate you putting up with my nosy beta.” Stiles hands Erica the bottle of wine and nods for her to leave them. She rolls her eyes, annoyed at being told to disappear, and stalks off further into the house leaving them alone. “I’m sorry about Erica. She’s really a sheep in wolf’s clothing honestly.”

“I wasn’t bothered by her. It’s okay. I get it.”

“Those for Lydia,” Stiles asks, nodding to the flowers.

“Yes.”

Stiles smiles, blushing a bit. “Good. They’re beautiful.”

“Stiles!”

“That’s Jackson. Christ knows what he burned. You can follow me.” Stiles hurries to the kitchen with Dr. Parrish right behind them.

Jackson stands in the center of the kitchen with every cabinet and drawer wide open with a lost look on his face. “What red dish are you talking about? It’s not here!”

Stiles rolls his eyes and grabs a large, red ceramic bowl from an cabinet, showing it to his beta.
“You said dish. When I think ‘dish’, I think rectangular ‘dish’. That, is a bowl.”

Stiles hands Jackson the bowl with an exasperated sigh. “Just put the risotto in there please. We’re eating in five. But first, say ‘hello’ to Dr. Parrish please.”

“Good luck, buddy,” Jackson says with a smirk. “You’re going to need it with her.” Jackson catches the fierce glare thrown at him by Stiles. He averts his eyes and goes about putting the food in serving dishes.

“Sorry. My pups usually aren’t this rude. I don’t know what’s gotten into this today.”

“It’s okay. I’m an outsider in their den, ‘after one of their own’. I understand.”

“Glad one of us does,” Stiles says, using a wine key to open the bottle of wine Dr. Parrish brought.

“We were like this with Allison, remember? Both times… Especially the second time,” Jackson reminds Stiles. “Even you were kind of standoffish with her.”

“Now, that you mention it. I do remember that a little. Jesus. That was almost 10 years ago,” Stiles says pouring two glasses of wine. He gives one to Dr. Parrish, and the other to Jackson, “You deserve it early for helping me.”

“Like I had a choice,” Jackson says.

“No. You most certainly did not.” Stiles and Jackson share a slight smile.

“The wine has aconite in it. Is that okay,” Dr. Parrish asks.

“Oh, it’s fine. We’ll just make sure the humans don’t drink it.”

“Wouldn’t want another ‘flying cat’ scenario again,” Jackson cackles. Stiles shoots him another glare and he quiets immediately.

“What was so funny?” They turn to Lydia standing behind them in a purple cocktail dress, her red hair bone straight and in heels.

Dr. Parrish’s jaw drops, Stiles eyes are blown wide, and Jackson outright laughs. Stiles swats at him to shut up and Lydia tries to level him with an evil glare, but her “powers” are useless on him at the moment as he turns his back to her, snickering quietly to himself.

“Uh, you look amazing, Lydia. Really,” Stiles compliments. And she does…but she might be a tad overdressed for a pack dinner.

“Thank you, Stiles.” She turns to Dr. Parrish, “Are those for me,” she asks, nodding to the flowers in his hand.

“Yes. They are.” He hands them over to her.

“Thank you. When did Stiles tell you calla lilies were my favorite,” she asks.

“He didn’t.”

Stiles takes note of the confused and stunted look on the redhead’s face. “He didn’t,” she asks.

“Wild guess. Glad I was right,” he says with a proud, happy beam.
“Yes. You were,” she says with a tight smile. The disappointment in her voice throws everyone in the room off a bit. Jackson and Dr. Parrish smell dissatisfaction coming off her skin as she hides a frown.

Stiles tries to alleviate the tension, “Lyds. Why don’t give Dr. Parrish a tour of the house while we set the table?”

“Sure.” She tosses—the flowers he gave her on the counter and click-clacks out of the kitchen, not even bothering to wait for him.

Dr. Parrish looks to the were and human, curious about Lydia’s odd, or rather rude, behavior that has suddenly appeared. Jackson shrugs while Stiles tries to maintain a semblance of reassurance with a fake, wide smile.

Lydia pokes her head back into the room, “You coming,” she asks the doctor with an eye roll.

“Um, yeah. Sure. Okay,” he responds. He grabs his wine and exits the kitchen.

Stiles turns to Jackson, “Okay. What the actual fuck,” he asks in harsh whisper.

“You’re her best friend. Thought you’d know,” he snaps back in a whisper.

Stiles shrugs just as confused as Jackson. “God, I wish I could drink.”

“Why?”

“Because I get the feeling tonight is going to be a shit show.”

Lydia takes Dr. Parrish outside. “And this is the outdoor patio. That’s the pool and hot tub, the barbecue, fire pit, and the guest house is connected by the breezeway.”

“Wow. This is a gorgeous house. Very beautiful.”

“It is nice. Your place was nice as well. Or what I saw of it.”

“Oh, well, thank you. A realtor showed it to me and I instantly knew I had to have it. I think it’s, uh, a really, um, nice place…to raise kids. A family. And it’s private.”

“Hmm. Maybe. Looks like it cost a lot. How much,” she asks without a hint of embarrassment.

He’s taken aback by the abrupt, uncouth question. “I’d—I’d rather not say.”

“Well, the median income for an obstetrician is about $250,000 a year, but given you have your own practice and specialize in rare pregnancies, i.e. males and supes, I’d say you make about $350,000 to $375,000 yearly. Maybe $400,000 depending on your success rate, but I think it’s closer to that number due to you being highly recommended by Talia Hale, an Alpha in the most notorious pack on this side of the country. The house, however, looks to be about 1.5 million, possibly two. With the student loan debt you’ve occurred since college and making less than half a million dollars annually, I’m going to say that you have a side job that deals handsomely in cash, possibly something illegal, in order for you to be able to afford that house. Or you have an inheritance.”

The corners of Lydia’s mouth turn up slightly at seeing him go from stunned, to seething, to bitten down anger. “I wouldn’t call a life insurance policy an inheritance. Or an illegal side job. My birth
father was murdered when I was young and his life insurance policy paid out to me and my mother. She gave me half when I graduated med school,” he says curtly.

She opens her mouth to speak. To apologize, but there’s nothing. There’s no words for how rude she just was, and how rude she’s been. She closes her already offensive mouth. Nothing she says will exactly make up for her bringing up how much he makes, how much his house cost, assuming he’s into illegal activities (as she is) to pay for his house, or rehashing a personal memory of a horrible tragedy that befell his family.

“We should go inside. Dinner might be ready,” he tells her. He doesn’t wait for her response and heads back in the house.

Lydia takes a breath, squares her shoulders, and follows him inside.

Everyone is gathered outside under decorative lights as they eat dinner on the patio by the pool. The dining table inside was far too small to comfortably seat everyone, yet the table outside gave them more than enough room.

Derek sits at the head of the table as Stiles serves the first course, an appetizer. As a guest of the Alpha’s, Dr. Parrish sits closer to Derek, on his left and across from Lydia.

“Stiles, this hummus is very good. I can’t believe you made it from scratch,” Dr. Parrish compliments.

“Thank you, Dr. Parrish. Glad to see there are some wolves that know how to extend compliments to the chef,” Stiles responds.

”’Jordan’, please,” he asks of Stiles.

“Stiles, we compliment your cooking all the time,” Erica says.

“Yup. Every time we eat it and don’t leave a crumb on our plate,” Scott says with a laugh.

“You’re not going to get a better compliment from a pack of wolves than that,” Theo assures him.

“Guess not,” Stiles says. He takes notice of Lydia rolling her eyes, looking very bored, despite the warm laughter around the table…

By the second course, a French onion soup, Lydia has been playing on her cellphone for 15 minutes as Jordan talks with Derek and the rest of the pack.

“So you’re the oldest,” Allison asks.

“Yes,” Jordan answers. “I have a little brother and little sister. They’re in high school. My sister is thinking about being a pediatrician, so she helps out during the summer.”

“Myra was always a very precocious, intelligent girl. Can you imagine a teenage girl giving up her entire summer to work in a doctor’s office,” Talia chuckles.

“Girl’s got big dreams. Why not shoot for them,” Erica says.

“Hear, hear,” Melissa adds. “Reminds me of another precocious young girl I knew,” Melissa says
with a smile in Lydia’s direction.

Lydia gives her a faint nod while continuing to play Scrabble on her phone.

Stiles and Derek exchange glances across the table at Lydia’s disaffected behavior.

“Were you like that in high school, Lydia? Like my sister,” Jordan asks, trying to engage her in conversation.

“Does your sister have a 5.0 GPA,” she says.

Jordan laughs. “How do you get a 5.0 GPA? No one has that.”

“Then no. She’s nothing like me,” Lydia says flatly.

John nearly choking on his wine, Stiles’ fingernails dig into the table, and Jackson does a poor job trying to suppress a laugh. The rest of the table is silent at Lydia’s disrespectful comment. Until—

“Main course,” Derek says. “Stiles. The main course.” Stiles’ attention moves from Lydia to his husband. “Main course. What is it?”

“Oh, uh, mushroom risotto.”

“Oh, God, really,” John moans. “There’s no meat during this meal?”

“No. Doctor’s orders. With a day-by-day meal plan for the next 7 months made by your favorite banshee,” Stiles tells his father. “Speaking of whom, Lydia, would you mind helping me in the kitchen with the main course?”

“Nope,” she says, shaking her head slightly as she continues playing on her phone.

“I’d like it if you did,” Stiles insist with a forced smile.

“And I’d like not to, Stiles,” she replies with the same forced smile.

Derek leans in close to her, “Lydia. Your Alpha asked you to do something. Do it. Now.” His eyes flash red at her. She can be impolite and discourteous to Jordan all she wants, but she will not be so with his mate, her Alpha.

Compelled, for numerous reasons, Lydia angrily breaks from the table and stomps toward the house. Stiles follows behind her.

Stiles slams the patio doors shut behind him!

“You are ruining this, Stiles,” she snaps at him with a harsh whisper.

“Because you need to knock it the fuck off, Red Queen,” he whispers back angrily. “Lydia. Don’t do this to him. It’s not going to go the way you want it to.”

“I’m not hurting him, Stiles. I’m testing him.”

“My point exactly. Don’t. Stop. Right now.”

“It doesn’t matter anyway. He’s my mate; we’re bonded to one another regardless. I just want to see how far it goes.”
“And you don’t see anything wrong with that?”

“It’s just a challenge I’m asking him to rise above.”

“First, he’s unaware of your ‘asking’. Second, he doesn’t need to be ‘challenged’, Lydia. You don’t need to do this with every guy. Especially him.”

“You’re making this a bigger deal than it needs to be.”

“Maybe that’s because you just insulted me in front of out pack. In front of two Alphas and your own Alpha.”

“I know,” she nearly squeals, giddy. “I needed him to see that I can show respect and submission, but be dominant and rebellious as well.”

“You looked sullen and disobedient. Like a teenager.”

“Shit. Was it too much,” she asked worried. “I’ll make it up by being compliant during the rest of the meal.” Lydia grabs the two bowls of risotto. Before Stiles can respond, she’s out the door.

“Fuck. I need a drink.” He places the side dishes and bread on a large tray, and heads back outside.

Stiles places the food at the center of the table, then takes his seat. Theo leans in and whispers, “Is everything alright?”

“You think Derek would be okay with me taking a quick sip of your wine?”

“I think my own son would kill me, here, at this table, if that happened. That bad, huh?”

“She might as well poison his food with wolfsbane. This is a disaster.” Stiles downs the rest of his mineral water, wishing it were vodka.

“So you’ve only been a wolf for almost ten years, Jordan,” Danny asks. Jordan nods. “That’s funny. So has everyone else.”

“Really? You guys seem to have such a handle on being wolves, it’s like you’re born ones,” Jordan says.

“Strong pack makes strong wolves,” Isaac gloats, like it’s a motto on the Hale family crest. He and Erica hi-five across the table anyway.

“I still have a hard time with some things some times,” Jordan says.


“Yeah. Sometimes.”

“Your Alpha didn’t teach you control,” Allison asks curiously.

“I don’t really have an Alpha. My step-father is a beta wolf, and not a born one either.”

“Then who bit you,” Lydia finally chimes into the conversation, unable to help but be curious.

“I don’t know. A rouge wolf or something.”

“There’s no such thing as a rogue Alpha. Rouge Omega, but not a rouge Alpha. Only Alphas can
He shrugs. Not really knowing what to say to her. That’s what happened to him. He can’t explain
the logistics of pack dynamics and werewolf culture to her any further than what’s happened to him
in his own experience, despite it being out of the norm.

Frustrated and disappointed by his response, Lydia rolls her eyes at him and picks her phone back
up. Derek snatches it from her nimble fingers and puts it in his pocket. Lydia pouts.

“Well, if you need help learning control, I’m sure Derek and Boyd can teach you,” John tells the
doctor. Derek and Boyd nod, glad to help him if need be.

“Hey, my control is pretty good, too” Scott pipes up.

“And who exactly did you learn it from,” Jackson says sarcastically. Scott doesn’t answer. He
learned it from Derek, just like the rest of them had. Boyd picked it up much easier and helped
Derek with the other betas.

“Were all of you turned by Derek,” Jordan asks.

Scott, Boyd, Erica, Isaac, and Jackson all nod.

“And you two don’t want to be turned,” Jordan asks, looking at Allison and Danny. They shake
their heads. Nah. They’re happy being squishy humans. “What about you, Stiles?”

“The prospect of me being wolf has come up,” he says, eyes on Derek, “but for now I’m good
being plain, ol’ human Stiles.”

“I liked being human, too. But being a wolf is pretty amazing as well,” Jordan says with a smile.
He looks at Lydia, “What about you, Lydia? Any desires to become a wolf?”

“Would you prefer me as a wolf,” she says with a raised eyebrow.

“No. That’s not what I said. Or meant.”

“I’m fine as I am. Banshee and all.”

“Good. I’d hate for you to feel uncomfortable in your own skin,” he says, taking a sip of his glass
of wine. There’s something condescending beneath the surface of his comment. She just doesn’t
know what. Or why it sounds that way…

The topic of conversation over dessert shifts to everyone’s favorite subject at the moment—Stiles’
pregnancy; but Lydia can’t seem to concentrate, too focused on Jordan and the easy way he’s
managed to slip into the pack. Her pack. Like he’s been there all along, just on an extended
vacation.

She’s not upset. She in fact loves how seamless it all feels, but she has the overwhelming desire to
test his resolve. All night he’s been so patient and tolerant with her antics, she wants to see how
good he can be. Didn’t he say he had a hard time with ‘control’…?

Lydia slips her shoe off under the table, and slinks down in her chair a bit. Jordan is laughing it up
about something with Danny and Jackson beside him, then turns his attention to Stiles who starts
in on one of his humorous, rambling stories. *Perfect.*
Lydia’s pedicured toes find Jordan’s foot across from her, beneath the table. He blinks rapidly when her soft, bare foot slides up his pant leg, rubbing up and down his femur. His eyes don’t leave Stiles as he nudges her foot away. She grins like the Cheshire Cat. Stiles always called it her ‘Peter grin’.

She keeps at it until her foot is on his knee. He bats her foot away with his hand. She snorts, like that’ll dissuade her… Her foot makes it back on his knee, and slides along his inner thigh, almost touching his—

“LYDIA! STOP,” Jordan barks, slamming his hand atop the table and eliciting a hushed quiet over it! Every wolf at the table stiffens and their eyes turn their appropriate color.

Lydia bolts upright in her seat and tries unsuccessfully to hide her fear. She knows he wouldn’t hurt her. Her fear is for the humiliation she feels.

Jordan takes a deep breath, calming himself… “Derek. Stiles. Can I talk to you two and Lydia privately please,” Jordan asks in an as even and normal tone as he can muster.

Derek and Stiles nod. Derek breaks from the table first. Stiles follows suit. Soon Jordan and Lydia trail after them toward the house.

They walk silently through the house to Derek’s office. Derek closes the door. “This is the only room in the house that’s soundproof.”

“I’d like to apologize for my outburst, first of all. Lydia was attempting to entice me under the table and I felt it was inappropriate.”

Stiles and Derek look to her with disapproving glares. Lydia flushes red, averting her eyes from theirs. Normally, she’d hold her ground and say something sharp and unapologetic about sexual expression and repressed female sexuality, but all she has at the moment is complete embarrassment.

“I came here to ‘declare’ Lydia. She’s my mate, and I’m hers. Of this I have no doubt,” he turns to her, “but what I am clueless about is your behavior today. I don’t understand.”

“I’m… I’m sorry, Jordan,” she says softly. The softest Stiles has ever thought he’d heard her speak.

“You don’t know me. That’s what today was for. Even if it was just for a couple of hours. But please know this about me if you don’t know anything else: I don’t like being played with. Especially when I’m supposed to be offering my heart and soul to someone.”

“I didn’t… I was only trying… Please. It was only to--”

“You were making me jump through hoops. Testing my resolve. That’s not what mates do, Lydia. That’s not what Stiles and Derek do.”

“In all fairness, Derek and I weren’t exactly shining examples for Lydia in the beginning. And neither are her ‘real’ parents,” Stiles says, seeing where this is regrettably headed.

“I understand that. Truly, I do,” he says to Stiles. He looks into the worried, dark green eyes of his mate, “but you’re an adult, Lydia. You should handle things as such. If you’re scared, or confused, or panicked about this between us, then you should have told me. I would have understood. Or at the very least, tried to, but you didn’t give me that chance. Instead, you decided to toy with me. Which I didn’t very much like.”
Tears well in her eyes at having hurt him and being called out on it. On behaving like a teenage girl and upsetting the very person she should be making happy.

“Alpha Hale. Alpha Stilinski-Hale. Thank you. Dinner was lovely. And very good. I appreciate you inviting me into your lovely home. But I’m going to have to excuse myself for the rest of the evening. Without ‘declaring’ Lydia as mine. I’m sorry.”

“What?! Wait?! No! Jordan! Please, wait,” Lydia pleads.

Stiles watches painfully as she continues begging the doctor as he makes his way out the front door and to his car, ignoring her supplications. “Jordan, I’m sorry. Please, wait. I want to talk. I’m sorry.”

“I can’t talk to you. Not right now. Not while I’m angry.”

“Then you don’t have to talk. We don’t have to talk. I won’t say anything!” She tries to climb into his car, but the door’s locked and won’t open it. Lydia smacks the window, begging him, as he starts the car. “Jordan! Please!”

A warm, summer night breeze blows around her in the dark as she watches Jordan’s car pull from the house and down the street. The red backlights disappear around the sharp bend. He’s gone.

She tries to stifle the wrecked sob that breaks from her chest, but she can’t. Her face is wet with tears. Tears she forced herself to cry when she decided to try and make the good doctor play her little games with her and he let her know that he was a more than worthy opponent, just not a player. The same tears Stiles had warned her to avoid three times, and she didn’t listen. She didn’t listen, and lost the love of her life. She’s alone. And forever will be.

Lydia races into the house, past Stiles and Derek waiting in the doorway. They watch, and listen as her heels click against the wood floors toward her room, and the door slams shut.

Derek pulls Stiles close. “Why don’t you--”

“No. Not to tonight. She needs a good cry to help her sleep.”

Derek nods. He doesn’t know if that’s best, but Stiles does. And Stiles knows her better than anyone. “Okay.”

Derek closes the door and locks it with the punch code. He takes Stiles’ hand and leads him further into the house, toward the patio.

Everyone cleans up in silence. No one wanting to speak. Casual words and laughter seem heartless in the face of what just happened. Of hearing Lydia, shuddering with wailing sobs that thunder through wolf ears like her banshee cries. And why not? To her it feels like death.

Scott tries to convince Stiles that as her two best friends, her ‘platonic soulmates’, they should go and comfort her, hold her while she cries, overcome with shame and guilt. Stiles refuses, insisting she be left alone.

Scott feels something bitter in his friend’s tone, in his stern ‘no’ as he dumps spoonfuls of risotto into Tupperware containers. He was like a father that grounded his daughter only to find out she snuck out the house and was calling him from a payphone where she was stranded and left by her friends. Instead of racing to go get her, grateful she was alive and well, he hung up on her, leaving
her to walk all the way home, alone.

Scott wasn’t far off base. Stiles is angry. Angry that his best friend let love slip through her fingers so easily with her taunting and toying, digging under his skin, trying to hit a nerve, instead of peeling off her skin and exposing her vulnerable self. She could know real, true love. Actual romantic love. But she burned herself with her own conceit, and a little part of him hoped she got scars. Scars that she’d have to look at everyday and remind herself that she had something pure in front of her, and lost it all to fear and insecurity. Did she learn nothing from the disaster that he and Derek used to be? Scott and Allison even? The next one they were supposed to get right. She was the one that was supposed to get it right. Maybe Lydia’s tears meant something that night. Maybe she didn’t deserve love after all, he thought.

Stiles sent everyone to bed, then washed and put away the dishes. Normally, he’d pick two of the betas to clean up, but he needed something to occupy himself with in trying to forget the horrific events of the night. He had no such luck. All he could hear in his head was Lydia’s pleas and the clacking of her heels on the floor as she ran into her room, brokenhearted in tears. Her anguished face wouldn’t leave his eyes, no matter how many times he tried to blink it away. Then the anger he felt would resurface, and it would replay all over again in his head.

He knew Scott wouldn’t—couldn’t—leave her alone and so ruined by Jordan. It was in him to comfort and soothe and make better. Scott was a healer, a protector. Stiles couldn’t help the smirk on his face, remembering Scott’s desire to be a veterinarian when they were teens. He never thought a job suited a person as well as that one for Scott. Which is why he wasn’t surprised to see him tapping lightly on Lydia’s door, softly whispering, asking her to let him in, when he shuffled up the stairs finally, the last fork wiped clean and put away. “She’s not crying anymore, but I can’t hear anything but her heartbeat.”

Stiles patted Scott’s shoulder than headed toward the master bedroom silently. He was too tired, and knew Scott wouldn’t bother to listen no matter how authoritative he made his tone.

Derek was up, waiting in bed with a book in his hand— The Woman in White by Wilke Collins.

“The Moonstone is better,” Stiles says, stripping off his clothing.

“Says you,” Derek responds. “Reminded me too much of The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.”

“I wouldn’t fault a book for that,” Stiles counters, putting on his night clothes.

Derek continues reading as Stiles brushes his teeth in the master bathroom. “You check on Lydia?”

Stiles steps into the room, toothbrush and a minty, green foam in his mouth. “What?”

“I asked you if you checked on Lydia.”

“No,” Stiles says harshly before stepping back into the bathroom.

Derek knows his husband well enough to know when to leave well enough alone. When not to tongue an emotional loose tooth. Besides, he pretty aware of why Stiles is so upset, and it’s not his argument to have. He just needs to be there for his husband and his beta when they have it.

Stiles turns out the bathroom light and comes into the bedroom, mouth free of mint-flavored Colgate. He climbs into bed, settling in between the sheets, curling on his side, facing Derek.

Derek bookmarks his novel then places it on the nightstand before turning out the lamp, letting the room go dark. He shifts into the covers and pulls Stiles close to him. Stiles head rest on Derek’s
bare chest, listening to his heartbeat. “The size of a raspberry, huh,” Derek says with a smile.

“At the moment,” Stiles groans. “A few weeks from now and I’ll be as big as a house. Peter’s right, I’m going to get so damn fat.”

“Please tell me he didn’t say that to you.”

“Not like it’s a lie, Derek. Two babies! At once! That equals super fat!”

Derek squeezes Stiles tighter, hearing the worry and insecurity in his mate’s voice. “And you’ll still be the sexiest man I’d ever laid eyes on.”

“…Yeah?”

“Yeah.” Derek kisses each fingertip on Stiles’ right hand. Stiles yawns. “Go to sleep.”

Stiles nods. “Good idea.” Stiles leans up and pecks Derek’s lips. “I love you.” He turns over, facing away from Derek, his aching back feeling better when he’s on his right side.

“I love you, too.”

It always takes a minute or two for Stiles’ brain to wind down and drift off to sleep. Even when he’s dog-tired. However, just as the darkness begins to seep through eyelids, a small, quick thought explodes into his head and makes him bolt upright with a gasp!

“What is it, Stiles? You okay,” Derek says, looking concerned at his boy.

“Erica’s birthday is next week.”

“Shit,” Derek says with a groan.

Chapter End Notes

I fix everything very soon. PROMISE! :)
August (d)

Chapter Summary

Lydia attempts to fix things with Jordan as Stiles approaches his ninth week of pregnancy with Erica's birthday looming.

Chapter Notes

SOULMATE/MATE RULES OF SUBMISSION

In a relationship between a Human and a Were, the Human will always submit to the Were
In a relationship between a Beta and an Alpha, the Beta would submit to the Alpha
In a relationship, between a bitten wolf and a born wolf, the bitten wolf would submit to the born-wolf
In a relationship, between two Betas, the youngest beta would submit to the elder beta
In a relationship, with two Alphas, the youngest would submit to the elder
In a relationship, with two bitten wolves, the youngest wolf would submit to the elder
In a relationship, with two born wolves, the youngest wolf, would submit to the elder

*Omegas will not have a mate until they have integrated into a healthy pack

Eight years ago, everyone—except Boyd—forgot Erica’s 21st birthday. Seven years ago, they did it again. And since then, Erica has made it her mission to make sure the pack never forgets her birthday ever again by always throwing an extravagant theme party. Last year it was an 80’s theme party. The year before that—a luau. And the year before that it was a Pajama party. For the last 6 years, Erica’s birthday ‘spectacular’ has been held at Derek and Stiles’ house as a full-on catered event and nearly 100 to 200 people in attendance, with Stiles and Erica (well-deservedly) winning best costumes every single year. Needless to say, Erica took her birthday very seriously, and gave hell to anyone who didn’t.

Erica wasn’t the best at planning such large events, and always let Lydia, Cora, and Danny take over the messy details after telling them that year’s theme and dumping banded bills in their hands for anything that needed paying for (Derek always took the money and gave it back to her, paying for the party himself. He never thought it right for someone to pay for their own birthday fun).

But this year was different, more complicated. Stiles was pregnant, Lydia was devastated over her soulmate walking out on her, and the FBI was starting a fresh new case against them. She’d understand, wouldn’t she…?

“This house is starting to get depressing. Thank God for my birthday next week,” Erica says at breakfast. Everyone is spread out within the kitchen and adjoining family room. Stiles’ father and Melissa are amongst the rest of the pack having breakfast. Talia and Theo left for a prior
engagement…which was brunch with Jordan’s parents (awkward!).

They all exchange nervous glances with each other as Erica stabs at her waffles, then shoves them in her mouth.

“Um, Erica,” Derek starts cautiously. He’s sitting beside Boyd and Jackson…who quickly leave his side, fearful of Erica’s ensuing tirade when he’s done saying what they think he’s going to say. “It’s so ‘gloomy’ around here, because, uh, there’s so much to worry about, at the, uh, moment. Don’t you think?”

“Yeah. The only good thing happening right now is my kick ass party. Right, Cora,” she says excitedly.

Cora nods with the biggest, fake smile, trying to tamper down her nerves.

“Oh! And the babies! Not that my party is more important than them, but they can’t get everyone drunk and laid like a giant birthday party can.” She shoves her last piece of waffle in her mouth and turns to Cora, sitting beside Danny, “Planning going good, you two?”

Cora and Danny nod with reassuring smiles.

“Awesome. I’m going to shower.” Erica dumps her plate in the sink and disappears from the kitchen to the bathroom.

Stiles immediately turns to Cora and Danny, “What’s her theme this year?”

“Oh, it’s a black and white ball,” Cora answers, remembering.

“That’s it. That’s pretty simple. You send out invites or find a venue at least,” Stiles asks. They shake their heads. “Then get the hell out of my kitchen and go do that.”

Cora and Danny bolt from the room just as Scott comes into the kitchen with a tray of untouched food. Stiles glances at it quickly, then turns back to his own plate. He can feel the harsh glare Scott bores into him as he sets the tray down on the island.

The room quiets. Every can feel the tension between the Alpha-mate and his best friend. Even Derek doesn’t think it’s a good idea to do anything rash. Like speak. Or move.

Finally, having enough of it, Stiles angrily tosses his fork onto his plate and meets Scott’s eyes, glare for glare. And that’s all that’s needed to clear the room out.

They’ve been friends for 22 years. Stiles can count on one hand the number of times they’ve had an all-out argument. They always managed to resolve it, obviously, but it still doesn’t mean Stiles doesn’t get a little queasy at the thought of fighting with the one person he gets along with so famously. Or maybe that’s just his ‘morning sickness’. Either way, he’s not looking forward to how this will all make him feel in the end. “What do you want from me, Scott?”

“To stop punishing her and help me take care of our friend. Your beta.”

“It’s been only a day. I’ll worry if it turns into three.”

“Are you serious? Is that what you told Derek about Allison when you made me come back home for probation?”

“So, not the same, Scott!”
“Yes, it is! She misses her mate! She needs him!”

“Then she should have thought of that before she ran him off with her bullshit!”

“That’s just how she is! You know that!”

“It’s not ‘how she is’, Scott! It’s the mask she wears! And you know that! She was playing with him, he got wise, and told her to ‘fuck off’!”

“And we should be there to comfort her!”

“Why?! That doesn’t let her know she was wrong and she needs to change!” He steps closer to Scott, arms folded across his chest, an unconscious move he’s picked up from Derek. “She’s going to end up alone if she doesn’t, Scott. I don’t want that for her. For anybody. I want her to know love, like we do, like the two of us. She had that chance and she blew it. Maybe not for good, but she didn’t exactly make a good first impression on the man she’s supposed to spend the rest of her life with. So, I’m not going to hold her while she cries and try and coax her into eating with soothing words and petting her hair. That’s not what she needs, Scott. Lydia always gets what she wants. She has to start getting what she needs now,” he says, uncrossing his arms, making himself appear less aggressive and more receiving to his friend.

Scott shuffles on his feet a bit, looking weary; trying to decide if Stiles is right or not. He is, and he knows he is, but the angelic puppy inside him wants to fight against his friend’s plan of ‘abandonment’. “She should still be eating,” he says.

“I agree. But did you eat when you and Allison broke up?” Scott sighs. Stiles knows he didn’t eat for days on end. His wolf actual took over and he found himself stumbling naked toward Stiles and Derek’s around dawn with animal blood in his mouth. “Short of force feeding her—which I do not recommend—she’s not going to either. And despite how pristine and perfect our darling Lydia typically is, she probably hasn’t bathed as well. Don’t frown. Neither did you. Or me.”

Scott snorts. True story.

July 2016

Derek opens the door. Stiles is on the other side. “Hi.”

“…Hi.”

“…Can I come in?”

He hasn’t seen Stiles in almost two months, and every day, every minute, he hadn’t, felt like painful, tiny cuts on tender skin. He nods, stepping aside to let Stiles pass the threshold. Stiles takes the invitation and Derek closes the door.

The stand in awkward silence… Their wants bumping up against their needs and what’s the right thing to do. He wants to push him against the door and mouth at his neck, leaving the biggest, most obnoxious bruise. He wants to drag his fangs across Stiles beating heart and lick his way down until his tongue taste nothing but sweat and precum. There’s a million and one other things he wants, but they’re not the right things. At least not now. Not after they broke an innocent girl’s heart with lies and wants.
“I didn’t know if it was a good idea to come see you, but… I don’t know. I just… really needed to… for some reason. That sounds fucking horrible.”

“What does?”

“Telling you I’ve been at home, counting down the hours to when it’d be appropriate to see you over the last two months. I still don’t know if it is. I mean, when is it the right time to hang out with the man you cheated on your girlfriend with, who also happens to be her cousin?”

“You didn’t cheat on Malia, Stiles.”

Stiles looks at him incredulously. “She may not have caught us naked, in a hotel room, but she did see us kissing. That’s enough. I wouldn’t want to see you kiss anyone else… if the shoe were on the other foot. So, you can’t try and make me feel… easy, about any of this.”

“We didn’t mean to hurt her.”

“But we did. Facts are facts.” Stiles plays with the hem of his flannel shirt, then runs his hand through his hair, and Derek wants. He wants so bad. He wants so bad he knows Stiles can feel it. Can smell it perfuming off his body and filling the apartment with the scent of fresh mint. “She asked me if I had feelings for you… I said I didn’t know.”

“Is that true?”

“Yes. I don’t know how I feel about you, Derek. I know I am unabashedly and absurdly attracted to you. You have no idea—

“I think I have a clue,” he says gruffly.

Stiles can no doubt hear the unmistakable arousal in his voice. He takes a confident step toward him. “Tell me then.”

It hits Derek like a hammer to the head. That smell. Stiles’ smell. His provocation seeping off his skin and wafting around them like a windstorm. He takes a deep breath, an inhale of the peppermint aroma circling him and making his knees weak; Stiles is like a giant candy cane he desperately has to lick. His fangs want to drop and claws snap out; his wolf is in need, panting and growling.

Stiles unconsciously licks his lips and Derek’s hands fly up onto his shoulders, spinning him around, pressing his back hard against the door! Derek’s eyes turn to rubies and his fangs fall.

“Scott was a mistake. I was trying to bite you. I could smell you in the woods that night, and wanted to make you mine.”

Stiles lets out a shaky breath. Derek has him pushed against the door, crowding him, so close Stiles can see the little gold flecks in Derek’s green eyes. “…He was wearing my coat. I forgot his and I had another one in my jeep and let him wear it.” Stiles watches Derek’s eyes dart over his face and his ears point a little at the tips, listening to his frantic, but truthful heartbeat. He could almost hear Derek’s thoughts: Scott smelled like him because of the coat. The wrong boy. I bit the wrong boy. Stiles could be mine. I’d have him. He’d be my little wolf…

Stiles moves a tentative hand up toward Derek’s quizzical face. He softly cups the wolf’s face, and then runs his thumb, smoothly, along his lips. Stiles gently parts Derek’s lips with his thumb, forcing Derek to open his mouth a bit wider.

Derek’s on fire, losing his breath as he keens at the fascinated look on the boy’s face as he traces
his fangs with his thumb. There’s not a hint of fear or worry wafting from him. Nothing but desire and attraction at the wolf’s canines and blood-colored eyes; he’s not afraid of Derek’s wolf, he’s turned on by him. Which does nothing short of cause burning heat to travel throughout Derek’s body. He’s always been able to detect a bit of hesitation from a lover, even Kate, but Stiles wants the wolf. Badly. Derek is choking on the smell of it pouring off Stiles’ body.

He snatches Stiles’ hand and pulls him close to him and captures his mouth in a raw, unforgiving kiss. Stiles gives back just as much as Derek puts in, grabbing a handful of jet black hair and grinding his erection against Derek’s own swollen cock.

They kiss their way to the sofa, knocking over everything in their path, breaking a lamp and kicking dirt along the wooden floor, when they tip over the ‘housewarming’ fern Laura gave Derek.

They land in an armchair, Stiles in Derek’s lap, facing him, desperate to take Derek’s shirt off. Derek takes it off himself, Stiles tumbling through it, too hot and panting to remember how to remove clothing. Derek gets his hands under Stiles’ shirt as Stiles presses their lips together hard and rough, his fingers digging deep in Derek’s shoulder, leaving fingerprint bruises that’ll disappear like melting snow when his hold on the wolf finds another piece of him to grasp on to.

Derek whips Stiles’ flannel off his body—

The door flies open and a primal growl bounces off the walls at the two men! Derek, without thinking, grabs Stiles and puts him behind him as he shifts into his beta form at the intruder!

“Malia,” Stiles says, shocked, protected by a shirtless Derek.

She crouches down low, ready to attack. Derek shifts back into his human form. “Malia. Don’t. Please.”

“He’s mine,” she snarls, then leaps from the floor at Derek!

It was Erica’s turn to do the dishes after dinner, but Stiles was feeling restless and sent her to bed with the rest of the pack after they watched The Shining (Isaac’s movie pick).

He didn’t realize just how restless he was until he found himself reorganizing the pots and pans in the cabinets at nearly two in the morning.

Then he remembered why he felt so itchy and mobile under his skin: Lydia, sleep-deprived, pale, and distraught made her way into the kitchen with a quiet hesitation. She was still wearing the purple cocktail dress from that night. Her lush red hair looked stringy and lifeless, dangling from her head like leaves on a willow tree. Her eyes were bloodshot from all the tears she shed, with dark rings and bags beneath them. Her pink lips were white and chapped, and her nose red and sore from blowing it into too many tissues.

She swayed back and forth on her bare feet like a drunk, and her eyes were half-lidded, like the harsh kitchen light was too much for her to bear.

Four days. This is what happens to Lydia Martin after only four days of no sleep, no food, no contact. Stiles hasn’t seen her. No one had. She wouldn’t let anyone into the room, and no one dared to barge in. They only knew she was alive by the sounds of her sobbing wails periodically throughout the day. Occasionally, Scott would lean against her door with his ear pressed against it, listening for anything but the cries her heard her make all day and night.
“Can I have something to eat,” she says, her voice low and hoarse.

He nods to the empty chairs at the counter. Lydia shuffles over, a little off balance as she stumbles into a seat. Stiles sets down the steel, stock pot in his hand and walks to the fridge. He takes out a carton of orange juice and pours her a glass. He places it down in front of her. “Drink that first.”

Lydia picks up the glass with a shaky hand, bringing it to her lips and drinking as though she’s been on a desert island for 15 years without a drop of water. She wipes her chin with the back of her hand as Stiles takes a plate of baked lemon chicken out of the fridge. He takes the Saran wrap off and places it in the microwave. “Scott’s been hording you a plate every night.”

She nods with a far-off, spacey look on her face, as though she heard him, but distantly.

They’re quiet. The only sound being the hum of the microwave and the tiny beeps it makes as it ticks down the seconds until ready…

The machine makes a loud, obnoxious beeping, signaling it’s finished. Stiles grabs a pot holder and removes the plate from the microwave, putting it down in front of her. He then grabs a knife and fork from a drawer and hands them to her. She takes them gingerly. “Thank you,” she says. Stiles nods. He watches as she hungrily cuts into the chicken breast and eats.

Stiles breaks from his spot, leaning against the counter to pour her another glass of orange juice. “Slow down so you don’t choke.” She nods, gulping down the drink, holding the cup for dear life with both hands.

She takes a deep breath, finishing her drink. Her mouth and chin wet with orange juice again. She puts the glass down carefully. “Thank you.”

Stiles leans against the counter, arms folded across his chest, eyes on the floor. He nods.

“You’ll be 9 weeks at the end of the week,” she says with a fragile smile.

“Which Stiles do you want, Lydia? Hold-You-While-You-Cry-Stiles, or No-Holds-Bar-Stiles?”

“If I wanted Hold-Me-While-I-Cry-Stiles, I would have gone to Scott.”

Permission granted. He doesn’t hesitate, “Why, Lydia?! I told you not to! I told you not to play with him! That you didn’t need to because he’s your soulmate and you’re his mate! You don’t need to put him through the ringer like that! There’s no test for him! He’s already won by being connected to your very fucking soul!”

“I just… I wanted to know if it was true. Real. I needed conformation.”

“On what exactly?! How to fuck up meeting the very person you’re to spend eternity with?!”

“No! If mates were real. If what I felt was real. And if I pushed at him, if I made him ‘work’ for me, would he. Would he be mine no matter what?”

“Yes! Yes. That is the very definition of a soulmate, Lyds! He is connected to you and no one else on this planet! And you fucked it by being scared! The bravest girl I know let fear get in the way of her own happiness! That’s what pisses me off, Lydia!”

“Well, I am so sorry that brave-face Lydia didn’t meet you expectations, Stiles,” she snaps back.

“Oh, don’t give me that! No one puts pressure on you, like you put pressure on you! You were
testing Jordan because you were scared and wanted to know how ugly and horrible you could be as a person and he’d still hold on to you. All because of your parents and their shit marriage.”

Lydia is taken aback by Stiles’ discovery of the core of her fear. He knows her better than anyone, but some things she thought she hid well enough for no one to find.

“I get it, Lydia. I get being scared of turning into your boozy mother and adulterous father, I do. I really do. But what you did to Jordan wasn’t fair. You should have just told him what you were feeling; he’s yours, he would have understood. He would have told you, confirmed, that you two will be different because you were meant to be together. You’re not going to be your lush mother, and he’s not going to be your cheating father. He won’t hurt you, Lydia. He can’t. It’ll kill him if he did.”

Lydia cries, sobbing into her hand. Stiles takes her hand from her mouth and turns her tear-soaked face toward him, “I want everyone in this house, in this pack, to get everything they need and want. And it infuriated me that you had the beginning of that in front of you, and you still pushed it away. I want you happy, Lydia. I want you so stupidly happy that you shit rainbows and burp bubbles and sing Disney songs all day long.” She can’t help but laugh. Only Stiles could be so heartfelt and so asinine at the same time. “I wanted you to learn from where I fucked up with Derek.”

“But you’re together. You’re happy. You’re having his babies.”

“But I spent the first three years without him, miserable, because I was scared. I’d love to have all 1,095 of those days back where I wasn’t being a coward. That’s how much I love him, and how much guilt I have for what I put him through; I want to still fix something that doesn’t matter now. That is the very definition of regret. I didn’t want that for you, Lydia. I wanted you to be smarter than me; you always are.”

Lydia pulls Stiles close, burying her face in his shoulder, bawling her eyes out. She’s been right. All these years, she’s held such a not-so-secret place in her heart for two special people, and it’s in these moments that she remembers why it’s Stiles and Scott that are so singular, and so justifiable in her favoritism.

“Hey.” They turn to Scott standing in the entrance in his boxers and an old Beacon Hills Lacrosse T-shirt. “Is this a Stydia only hug?”

Lydia pulls from Stiles to give Scott a crushing hug.

“I love you, Lyddie. We love you. We don’t like when you’re not happy,” Scott says. He pulls back a bit to wipe her tears away with the back of his hand.

“I love you, too.”

“He’s not done with you, you know? That’s not how mates work. It’ll keep gnawing at him until he sees you again. He’s probably losing his mind right now.”

“I can’t face him after how I acted.”

“Just apologize and tell him the truth, and how you feel.”

“What if he can’t forgive me?”

“He’ll forgive you if you’re honest with him. He’s your soulmate. You belong to each other. Go see him. It might not fix everything, but it’ll make it a little better. I promise.”
The corner of Stiles’ mouth turns up at his sappy, romantic friend. Scott’s right, but he’s so full of corny, cheesy dialogue it’s like being trapped in chick lit.

“Lydia,” Stiles addresses. “Put on your big girl panties and go to him. He can no more live without you anymore than you can live without him.”

She’s never in her life thus far had to do this. Had to plead for forgiveness. Had to bow her head in shame and eat crow. She’s made so sure that’s never the one at fault, to make mistakes. Even when she forced others to play her games. She set the rules, so she was always the victor. Yet, in this one, the one she tried to push her soulmate into, she was dragged off the field, defeated and hurt. She lost. Just by playing.

She had to do this. Had to fix what she wronged. Not for the sake of pride, but love. Something else she wasn’t all too familiar with—fighting for her heart. Mainly because she never let men have it before. She only made them think they were in possession of it; that they won it after she had toyed with them and they came out the other side unscathed and ‘victorious’. Such silly boys… But now she’s the silly girl.

She nods. “Okay. Okay… I can talk to Jordan. I can apologize, and tell him the truth.”

Scott smiles, big and wide and proud. He plants a big, sweet kiss on her cheek. Lydia’s eyes turn light, a hint of color pinks through her pale skin as she smiles back at the wolf.

She turns to her other ‘platonic soulmate’. “Are you tired?”

Stiles shakes his head. “No.”

“Will you stay up with us and watch a really bad, horror movie while I polish off the rest of that lemon chicken?”

Stiles smiles. “Yes.”

Lydia extends her hand. Stiles grabs her half-eaten plate of lemon chicken with his right hand and takes Lydia’s into his left. She takes Scott’s hand into her own left as they approach the adjoining family room.

“Oh, my God. This reminds me of that Halloween we went as The Wizard of Oz, and Jackson was the Tin Man.”

“You mean Halloween ten years ago when Derek bit you,” Stiles says sarcastically.

“Best Halloween ever,” Scott smiles.

Stiles and Lydia groan, suggesting otherwise…

Stiles and Scott are knocked out on the sectional… That is until Stiles wakes up with a tidal wave of nausea hitting him. He practically flies from the family room into the kitchen and retches into the sink…again!

Scott is still passed out, asleep, on the sofa, mouth hanging open and drooling.

Derek races into the kitchen—having sensed Stiles’ condition—and makes a beeline for him. He rubs Stiles’ back in soft circles as he spews the last of the bile from his stomach. “Our children hate
me already,” Stiles groans.

“They do not. You’re still in your first trimester, that’s all,” Derek says, grabbing a bottle of ginger ale from the fridge. He twists the cap off and hands it to Stiles.

“Oh, my God. There’s bits of chicken and lemon in it,” Stiles says with a grimace.

“Stop looking at your puke and go sit and drink that please. I’ll clean it up.” Derek kisses Stiles forehead and points him back in the direction of the sofa. “I’ll take you upstairs when I’m done.”

“You can’t. I have to make breakfast.”

“You can’t make breakfast after you just puked in the sink. Uh, Allison and Danny can make breakfast.”

“It’s not their turn; they made breakfast the last time I got sick. It’s Scott and Jackson’s turn.”

“Awe, we’re going to starve.”

“Scott can make breakfast. Jackson can…wash up afterward.” Stiles lies back down on the sofa beside Scott.

“You might want to wake him up then.”

“Where’s Lydia,” Stiles asks.

Just then, a freshly showered and livelier-looking Lydia Martin enters the room. Her hair is combed and in a simple ponytail, there’s perfectly applied make up on her peaches and cream face, and her outfit is a simple, white sundress that looks radiant on her. She takes a deep breath and announces, “I’m going to Dr. Parrish’s office. I don’t know when I’ll be back, so please don’t hold dinner for me.” She pecks Stiles, a still sleeping Scott, and Derek before proudly walking out of the room.

Stiles listens to Lydia’s sandals clip against the hardwood floors as she approaches the front door. He hears it open, then close. “What’s her heart sound like?”

“What do you think it sounds like? ‘Panic’, ‘fearful’--”

“But not a lie, right?”

Derek approaches his worried husband. He places a kiss on his forehead. “She wasn’t lying. She’s really going to go see him.”

“Okay,” Stiles says, looking very nervous.

“She’s still sitting in her car if you want to run and give her a few words of encouragement.”

“No. This is Lydia’s…thing. She has to do this…eventually…when she puts her car in reverse and drives down the road…which is hopefully now.”

“It is now,” Derek says, hearing her thumping heartbeat grow evermore distant as she backs out of the garage and from the house.

“Oh, thank, God,” Stiles says relived. “You can take me upstairs now. I’m fucking exhausted.”

“Scott,” Derek barks in his best Alpha voice.
Scott jerks awake, wiping the drool from his mouth with the back of his hand. “W-What?”

“You need to make breakfast. Stiles doesn’t feel well.”

“I guarantee my cooking isn’t going to make him feel better.”

“I’ll make him something to eat. You make breakfast for the rest of the pack. And clean the rest of that puke out of the sink.”

“Oh, man,” Scott groans.

Stiles smirks at his annoyed best friend as Derek sweeps him into his arms in a bridal carry at out of the room.

Lydia leans her head against the center of the steering wheel, hands gripping the handle for dear life, begging God, Yaweh, Buddha, Allah, Santa Claus, or werewolf-Jesus-- anyone to make her brave enough to climb out of the car. Which is absurd, given she’s been an atheist since she was ten years old.

“You can do this. You don’t have to call Stiles and Scott. You’re a big girl, Lydia,” she pep talks herself. “You don’t need ‘mommy’ and ‘daddy’. Scott will just placate to your fears and tell you to come home…whereas Stiles will kill you, and no one will ever find your body.”

She lifts her head and glances back at the front door. She takes a deep, calming breath…then another…then another…then counts slowly to ten.

She opens the door and gets out.

One foot in front of the other as she makes determined steps to Jordan’s front door. Another deep breath and she raises her hand to knock— Jordan opens the door, her fist suspended in mid-air.

“…I heard your heartbeat.”

She puts down her hand, realizing her fist is still held proudly in the air. “…You can hear my heartbeat?”

“Loudest thing I’ve ever heard,” he smiles.

“Am I bothering you?”

“It’s Sunday. I don’t have patients.”

“Oh. Okay. Good.” She nods. She stands awkwardly, rolling on her feet, trying to look anywhere that isn’t Jordan’s bright eyes.

“Would you like to come in, Lydia?”

“Yes. Please.”

Jordan steps aside, letting her in. Lydia enters, taking in the sharp foyer with the dazzling, white walls.

“Can I get you something to drink?”
“No, I, uh… I just wanted to talk…for a minute. If that’s alright?”

“That’s fine.” He leads her to the living room. She takes a seat. He sits beside her, at the other end of the sofa. “Are you sure you don’t want anything to--”

“I’m sorry,” she blurts out. “I’m sorry for the way I acted. It was immature and pathetic, and you had every right to respond the way you did. My behavior was really unbecoming of a mate. And I just wanted you to know that’s not who I am. That’s not how I normally am. I’m sorry if I gave you a damaging impression of me.”

He smiles.

“What?”

“Your apology sounds like a professor you’re apologizing to for turning in your thesis late.”

“Oh, my God. I can’t even apologize right. I’m going to go.” She breaks from the sofa, but Jordan grabs hold of her arm, pulled her back down.

He turns his grasp on her wrist into a tender hold of her hand. “Your apology was fine, Lydia. I just meant that I can tell you don’t do it that often.”

“I don’t. It’s been replaying in my head for days, all the apologies I owe to people I didn’t think deserved them.”

“You’re not a horrible person, Lydia. Far from it. I see so much love in you…but I see an equal amount of fear, too.”

“How? You don’t know me. You met me for a day, and I was horrible.”

“You’re my mate. I've known you for a lifetime. And in this one, you’re scared a lot of the time, and keep romance at arms length. I’d much rather you told me why than sit here chastising yourself over that night.”

She looks at him. There’s a pleading in his eyes, and the hint of something else. Something…hopeful. As though, all she needs to do is unleash her burdens and he’ll make them all go away. He’ll make it his mission to ease her fears and always let her know he’s there for her, no matter what. She sees that, all of it, in his light eyes, and feels it in the gentle hold of her hand. He’s her soulmate, and this is what he’s here for. What he does.

“Stiles is right. My parents are awful. Good people, but just horrible to each other. They’ve spent the last 30 years blaming one another for their regrets and missteps, and battling against each other for control. And the only reason they’re still together is just so they can continue to hurt one another. Divorce would be too simple. Too clean. Hate feeds, and doesn’t allow you to forget. That’s easier for them.”

“I’m sorry. That must have been horrible to grow up in the middle of.”

“I got used to it, but my brother and sister… I was more worried for them… But then I left them. I went to school and left them to deal with everything all by their selves. Derek made me apart of his pack and I just abandoned them. No wonder they don’t talk to me anymore,” she says with a tight smile, tears forming in her eyes.

“Doesn’t mean you shouldn’t keep trying to reach out to them.”
“I think my brother’s exact words were: ‘Stop trying, Lydia. I’ve got nothing to say to you.’ I can’t exactly be too upset with him. I’m the one that keep drilling it into his head to always be ruthless, and never allow people to let you down.”

“I don’t intend on turning us into your parents, Lydia. I don’t know their history, so I don’t know why they’re so horrible to one another. What I do know, is that they’re not mates. Not if they treat each other like that. I will never hurt you like that. Ever. That’s a guarantee...if you can stop playing games with me. There’s no need. I’m already here for you. I’m already yours.”

She kisses him, taking him by surprise. He gives in a little, and Lydia immediately deepens the kiss, sliding her tongue into his mouth.

Jordan’s wolf howls at Lydia’s eagerness and his hands find their way into her red locks and tilt her head back, letting him take control. They move in an unspoken rhythm as Lydia climbs into his lap, matching his passion with her own. Her skin’s on fire and she never wants to stop. She takes his hand and moves it to her breast.

Jordan quickly breaks their kiss. “We have to stop.” He slides her off his lap, looking full of regret. And want.

“What? Why?”

“Because my wolf will tear you apart otherwise.”

Lydia holds back a moan. The idea of Jordan losing control on her makes her want to pant. And she knows he can smell it on her, making her desire even worse.

“I have to ‘declare’ you first anyway.”

“That sounds like boring, old tradition to me,” she says, rubbing his thigh, her pinky grazing his erection.

He captures her hand. “I want to. Christ, I want to, Lydia, but it’s not just tradition. It needs to be done that way. Didn’t Stiles and Derek do it that way?”

“No. They kind of had a rocky start...that lasted 3 years.”

“And I’m sure Theo and Talia were none to happy about that when they finally were ready to ‘declare’ themselves mates.”

“I wasn’t there, but Stiles said their parents gave them so much hell that Stiles thinks he’s still grounded.”

Jordan laughs. Lydia can’t help but smile. He’s got a great, friendly smile, that reaches all the way to his eyes and makes his boyish looks appear even more innocent. She runs a gentle hand along his face, eyes looking at him. Really looking at him.

He takes her hand and kisses it, then bends to bury his face in her neck. Lydia closes her eyes as Jordan smells her scent and nuzzles her. Stiles told her numerous times that ‘nuzzling’ feels good, and can be either endearing, or completely hot. Or both. She brushed him off each time, calling it “something 7th graders do, like hiccups and dry humping.” She’d have to tell him when she gets home how wrong she’s been all these years.

Jordan pulls back to capture her lips in a chaste kiss, and Lydia crumbles in his hands. The weight of what he means to her, and what he is to her life now, makes her feel light enough to let go, and
his kiss allows her to turn into broken pieces of her former self, leaving behind a dust that’s picked up in the wind and carried off elsewhere. That was just a shell. She’s new now. He’s made her new. “I know you said we have to stop, but does that mean I have to leave?”

“I don’t know if I can handle you in my presence at the moment.”

“What if we distracted ourselves?”

“With what? I’ve got puzzles, a few games, but their more party games…”

“Oh! I know! We can make lunch, then dinner and I can work on a few things and you can help me. Do you have a laptop?”

“Of course. What are you going to work on?”

“I have to take over Erica’s birthday from a bunch of amateurs. And I have to plan a few things for Stiles and the twins. By the way, we’ll probably need to have a good talk about him. And my other best friend, Scott. Just so there’s no jealousy issues in the future. I know how wolves can be.”

“Perfect. Gives us the opportunity to talk about Freya.”

“Who’s Freya?”

“My version of Stiles and Scott.”

February 2017

STILES: Happy Valentine’s Day, Sourwolf!

…

…

STILES: I sent you flowers. Did you get them?

…

STILES: Derek, come on. Please talk to me. Or text me rather.

…

DEREK: What do you want me to say to you, Stiles?

STILES: Did you get the flowers?

DEREK: Yes.

STILES: And the candy?

DEREK: Yes.

STILES: And the giant stuffed wolf? I thought that was funny. Lol

DEREK: Yes. I got it. ALL of it.

STILES: Did you like them?

…

DEREK: Yes.

STILES: …Are you at home?

DEREK: You can’t come over. It’s not a good idea.
STILES: Do you have someone else over there?
DEREK: No.
STILES: Then why can’t I come over…?
DEREK: I thought you just wanted us to be FRIENDS.
STILES: I do.
DEREK: Then don’t you think it’d be a good idea if you didn’t call me or text me all the time? Or send me flowers on a day reserved for people in a ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP?
STILES: Will you please let me come over and talk about this?
DEREK: THERE’S NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT!
STILES: Derek, please! You know why I did what I did!

DEREK: NO, I DON’T!
DEREK: You gave me up, and then you abandoned me, Stiles! AFTER I told you that I loved you. TWICE! I’ve got nothing left to say to you!

STILES: PICK UP YOUR PHONE!

STILES: Fine! First, I had to give you up, you know that! Malia formally challenged you and according to stupid ‘werewolf code’ that meant you had to fight her TO THE FUCKING DEATH OVER ME, or lose your Alpha status. Your TRUE ALPHA status!
STILES: I didn’t want that! I didn’t want you two doing that just because of me! I’m nobody, Derek! She’s your cousin. You love her. And I know you. You would have lost on purpose, so you didn’t have to hurt her.
STILES: You would have given up everything, being a True Alpha, your pack, your name, EVERYTHING over it, so I had to give you up. Both of you! I was the reason she challenged you to begin with, so I had to be the reason you’d both back down. I had to promise to not be with you, either of you, so you could keep your pack!
STILES: You know this! And you know how sorry I am and how much it hurt me to have to do it, Derek…

DEREK: Still doesn’t explain you leaving the pack.
STILES: You were being reckless, Derek! You were going to get yourself killed, and I couldn’t just stand there and watch that happen!

DEREK: I love you.
DEREK: Say it back.

STILES: I can’t, Derek… Not yet.
STILES: Please understand…

DEREK: After all of this, you still can’t tell me.
STILES: I care about you, so much!
DEREK: But you don’t know if you love me…?
**STILES:** You’re terrifying.

**STILES:** THIS is terrifying…

**DEREK:** But somehow, I managed to tell you exactly how I feel…

**STILES:** You’re a lot braver than I am. I’m sorry. I can fight vampires with you, but it’s hard to do this…

**STILES:** I just want to see you. I think you’d understand better if we could talk in person.

...  
...  
...

**STILES:** Derek?

...

**STILES:** Derek…?

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...  
...
...

**STILES:** Happy Valentine’s Day. Glad you liked the gifts.

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Stiles and Derek lie on the sofa, making out, burningly slow and intimate. Derek’s favorite kissing. Stiles hands card through Derek’s hair as his tongue slips between Derek’s lips.

“I love you, Stiles.”

“I love you, too.”

“You sure you’re okay?”

“Derek, I swear if you ask me that one more time, I will end this make out session so quick, and leave you with the worst case of blue balls ever.”

“Shut up.” Derek returns his lips to Stiles’ mouth before he can retort with his usual snark. His lips travel across Stiles’ cheek and along his jawline, then in soft bites to his neck. Stiles keens, raising his hips against Derek. Derek grinds back down on him, pressing his erection into Stiles’ thigh.

“What do you want, baby?”

Stiles sits up and kisses Derek hungrily. “Suck me off.”

“That might have to wait.” They both jump at the sound of Lydia’s voice…and her standing behind the sofa.

“Really, Lydia,” Derek growls.

“You’re right. We need to have a talk about boundaries,” Stiles tells Derek.
Lydia rolls her eyes.

“Something you needed, Lydia,” Derek asks with a sigh.

“I thought we discussed you two having sex in communal areas…? But yes, I do need something. Jordan.”

Jordan hesitantly enters the room. “I’m so sorry. I didn’t know she was going to do that. We could have come back later,” he says, eying her. She shrugs.

“What’s this about,” Stiles asks.

Lydia takes Jordan’s hand. “You two offering your blessing with Jordan ‘declaring’ me as his.”

Stiles can’t help the happy smile that blooms on his face.

“The rest of the pack isn’t here,” Derek says.

“Yeah. We told them we wanted two hours to ourselves, otherwise they’d have to watch us have sex in front of them. Never seen my dad move so fast…and look so disgusted.”

“That’s perfect. We kind of wanted it to be a bit private anyway,” Lydia tells them.

“But my dad’s not here. He usually does the ‘declaration officiating’.”

Stiles puts a hand on his husband’s shoulder. “Derek. Theo’s not here and you’re her Alpha. He would have made you do it alone anyway, because this is your pack now. Remember?”

Derek pecks Stiles on his lips. “Our pack.”

“I, Jordan Philip Parrish, would like to declare your beta, Lydia Ashley Martin, as my one and only mate,” he says, standing before Derek and Stiles. “She is bound to my wolf, just as I am bound to her soul.”

“Lydia is this true? Do you feel bound to Jordan as his mate, and your soulmate,” Derek asks.

“Yes,” she answers proudly. “I love him. I am his, and he is mine.”

“Stiles. Objections,” Derek asks his husband.

“None,” he smiles blissfully at his best friend.

“Lydia is to remain a beta within the Hale pack. Upon your marriage to her, you will be made a beta within it as well, forsaking all other packs, and carrying out all responsibilities given to you by myself, as your Alpha, and by Stiles, as your Alpha-mate. You are also expected to answer to and respect all commands of Alphas Theodoric and Talia Hale, in addition, to Jonathan Stilinski. Can these conditions be met?”

“Yes,” Jordan answers.

“Stiles. Anything to add?”

“If you hurt her, in any way, shape, or form, I will hunt you down, and kill you myself. Is that clear,” Stiles glares at Jordan, his eyes fading quickly to orange.

“Good. Derek.”

“As True Alpha of the Hale pack of Northern California, I, Derek Stephan Hale, give my blessing for this mating.”

Lydia clasps her hands together with a giddy squeal. She turns to Jordan, ready to kiss him—

“Wait. We have to scent mark each other.”


“I’m happy for you, Lydia,” Derek tells her. He rubs his cheek against hers, bringing tears to her eyes.

“Thank you, Derek.” She hugs him tightly.

They pull apart so Derek can scent mark Jordan. “She’s very precious to us. Always remember that.”

“I will never forget it,” Jordan says. He and Derek shake hands.

Stiles steps to Lydia. “What did I tell you at Hale House,” Stiles asks her.

“That I’m capable of love, and deserve it.”

“Told you I wasn’t lying,” he says.

She pulls him into a crushing embrace. 22 years of friendship. Of ups and downs and the unexplainable. Of heartbreak and joy, terror and happiness. Their lives are moving forward, catching up to one another. The naïve kids they once were are officially gone. They’re a distant memory. People they used to know in a photograph, that only seem familiar, but it’s hard to recall. There are these new faces, having babies and getting married; makes it hard to hang on to the past when pushed toward the future.

“I love you, Lyds.”

“I love you, too, Stiles.”

“You know we have to do this over for Scott to see. Otherwise, he’ll cry.”

“I know. No one can resist the Scott McCall puppy eyes.” He kisses her cheek. They pull apart; Lydia grabs a tissue off [Derek’s desk](#) to dab at her wet eyes.

“Jordan. I’m trusting you with my girl’s heart,” Stiles tells the doctor.

“And I’ll never break it.”

“Then that’s all I need to know.” Stiles and Jordan hug.


“No. Juice has too much sugar. I’ll make you an organic fruit smoothie.” And with that, Lydia is out the door toward the kitchen.
Stiles turns to Jordan, “That’s what you married. Enjoy yourself.”

“There are 200 people in this room, and I can smell every last one of them,” Stiles says with a horrified look on his face. His eyes float around the exquisite ballroom at the sea of people mingling, laughing, dancing, and such. All of them dressed in formal, black and white attire. There’s a slight vintage, 1920s look to the décor. The black and white balloons add to the atmosphere. And in the center of it, is Erica, looking radiant as she floats about socializing with her guests; the belle of the ball.

Derek pulls him close and plants a kiss on his temple. “Let me know the moment you don’t feel good and we’ll get out of her.”

“I’ll try and make it to her cutting the cake.”

Stiles and Derek sit alone at the table, in the farthest corner of the room. It was the only table Stiles felt “secure” in, and was closest to the open doors which led to the garden, masking the combined smells of everyone there. He’s been irritable and nauseous all day.

Lydia enters with Jordan, looking ever the dashing couple. Valerie spots them, and she and Jason greet them warmly. Lydia introduces Jordan to them. They talk briefly before Lydia spots Stiles and Derek. They approach.

Before they even sit down, “Are either of you wearing perfume, or cologne,” Stiles asks sternly.

“Uh, I’m not,” Lydia says.

“I am,” Jordan responds.

“Then you need to go,” Stiles tells him with a glare.

“Smells are really bothering him today,” Derek answers for Stiles’ rude attitude.

“I wouldn’t call nausea and a perpetual migraine a ‘bother’. I’d call it evil. Being pregnant is evil. You’re carrying next time.”

“Why don’t I go to the restroom and wash off the cologne,” Jordan says, trying to appease Stiles.

“Yeah. You do that, Great Gatsby,” Stiles responds.

Jordan leaves for the restroom. Derek and Lydia immediately turn to him, “That was so unnecessarily rude, Stiles.”

“What are you talking about? I gave him a compliment! I called him ‘Gatsby’! And I meant the Fitzgerald, book version, not that shitty DiCaprio movie version!”

“Either way, you owe him an apology when he gets back,” Lydia snaps. Derek nods in agreement.

“I’m not apologizing for shit,” Stiles shouts, banging his fist against the table.

“Okay. Looks like we are going home way earlier than I thought,” Derek says, wanting to avoid Stiles’ current mood in public.

“I’m not leaving without a piece of cake, Derek. I mean, we fucking paid for it.”
“Keep your voice down, Stiles. No one needs to hear your impolite comments out loud,” Derek says through gritted teeth. “And I’m sure Erica can save you a slice.”

“Wait. I wanted to talk to you,” Lydia says.

Stiles groans. “About what, Red Queen.”

She ignores his irritable groan at her, knowing its all hormones making him so hard to be around. “It’s about Jordan’s friend, Freya.”

“What about her?”

“Well, I have to meet her soon, and I’m kind of nervous.”

“Why? She’s just his friend. Not his mother.”

“I’m meeting her, too. His whole family actually, and Freya will be there. And well… He calls her ‘his Stiles and Scott’. They’ve been friends since they were kids. They used to date when they went to West Point together, but realized they were better off as friends. They even lived together when he went to med school in Maryland. She moved out here to California because he asked her to and she missed him. So, can’t you see why I’d be a little intimidated, Stiles?”

“No. Seems like they have the same co-dependent relationship you, me, and Scott have.”

“I will forever remember you said that before I did,” Derek tells him.

Stiles rolls his eyes. “Look. Yes, meeting her is going to be scary, just like when Derek and I decided to quit dickering around and make something happen between us, and you had a few choice words for him—”

“She grabbed my balls and told me she’d rip them off and serve them to me hot if I ever broke your heart,” Derek scowls, recalling the situation.

“See? Exactly. She’s going to threaten you and make you piss yourself a little, but you already know her threats mean nothing, because you’d never do anything to hurt Jordan, and you already belong to each other. There’s no going back on it.”

“He hasn’t claimed and marked me yet. And I haven’t submitted yet.”

“What the fuck, Lydia?!”

She shushes him. “We’re doing this right. I’m meeting his family, then he’s meeting my horrible one, and after all the drama of that ends, I’m going to let him tear me apart in his bed.”

“You’ve been spending the night at his place every day for the past week. What have you two been doing?”

“Cuddling,” she answers simply.

“In the same bed? With your clothes on,” Stiles asks. She nods. “Oh, he is going to wreck you when the time comes.”

“God, I hope so.”

Jordan draws near. “Sorry about that.” He kisses Lydia sweetly, then turns to Stiles. “Cologne all gone, Stiles.”
“Doesn’t matter. We’re leaving.”

“Stiles. We’re not done talking about that thing,” Lydia says.

“Sorry, Lydia. We have to, before I give someone permission to deck him.”

“You’d let someone punch your pregnant mate?”

“With your attitude right now…? No. But I’d wait a good second before rescuing you.”

Stiles rolls his eyes. “Just take me home and away from all these people. Lyddie, we’ll talk in the morning when I feel better. Swear.”

Derek takes his hand. Stiles stands, but then wobbles back into his seat, off-balance. “Stiles. Baby, you alright?”

“The room is moving and I can feel that pasta entrée trying to make its way up north.”

“I’ll get you some soda water, or ginger ale,” Jordan says. He heads toward the open bar.

Just then Erica walks up. “You two have been hiding in this corner all night. I’ve danced with every guy in our pack, even creepy-ass Peter, but now I want a twirl with my favorite dance partner.”

“Erica, I don’t think–” Lydia starts.

Before Derek knows what’s happening, Erica puts down her champagne flute, grabs Stiles’ hand, and yanks him from his chair with her ‘werewolf strength’. As soon as he’s upright, on his feet, Stiles vomits pesto sauce all over Erica! The green coloring of the sauce makes it look like slime coating the entire front of her dress!

Erica screams in horror at the top of her lungs! The whole party stopping to look in the direction of her shouting.

“Oh. My. God,” John vocalizes at the scene. The only other sound is Peter’s outright laughing.

“STILES,” Erica shouts, agape at her ruined dress.

“…Can you save me a piece of cake,” he asks.

Chapter End Notes

August done! Now, we move on to September next week (one chapter for that month, I swear!) ;)


Lydia tries to make a good impression on Jordan's best friend, Freya, and Stiles' 29th birthday is on the horizon.

So, September got away from me a bit, too... But it'll only be this chapter and following before October.

“Can’t you come with me,” Lydia pleads with Stiles as he meanders along the wall, eying each painting carefully. Stiles had been feeling better and dying to get out of the house, and Lydia wanted to spend all morning talking his ear off about having to meet Jordan’s parents, and the illustrious Freya. So, he figured if he had to endure her perpetual worry for a couple hours, why not out of the house and at the new art exhibit downtown.

“This guy’s stuff is so good. I mean, I know it’s dark, but that’s what makes it so powerful, you know,” Stiles said. He wasn’t really asking her, so much as he was thinking out loud. He read in The San Francisco Chronicle that a much-talked-about werewolf painter was having his exhibit in early September in the city. Stiles had heard about his abstract work from Valerie who was a fan and turned him onto his art. He painted macabre werewolves using charcoal…and his own blood. “I’d buy a painting if the whole ‘another-werewolf’s-blood-smell-in-my-house’ thing didn’t disturb Derek.”

“Have you been listening to a word I said?”

“Yes. It’s the same damn thing you’ve been on and on about since we left the house this afternoon.”

“Sometimes I miss the goofy boy that fawned over my every word and whim.”

“That boy is long gone. He’s been replaced by one that likes tall, dark, and handsome werewolves.”

“Brooding is so your thing.”

“Derek’s the only brooding werewolf I’m into.”

“Oh, please. Where are we at right now? I mean, look at this guy’s paintings… You love dark and menacing and sulking. You’re like those girls that date indie rockers and hope to change them into something soft and cuddly. ‘If only I could get him to read Keats instead of Kerouac’,” she says, dramatically fluttering her eyes.

“You’re an ass. And I’ve never batted my eyelashes at Derek. Not once,” he says, trying hard not
to crack a smile at her teasing. Instead, he takes her hand and they walk along the wall, stopping at a particularly large and gruesome painting.

“At Erica’s party, when I said you, me, and Scott have a co-dependent relationship—”

“We do. Which is why it scares me meeting Freya. Jordan’s like that with her, too. I want her to like me, Stiles. And I’m aware enough to know most people don’t, and with good reason. He values her. She’s always going to be there, so I want to be friends with her. It doesn’t have anything to do with Jordan. Not really. I just don’t want him stuck in the middle. And I don’t want to add someone so important to him to the already long list of people that don’t care for me all that much.”

“I’m sorry. I didn’t realize. I never had to go through that with you. Or Scott. You guys liked Derek from the beginning—”

She pulls a face that makes him curious.

“What? You didn’t like, Derek?”

“I did. I mean, have you seen him. And he’s such a closet romantic it’s gross. But Scott kind of…”

“Scott didn’t like Derek!”

“He did kind of turn him into a werewolf without his permission, so… Yeah. Scott didn’t like him. For a good while. Not until he let Allison back into the pack.”

“Two years? He hated Derek for two years? Why did he join the pack then?”

“Because I told him to. He and Jackson. I read about Omega wolves and what happens to them, so I told them to join the Hale pack or suffer my wrath.”

“And Derek was so proud of his whole, ‘Scott, we’re brothers now’ speech… He can’t ever find out Scott hated him.”

“He might’ve suspected it, given he can smell emotions.”

“Still… Want to know a secret?”

“Of course; I just told you one.”

“Derek never meant to bite Scott. He was trying to bite me.”

“I knew it,” she says with a gasp. “Scott was wearing your coat that night! He smelled like you!”

“You think Scott would be upset if he knew that?”

“Six years ago, no. Now? I think he’d cry. He really loves being a wolf. He’s grown into it pretty well. He thinks it’s the only reason he has Allison. That she wouldn’t love him if it weren’t for him being one.”

“What? That’s ridiculous. For a number of reasons.”

“It is, but you have to remember what Scott was like then. This shy, wheezing, frail boy with terrible hair. Being a wolf gave him confidence. It changed all that. He’s different. He thinks him being a wolf is what drew Allison to him. He thinks it’s why they even met. Which is kind of true.”
“But it’s not why she loves him. A girl bred into the Argent family, force-fed bullshit about werewolves, and told everyday a Hale is responsible for her mother’s death, falls in love with the first wolf she’s sent to run a con on…? He has to eventually believe she loves him for him. They’re mates for God’s sake! They’re fucking fated.”

Lydia simply shrugs. “Takes a while for people to get over their insecurities, Stiles. You and I both know that. Maybe he’ll finally let go when they get married.”

“Hopefully.”

Their attention turns back to the wall-length painting before them. It’s the only oil painting in the collection. “I actually like this one,” she says. “It’s twisted, and Gothic.”

“It’s beautiful.”

“I can see why you’d think so,” she says with a cheeky smile.

He smiles back. “I could also find it to be just a wonderful piece of art.”

“You could. But you don’t. In fact, I think you wanted to come here, mainly for this specific piece.”

“I shall neither confirm, nor deny.”

Lydia looks at the placard beside the painting. She whistles. “Almost half a million. Wow.”

“You’re shoe closet is about 1.7 million.”

“Accumulated over a period of 10 years; not collectively.”

“Maybe that’s what you can bond over with Freya. Shoes.”

“No. I don’t think so. Jordan says ‘she has style, but she’s not really into fashion’. He's so no help on the Freya-front.”

“Would it be corny if I told you to just be yourself and it’ll all work out?”

“It’d be corny, and I’d punch you,” she answers.

“Fine then. Just try to not try. Don’t be desperate, but be open. Was that better,” he asks.

“No. But thanks.” She leans her head on his shoulder with a sigh. He kisses her head affectionately.

They decided to do Lydia’s family first, and drive down to Beacon Hills to get the "rough one" out of the way earliest. It went as smoothly as Lydia had expected: her mother and father sniped at each other with passive-aggressive comments all day, in between her mother never being far from a bottle of Chardonnay, and her father disappearing periodically to make “mysterious” phone calls.

Her little sister showed up two hours late, stoned and with two friends who were just as high and annoying. One of which kept hitting on Jordan to the point where Lydia had to pull her sister aside and encouraged her to ask her friend to leave. Her little sister refused, which resulted in a shouting match between the two Martin girls that their drunk mother tried horribly to break up. Lydia eventually let it go, but made sure she was plastered to Jordan’s side for the rest of the night.
Her younger brother and his wife and kids were already at the house when she and Jordan arrived. Her two nieces and nephew ran ramped throughout the house, and caught the ire of their grandmother when they broke the bottle of wine for dinner. Mr. Martin used the broken bottle as an excuse to leave the house and retrieve another one from the liquor market. Mrs. Martin, in her drunkenness, decidedly called out her husband for “leaving to go see your whore.” Lydia and her brother tried to break up the fight that ignited at that comment, but it quickly turned into a vicious argument between herself and her brother. Mrs. Martin’s attention turned to her bickering children and broke down in tears, comforted by her daughter-in-law.

Mr. Martin decided to stay when he saw his inebriated wife slumped on the floor in tears at their “broken family.” He picked her up off the floor and carried her upstairs to bed.

He came back downstairs and requested they resume dinner as intended. They reluctantly agreed and ate in silence, save for Mr. Martin asking Jordan a question here and there about werewolves and what he does for a living.

Her brother proceeded to take a swig of beer with every bite of food that made it into his mouth, all the while glaring at Lydia as though she were the bane of his existence.

After dinner, Lydia cleared the table and washed the dishes. Her little sister and her friends stole the six pack her brother brought over and left without saying goodbye.

Her mother eventually made it downstairs, apologizing to Lydia and Jordan. She was beginning to sober up when Lydia lightly touched on the subject of AA, and her mother turned their plausible conversation into a screaming match with her mother telling Jordan, “I’d watch myself if I were you with this one. She’s a real piece of work,” before she stalked off, out of the kitchen. Lydia broke down in tears.

Jordan had enough of the hurt Lydia’s family had caused her, and insisted they leave. Lydia couldn’t agree more. As they were putting on their coats, her brother drunkenly confronted her about “abandoning them when they were kids.” He was getting too close and too aggressive toward Lydia for Jordan’s liking. When he pushed Lydia into a wall, Jordan snapped and punched him square in the face, breaking his nose! Jordan grabbed Lydia and ran out of the house!

Lydia didn’t want to go back to the hotel. She gave Jordan directions and he pulled up to a standard suburban house. In the driveway was a police cruiser. Lydia stepped out of the car and ran to the front door, banging on it hurriedly.

John answered. Lydia immediately wrapped herself around him and cried. The sheriff invited them inside. Just a week before he’d seen them both, when he, Melissa, and Derek’s parents stayed a week in San Francisco for Stiles’ first ultrasound and Erica’s birthday party. She had been so happy when they left. It wasn’t until Jordan told the sheriff where they had just came from that he understood.

He insisted they stay the night and head back to San Francisco in the morning. Lydia couldn’t think of any other place she’d rather be at the moment.

She and Jordan stayed in Stiles’ old room. Jordan held his mate close as she cried herself to sleep.

Needless to say, she had hoped meeting Jordan’s family, and Freya, would go infinitely better. And it had. Freya was running late, stuck at work, but things were going swimmingly. His mother, Alicia, was sassy, smart, and funny. She reminded Lydia of when she watched Gloria Steinem
interviews in her Post-Modern Feminism class at Stanford. His father, Robert, was equally charming, a friendly, but reserved. He was a fitting compliment to Jordan's outgoing mother.

He reminded Lydia of Theo, a quiet, and respectful formality coupled with warm, fatherly demeanor. She liked that. It made her comfortable and more at ease. And interested. She’s been surrounded by wolves and other were and supes for the last decade consistently, but still managed to always be a bit intrigued when they were meek, or introverted.

Jordan told her that his real father was murdered trying to break up a fight between two men outside a bar one night while on his way home from work. One of the men was carrying a knife and stabbed his father in the throat when he lunged at the other man, and Jordan’s father got in the way. He was only 8 years old at the time. Three years later, his mother went to visit her favorite aunt in Chicago who was dying in the hospital. The attending physician to his great-aunt turned out to be his future step-father, his mother’s soulmate.

They married a few months later with his step-father moving to Palo Alto after locking down a job at the local hospital as an end-of-life physician. He was a beta in a small pack just outside Chicago. Normally, the rules state that Jordan and his mother would have to move to Illinois and join his pack, given that she’s human, and seen as the "submissive" in their relationship, but Robert’s Alpha wasn’t hung up on “old, werewolf traditions” and gave Robert permission to leave the pack and join one in Northern California. Derek and Stiles ran all over NorCal, but there were two very small packs they allowed to remain in their territory because they were quiet and kept to themselves. Theo had brokered a deal with them decades ago that if they stayed out of the way, and swore allegiance to the Hale pack if ever called upon, their packs could stay and wouldn’t be bothered. The smaller of the two was the Grissom pack that Jordan and his family belonged to.

His sister, Myra, was beyond bright, with a shy, sweetness about her. She was a bit on the heavy side with blue ombre hair and black, horn-rimmed glasses. Lydia got the impression she might be a loner at school, with little to no boy prospects. Lydia never understood why such cool, interesting kids were never recognized by their peers for just how awesome they were. It’s part of the reason why she reached out to Stiles, and remained his friend during their teenage years, even though she became obscenely popular in high school, and Stiles and Scott were “outcasts.” It always broke her heart that no one could see how amazing her friends were but her. Even Jackson felt it above them both to socialize with Stiles and Scott. He refused to do so publicly, but always tagged along when Lydia was hanging out with them on the weekends, or in study groups during the week. They were smart, silly boys that always brought out her playful and mischievous side.

Jordan's brother, Dell, was probably more successful with their peers than Myra was. He was cute, and looked like Jordan a lot, but he was a bit taller, leaner, and all limbs. Yet, he managed to be very coordinated and lenient. He wore an ironic T-shirt that made her giggle, thinking of Stiles and his embarrassing collection of them when he was Dell’s age.

Dell dominated the conversation passionately when Lydia asked him what he likes to do, and he responded that he was “really into film, and film production.” He apparently wants to be a director. Which seems to be a subject of contention between the teenage boy and his mother. Lydia asked him if he’d seen a particular movie she liked and he went into a tangent about film, and how it should be seen more appreciatively as art by those within the artistic community. He ran down a quick list of his favorite films and Lydia thought how he and Derek would get along so well. At least when it came to movies. Derek didn’t seem to like any movie made past 1983, and neither did Dell.

Lydia insisted on bringing something. Anything. She didn’t want to show up empty-handed, no matter how many times Jordan told her she didn’t have to bring anything. She didn’t want to bring
wine, because everybody brings wine. So, she thought she’d make a dessert…with Stiles’ help. But for some reason, no matter how hard she tried, or read the directions, or listened to Stiles, her dessert never came out right. It was undercooked, burnt, lopsided, sloppy, or fell on the floor. Stiles had had enough and threw her out the kitchen.

Before Jordan picked her up, Stiles handed her a large tray of a dozen lavender-honey cupcakes and told her to take full credit for them with Jordan’s family. She owed him big, but knew he was really just happy to help her.

They were just about to sit down to dinner, when the front door opened, and a woman walked in spouting apologies for being late. Freya. Jordan immediately broke from his seat to give her a hug and pull her into the dining area. Lydia stood as Jordan introduced them. “And this is my Lydia.” Lydia’s heart fluttered at Jordan referring to her as “my Lydia.”

Lydia extended her hand to Freya, “It’s so nice to meet you. Jordan talks about you a lot.”

Freya takes her hand and shakes it. “All the cool stories I hope.”

“There are no cool-Freya stories. You are infinitely boring,” Jordan teases.

“Yet, you’re the one that apparently can’t keep quiet about me,” she teases right back.

“They are cool stores. For the most part,” Lydia says, and Freya’s smile brightens with Lydia feeling she’s already off to a good start.

“Alright, let’s sit down and eat. Or pretend to while I grill Lydia, making Jordy break out in a sweat,” Freya says with a sly smile.

“Don’t let her fool you. She only looks scary,” Jordan tells Lydia.

“Actually, I look amazing. See? New dress and everything. That’s how worth it you are to Jordy; he made me go buy new clothes.” Freya playfully nudges Lydia before taking a seat at the dining table.

The tension in Lydia’s shoulders deflates a bit and Jordan takes her hand, feeling her anxiousness fall away gradually.


“Somewhat. I’m not immortal, but I am immune to magic. I can’t really practice it and it doesn't work on me,” Lydia answers.

“So you can’t be made a were,” Freya asks, sipping her wine.

Lydia nods.

“Did you ever want to be a wolf,” Frey asks.

“Yes. That’s how I found out I was a banshee. My Alpha offered me the bite and I accepted, but it didn’t take. And with the bite it either takes and you become a were, or you die. Neither happened and we found out what I was.” She didn't want to mention Peter offering her the bite first and her turning it down, much rather having Derek turn her than his slimy uncle.

“Are you the only banshee in your family?”
“I thought I was, but when I told my mother and father that I was one, they told be my maternal grandmother was actually a banshee and my late fraternal grandmother was a witch.”

“Wow.”

“She wasn’t a powerful witch. She just knew a few spells and made potions every now and then. Nothing major.”

“Still fascinating. I know supes have been ‘out of the closet’ for over a hundred years now, but it all still makes my eyes go wide like a fireworks show. I’m sorry. I shouldn’t be bombarding you with a bunch of supe questions. Tell me about you. Where are you from?”

“A small town about a day’s drive from here called Beacon Hills. I grew up there with my two best friends. One is a werewolf in my pack and the other is our Alpha-mate.”

“Jordan says your two best friends are guys. How sweet.”

“They are the sweetest, goofiest, lovable boys I’ve ever known. They mean the world to me. They’re my family.”

“That’s how I feel about that lump beside you,” Freya says nodding to Jordan.

“Love you, too, Frey,” Jordan smirks.

“I think I must have been real lonely as a kid to pick him. I’m an only child. I take what I can get,” she says teasing Jordan. He rolls his eyes.

Lydia laughs. She’s decided. She likes Freya. She’s funny and smart and doesn’t see Lydia as a threat. Nor does Lydia see her as one.

“So, tell me about what it was like meeting your soulmate,” Freya asks Lydia.

Myra and Dell groan. “Nothing against you, Lydia, but Jordan’s told this story so many times, and in such sappy, Hallmark Channel detail, that if I have to hear it again my ears will bleed,” Dell complains.

Jordan frowns at his little brother and flicks a spoonful of peas at him.

“I already knew the story, too. I was asking about how it felt. Just to clarify,” Freya says.

“It was…overwhelming. Powerful. And it felt singular, like all my energy was directed towards Jordan.”

“I hear it hurts like hell,” Myra chimes in.

All four soulmates/mates at the table nod in staunch agreement.

“At 28 years old, I now know what a heart attack feels like,” Lydia says, earning a smile from Freya.

“Is that really what it feels like,” Dell asks.

“You betcha, kid,” his mother responds.

“I don’t want a mate if it’s going to suck balls like that,” Dell squeals with a look of terror on his face.
“It only lasts for a minute and then your wolf will take over instinctively,” Jordan reassures his little brother.

“Still. You know I have a very low tolerance for pain, Jordy. I’d probably cry like an infant and she wouldn’t want me after that.”

“She’d be your mate. She’d want you regardless,” Robert tells him with a gentle pat on his shoulder.

“What do you expect being literally lovestruck to feel like, Dell? Rainbows and baby ducks on a cloud,” Myra teases him.

“You mock, but that sounds a lot better than a damn heart attack that leaves me crippled and crying on the floor like a 3 year old girl,” he says.

Lydia laughs. She likes the easy way they can joke with each other and be so close. She’d be sad if she weren’t so envious…and desperate to be apart of their family.

“Is it your Alpha-mate, your best friend, the one that’s Jordy’s patient,” Freya asks.

“Yes,” Lydia says with a bright, proud smile. “He’s about 10 weeks along now.”

“Is he excited?”

“I think we’re all more excited than he is, but yeah. He’s having twins.”

“Twins?! Wow,” Freya says.

“How’s the Alpha taking the news,” Robert asks.

“He seems to be really happy. Excited,” Jordan says.

“He’s wanted kids with my friend since they met. They’re mates, too,” Lydia adds.

“I’m sorry. I hate to admit it but I don’t know much about the Allendale pack. I think that’s why I’m so Fascinated by all the supe talk. Especially considering your two Alphas are male,” Freya says.

Before Lydia can cut in, Jordan responds innocently, “Lydia’s not in the Allendale pack. She’s in the Hale pack.”

Jordan’s parents and Lydia draw quiet…

Lydia and the rest of the pack keep as low a profile as they can, always avoiding pictures, unless taken by a close member of the pack, never on social media (it’s actually a big “no-no” in their pack to be on any type of social media outlet), always sitting privately, or quietly at restaurants, using back door entrances, whenever they are in public they go in pairs, especially crowded areas, burner phones, untraceable IP addresses for their computers, always paying in cash… They watch their steps closely. And they never, ever mention to anyone what pack they belong to unless imposing a threat on the one asking.

Most seem well acquainted with the Hale pack name and reputation, but it seems bright-eyed Jordan, was very unaware of what it meant to be associated with the Hale pack, let alone a high-ranking member of it. Which, judging by the vexing look on Freya’s face, it seems she’s very accustomed with what it means to be a Hale, or in the Hale pack.
“Hale pack? You’re in the Hale pack,” Freya asks with a judging tone in her voice that seems to be leaving Jordan confused, if going by the look on his face.

But Lydia has always been proud of her pack and her “job.” She’s not going to let Freya and her being Jordan’s closest friend ever shame her of it. “Yes. I’m a member of the Hale pack. I’m a beta,” she says confidently.

The two women have a stare down, waiting for the other to blink first… Myra and Dell now look tense, sensing the room’s air change for light to spicy, and the wave of anger pouring off Freya at the moment, mixed with Lydia’s masked nervousness, and their parents’ complete nervousness.

Freya breaks from the table. “Can I speak with you a moment, Jordy,” she asks.

He glances to Lydia for a quick moment.

Lydia nods. *It’s okay.*

Jordan breaks from the table and follows Freya into the kitchen and outside to the backyard.

“Freya, what the hell,” he snaps in a harsh whisper.

“Jordan. She’s a Hale. Do you know what the Hale pack does? Who they are?”

“...What I know, is that Talia Hale and my mother have been friends since they were teenagers. And that Talia is one of the biggest reasons my patient list has done nothing but grow since I decided to open up my own practice. What I know, is that Theo Hale, assured me that the man that killed my father, will *never* hurt anyone ever again. I also know, that the love of my life is apart of their pack, and she’s the most wonderful creature I’ve ever met.”

“You never told me that you were familiar with the Hales.”

“I know who they are, and what they’re allegedly capable of, but they’ve never been nothing short of gracious, kind, and charitable to me and my family since I was a boy.”

“So, you mean to tell me you see no moral conflict with being associated with them, or mating with one of their members?”

Jordan sighs, not really knowing how, or if even, he wants to answer that question.

“Oh, I get it. You were hoping to ignore all that and turn a blind-eye to it all. To the murders, drug dealing, theft, gambling, prostitution, sorcery, and the like,” she says condescendingly. “Well, you fucking can’t, Jordy, because when you marry her, you become part of her pack—and don’t think I don’t know you’d end up joining because I know there’s no way she’d leave them. You become a Hale and you answer to their Alphas, and what are going to do when your Alphas ask you to do something you don’t think you have the blind obligation to do?”

“...I don’t believe they’d ever ask me to do something I couldn’t.”

“They wouldn’t ask, Jordy. You’re their beta. Once you submit to them, you have to obey.”

She’s right. He knows she’s right, and he really doesn’t want her to be.

“I love Lydia. She’s mine. I’m hers. And we’ve been each other’s for a thousand lifetimes already. Some probably more crucial than this, so I can take whatever comes my way. If I have to. But I’d like for my best friend, the other woman in my life, to be supportive of me and the love I have for her.”
“I want you to be happy, Jordan. I’m glad you found your mate and it’s all coming together for you, but I don’t know if I can smile and pretend it’s all okay if I think you’ll always be in danger.”

“I would never let anything happen to Jordan.” They turn around to Lydia standing in the backdoor. “I swear that on my life. I would die protecting him.”

“And what exactly is it that he’d need protecting from so fiercely,” Freya asks bitingly.

“Not a goddamn thing if I can help it,” Lydia says coolly. “Freya, I get it.”

“No, you don’t.”

“Yes, I do. I would do anything for my pack. Especially, my two best friends. I have done anything for them. Without regret and remorse because they are not just friends; they are family. My family. I protect my family with a strength so powerful I can move mountains. Jordan is now my family, and I will fight with everything inside of me to make sure nothing hurts him. Physical, or otherwise. Just like you would.”

Jordan takes Lydia’s hand, hearing the raw honesty in her heartbeat.

Freya shakes her head, “No. I can’t just… I can’t just let it go. I can’t ignore it like you can.”

“Frey, I’m just asking you to be supportive of me and Lydia. Nothing else,” Jordan says, the tint of a plea in his voice. “I’m asking you—we’re asking you, to be happy that I’m in love. That I’ve found my mate.”

“I am happy you’re in love, Jordy. I just…,” she turns to Lydia, “I don’t think you’re a bad person, Lydia. I’m just not convinced you might be a good one.”

Frey rushes back into the house, Jordan calling after her.

Lydia feels horrible. Not for herself, but for Jordan. His best friend, his “sister” couldn’t give her blessing, and she knows it must eat at him from the inside/out. Or at least she knows it will, because if Scott, or Stiles, felt the way Freya did, it’d surely feel that way to her…

March 2017

Lydia sits on the sofa, watching TV in the well-decorated house she and Stiles share. Her attention draws toward the sound of the front door opening and closing. She mutes the TV. “Stiles…?”

Stiles comes into the family room. His left cheek is bruised and his bottom lips busted. Lydia immediately jumps up from the sofa toward him. “Who the hell did this to you? Tell me right fucking now, Stiles, and I will murder them.” In addition to his face, there are fingerprint bruises along his arms, black and blue skin on his wrists, and deep bite marks all along his neck.

“Derek. I had sex with Derek.”

“Sex? It looks like he beat the hell out of you!”

“Yeah, that happened, too.”

“What?! Stiles… Did he force himself onto you?”
“No. No, Lydia. I swear to you he didn’t.” She glares at him. “Lydia, I swear on my mother’s grave, he did not force himself on me.”

She knows Stiles would never say something so serious, yet so immature of a promise unless it were true.

“Then what the hell, Stiles…”

“We got into an argument…about Jennifer.”

Lydia huffs and rolls her eyes at him. “Stiles, you’re not even in the pack anymore. You left, so you should stop getting so wound up about things that don’t concern you anymore.”

“Oh, nice, Lyds. Real nice. I may not be pack anymore, but I still give a shit about what happens to my friends!”

“I know you do! But if you really cared then you should have never left!”

“I had to! Derek was a loose canon! He’s was going to get everyone, and himself killed!”

“Then you should have stayed and helped make him better! I can’t do it! Neither can anyone else!”

“And I have to?!”

“Yes, you stubborn little shit! You’re his mate!”

“Well, he doesn’t think so. I asked him to break up with Jennifer and he told me to fuck off and that everyone was better off without me around, so I hit him. I belted the shit out of him. He fought back, and next thing I know, we’re fucking like wild animals all over his apartment. Then, you know what he says to me,” Stiles eyes fill with tears, “‘You should go. This was a mistake. Just like with Malia’.”

Lydia watches her friend try desperately to keep his dignity and not fall apart into a pool of tears.

“I was going to tell him. We made love four fucking times and I let go. I let all of it go, Lydia, because I started thinking: ‘I could have this. I could make love to Derek Hale everyday. He’d be mine. Forever.’ But he doesn’t want me anymore. He wants her. He wants Jennifer. He said she was his real mate. I’m just this stupid boy he had a crush on and now it’s over.”

“That is not true, Stiles. He loves you. He told you so, and I’ve seen the way he is with you. I don’t know what’s gotten into him, but he does have strong feelings for you. You’re not a passing fancy. You mean something to him.”

“Well, he told me I didn’t. Before and after he fucked me. Which was the best sex of my life by the way.”

He’s trying to act cool now, but she can see his heart breaking. She knows he’ll cry himself to sleep, full of guilt and regret for not going after Derek sooner. For not confessing his true feelings when Derek confessed his. Then he’ll get up early tomorrow morning and make breakfast, and pretend nothing’s wrong, when everything is.

“Stiles. Don’t. I’m telling you, something is wrong with Derek. Something’s not right. Help me figure it out. Please.”
“I would, but I’m not pack,” he says curtly.
She calls after him as he runs upstairs to his room, and slams the door shut.

“MOM!”

Oh, for Christ’s sake! Stiles had just laid down for a nap when the sound of Jackson’s voice bounced off the walls and boomed in his ears.

He spent the entire day with Erica, making it up to her for vomiting on her very beautiful and very expensive dress in the middle of her birthday party. He first got up early to make her mint chocolate chip pancakes (her favorite), then picked her up after her kickboxing class at the gym to take her out to her favorite sushi place because she loved their sushi boat. He couldn’t eat anything there but the seaweed and cucumber salad and Miso soup (seafood and raw fish being on his ‘NO’ list of good and bad foods from Jordan).

They then did the 49 Mile Scenic Drive around the city, just driving around San Francisco like tourists and talking. He liked heart-to-hearts with Erica. She wasn’t like the other betas. He didn't have to try and figure her out and draw out her hidden feelings about something. Erica was always upfront and direct about everything. Whether it was about the pack, Boyd, other relationships, her future, whatever it was, she was always honest and blunt, like a Hemingway novel. He liked that, and felt he owed it to her to be the same way when they were together. So it was fair to say Erica held a fair number of his secrets. Almost as much as Scott.

They came home and Stiles was exhausted. He needed a nap. Erica had to go back to “work” for something Derek needed her to help Scott with. His plan was to make a recipe he copied of a Cajun chicken gumbo Erica gushed over the last time they went to New Orleans, for dinner, and a mint chocolate cake for dessert (her favorite), after his nap, but it seems his nap will have to wait in favor of whatever Jackson is shouting at him for.

Reluctantly, he pushed himself out of bed and headed downstairs. “Jackson,” he called.

“Front door!”

Stiles made his way to the front door to see Jackson standing protectively in the open doorway. Two men and a woman in dark suits and shades stand on the other side. Feds. Fuck.

“Are you Przem—” the one in front begins to mispronounces.


The agent takes off his glasses—Kenneth Haigh. “No. I’m afraid I don’t.”

“Then get the fuck off my property.” Stiles tries to close the door, but the agent stops him, pushing his hand against it. “That’s a sure-fire way to lose a finger, my friend.”

“I just had a few questions I wanted to ask you.”

“I’m sure whatever you want to know I can’t help you with.”

“You sure about that?”
“Very fucking sure.”

Jackson snorts.

“Not even with the mysterious death of Katherine Argent,” the female agent pipes up.

Stiles shrugs. “Nope. Sorry. Don’t know anyone by that name.”

“She was one of the agents that brought charges against your pack in April this year.”

“Oh, that Katherine Argent? I’m so sorry. I’m sure she’ll be missed greatly,” Stiles says, feigning sympathy. Badly.

“Her niece, Allison Argent, is apart of your pack,” Agent Haigh says.

“Is she? Allison never mentioned. Guess I’ll have to talk about that later with her.”

“We could do that for you. Where is she?”

“I don’t make it a habit of tagging my pups. Besides, she doesn’t live here.”

“Will she be here later?”

“Who’s to say? Allison is a very busy, modern woman. She makes her own way through the day.”

“What about your husband, Derek Hale,” Agent Haigh asks.

“Oh, he’s the sexiest man alive, and gives the most amazing head, but he’s taken. Evidently. Now, once more: get off my fucking property with this bullshit.” Stiles slams the door shut in their faces. He and Jackson stand behind the door, waiting for the agents to leave…

Finally, Jackson nods to Stiles when he can hear their car disappear from the house. “You want to call Derek,” Jackson asks.

“No. Allison.”

Derek paces up and down the living room, in front of the fireplace. “Why didn’t you call me?”

“Derek, I’m fine,” Stiles responds.

“That’s not what I asked. If you weren’t intending to call me, than Jackson should have.”

“I told him not to, because I knew they’d expect that and try and crowd you without me there. I’m your anchor. They probably know that and would have used me against you to bring your wolf out and arrest you on manslaughter charges when you ripped their beating hearts out of their chests.”

Derek stops pacing. “You’re 11 weeks pregnant, Stiles.”

“Really? That totally escaped me. Especially this morning when I threw up my breakfast. FYI: vegan sausage doesn’t look so good on the way up.”

“What I mean is, the stress of all this is not something you should be taking on. You should have called me.”

“And I just told you why I didn’t. Which you have yet to put up a good argument against, so I’m
assuming you know I’m right.”

“I need you, to take 5 seconds to think about how I feel right now, Stiles.”

Stiles blinks a few times at Derek’s serious Alpha tone. This isn’t an argument. Derek is really offended about what happened this afternoon with Stiles not telling him about it until he came home. “...Your mate is pregnant. In the early stages of his pregnancy that are most critical, and federal agents, who are looking for any reason to throw all of us in jail, came to our house—our den—in an attempt to scare me into submission about Kate’s death. And you’re upset that not only did they violate our home—the Alpha’s personal territory—but they did so with your pregnant mate here without you.”

“I get that you were trying to protect me, but you, and our children, are first priority. I need you to be safe. Especially when I’m not here. You can not keep things like this from me, because when I do find out, it’ll just drive me insane. Understand?”

Stiles nods. He does understand now, and feels awful for being so flippant earlier. “I’m sorry.” He falls into Derek’s arms, letting him hold him close.

“Are you okay? Really?”

Stiles nods. He’s fine. “I think they want to flip Allison,” Stiles says, meeting Derek’s eyes. “If Chris couldn’t make her do that, then there’s no way a bunch of low-rate agents are going to.”

“I know, but we need an angle, Derek. Some way to be three steps ahead of them.”

“We are most of the time--”

“But we’re not now and I don’t like it. We have no leverage and can’t buy him off because Edmund’s already doing that. And I’m not getting into another werewolves vs. vampires war while I’m pregnant.”

“As if I’d let that happen.”

“You think Boyd would be okay with us temporarily giving him to Edmund as a sex slave so he can tell Haigh to bury our case?”

“I think Boyd would turn Omega before he’d let us do that. And you never sacrifice your best beta. We just have to be on our p’s and q’s wth an ear to the ground. I’ll figure something out.”

Stiles readies to protest—

“Yes, I said, ‘I’ll figure something out’. You need to remain stress-free and keep taking good care of my cubs.”

“I don’t know how to be stress-free. I live in a vacuum of stress. It’s what makes my day!”

“I got this. Trust me. Please.”

“...Fine,” Stiles says reluctantly. “But if something bad happens, I am completely involved. 100% fucking involved, Derek, and I’m not backing down.”

“You can try.”

“And you can watch me,” Stiles says smugly.
Derek woke Stiles up to lazy kisses, coaxing him slowly out of his sleep. Stiles immediately fell into the kiss and turned into a sensual make-out.

Derek’s lips traveled down Stiles’ body, shedding his clothes as he went further and further south, paying exclusive attention to the small baby bump forming at Stiles’ belly. He felt Derek smile against it and carded his hands through his hair tenderly.

Derek eventually found his way between Stiles’ legs and took his underwear off, discarding it to the floor. His softly kissed his thighs, nuzzling in the hair there, and taking in the strong scent of his mate. His tongue stuck out and lapped, in long, slow strokes at Stiles’ balls and the patch of sin behind them, driving Stiles insane. Derek purposely wanted to drag it out, making Stiles squirm and beg, teasing him and driving him wild. He gave a long playfully lick up Stiles’ shaft, his claws extended, softly scraping along Stiles’ side, while his other hand held him hip, keeping him in place. He went up and down Stiles’ cock a few times, then flicked his tongue over the head and in the slit. Stiles reached up, grabbing at the headboard for leverage. Derek knew he was on the verge of coming, so he gripped Stiles hard at the base of his cock to stave off his orgasm, earning a few choice curses from his mate. Derek just smiled as he reached into the nightstand for lube. Stiles watched him pour some onto two fingers and begged for Derek for fuck him.

Derek’s middle finger teased at Stiles’ puckered hole, circling it lazily, and rubbing it up and down. By that point, Stiles was withering and moaning on the bed so spastically, Derek had to hold him in place with his other hand on his chest.

He finally slipped the finger past Stiles’ tight ring and nearly came himself at the greedy way Stiles’ muscle contracted around it, begging in sync with Stiles’ verbal pleas. Derek worked his finger painfully slow, Stiles was becoming less aroused and more frustrated, contemplating abandoning their morning sex all together, until Derek worked another finger inside and curled them, touching his sweet spot. Stiles’ eyes rolled to the back of his head and Derek inched closer between Stiles’ open legs, pushing in and out of Stiles’ wet hole.

Stiles fisted the sheets and whimpered at Derek giving up the tease and deciding to hammer his fingers inside his boy, pushing harder and harder against Stiles’ prostate while spewing the most filthy dirty talk.

Derek gripped the headboard with his free hand, looking down at his mate, shaking and crying, on his fingers. His dirty talk then peppered with praise kink at how good Stiles looked fucked on his fingers.

Derek slipped in another finger and pushed into Stiles hard, curving his digits and pressing against Stiles’ prostate viciously. Stiles went boneless and screamed Derek’s name at the top of his lungs as tears fell from his eyes and he came all over himself. A splash landing on his own chin.

Derek slipped in another finger and pushed into Stiles hard, curving his digits and pressing against Stiles’ prostate viciously. Stiles went boneless and screamed Derek’s name at the top of his lungs as tears fell from his eyes and he came all over himself. A splash landing on his own chin.

Derek took his fingers from Stiles then wrapped his hand around his own swollen cock. Three hard strokes was all that was needed for him to come, roaring above Stiles, cracking their headboard, and splattering robes of hot cum all over Stiles’ stomach. He messaged his and Stiles’ cum into Stiles’ skin, then peered over him to lick the line of cum Stiles shot on his own chin. His tongue slid into Stiles’ breathless mouth, trying to reach the back of his throat in a kiss so hungry it was starving.

He finally pulled away, leaving Stiles’ lips wet and red. He leaned in toward Stiles’ ear to whisper: “Happy birthday, baby.”
When Stiles regained the ability to move, he stumbled out of bed and toward the bathroom to shower. Derek took the opportunity to disappear into the kitchen. Stiles came out of the bathroom and dressed in comfortable clothes, with no real plans to go anywhere this morning. Then Derek came into the room with a serving tray of food. It was hardly the first nor the third time he’s gotten breakfast in bed, but it was his favorite surprise, because it typically led to he and Derek lounging in bed all day and all night, just the two of them cuddled in each other’s arms, periodically making love throughout the day, only stopping to eat, or sleep. Those were his favorite days.

His birthday breakfast consisted of real banana pancakes with powdered sugar, actual pork bacon, and scrambled eggs with cheese (egg whites only), and home fries. The only thing missing was a giant mug of coffee, but that was something Derek refused to budge on. Stiles ate happily while Derek sat beside him on his tablet, watching the news.

When he finished his breakfast, Derek took the tray downstairs to the kitchen. His father called him then to wish him a happy 29th birthday, but their conversation was only a half-hour in before Stiles started to feel dizzy, then nauseous. Stiles raced into the master bedroom and threw up. Derek hurried into the bathroom to check on him when he zeroed in on Stiles’ heartbeat and it felt weak, tired, and overwhelmed with anxiety.

Stiles threw up two more times before Derek put him to bed with a glass of ginger ale by his side of the bed and a cool cloth on his head. He took a short nap and woke up feeling better. He brushed his teeth and let Derek take him to the home theater. The whole pack was there waiting for him, ready to begin their Star Wars marathon, something he’s been asking everyone (but Derek, who watched it with him years ago) to do with him for the last 10 years. Stiles noticed that everyone was wearing Star Wars themed clothes, feeling good that he chose to change into his Chewbacca T-shirt after he got out of the shower. The marathon consisted on the first three Star Wars movies (which in reality are IV through VI). Stiles threw popcorn at Scott and Allison who decided to make out during the beginning of The Empire Strikes Back. After they settled down, Lydia and Jordan started kissing, and found themselves in the middle of a popcorn shower from their Alpha, too.

But Stiles gave up when midway through Return of the Jedi Derek’s claws gently grazed along his buzzed haircut, sending shockwaves down his spine, and they, too, decided to ignore the movie in favor of kissing.

Isaac, Jackson, Cora, and Danny apparently left when Erica grabbed Boyd and rammed her tongue down his throat. They grabbed a few aconitum beers from the fridge and went to the pool.

When the movie was over, Stiles returned his dad’s phone call, apologizing for hanging up on him to puke. Melissa called him, too, to wish him a happy birthday, as did the rest of his pack. He stayed on the phone the longest with his dad and Laura. Even Peter called him to say “happy birthday,” but he promptly hung up when Peter made a lewd comment about Stiles getting “more and more fuckable every year.”

He took a shower, Derek joining him—and fucking him into the wall under the spray of hot water — then dressed for dinner. The whole pack was going out to a new fine dining restaurant with a great view of the bay. Things were going great. They were laughing and enjoying their expensive cuisine when Stiles began to feel dizzy again. He thought he was just going to vomit again, so he tried to head to the restroom, but as soon as he stood up, the room spun even faster and Stiles found it hard to breathe. Next thing he knew, a whiteness crowded his eyes and everything went dark…

He woke up in the back of the camaro in Derek’s arms with a splitting headache. Lydia was driving, Jordan beside her in the front seat. He looked up at Derek who peered down at him with
nothing but worry in his own eyes. Stiles ran a gentle hand along the scared Alpha’s face, whispering reassurances against his lips.

Derek carried Stiles into the house, his headache turning into a full-blown migraine. Derek put Stiles on the bed and took off his clothes, tucking him into the sheets. He placed a glass of ice water by the bed and an ice pack on Stiles’ forehead after closing the curtains and turning out the lights. He burned a lavender candle at Lydiá’s suggestion, claiming it was good at helping to relieve migraines since Stiles wasn’t permitted to take aspirin while he was pregnant.

Derek took off his shoes and climbed into bed beside Stiles. Stiles wrapped himself around Derek's waist.

“Don’t you ever do that to me again,” Derek said with a shaky breath.

“I’m sorry,” Stiles said, wrapping himself tighter around his husband. Stiles then groaned in pain at his head pounding.

Derek didn’t know if he should. They had never asked Jordan if it would be okay, completely forgetting that it was something on the table, but Stiles was hurting and he wanted to fix it. He ran his hand along Stiles’ head, and siphoned his pain away. Stiles moaned gratefully, cuddling as close as he can to his soulmate.

Stiles eyes fluttered open. Derek is gone.

A soft knock on the door… “Come in.”

The door opens gingerly. Jordan. Holding a small plate of something in his hand. “…Hi.”

Stiles nods for him to step further into the room. Jordan comes all the way in.

“What’s that?”

“A piece of your birthday cake. Scott gave a rousing argument as to why they should eat it without you and mostly everyone agreed. Plus, it was when Derek was up here with you, so there was no one there to stop them. Derek’s down there now using his Alpha voice on them for it. Thought I’d come up here and sneak you a piece.”

“And escape the reprimand.”

“That, too.”

Stiles chuckles.

Jordan hands the cake over to Stiles. “Plus, I think you fainting has a lot to do with your blood sugar being low. Happens during this stage of pregnancy. Babies take a lot out of you, and you’re having two.”

“How’d Derek take that as an explanation?”

“Boyd and Lydia had to calm him down…for an hour. He’s still pretty rattled.”

“As evident by him yelling at our betas over cake.”

Jordan smiles.
“I’ll smooth everything over, then get Laura to call him. She’s good at getting him to calm down, even when I can’t.”

“Laura?”

“His eldest sister. She’s great.”

“Sometimes I wish I had an older sibling to turn to when I need guidance. I’m the oldest so I’m the one that gets all the anxiety phone calls.”

“Well, I’m an only child, so I had to rely a lot of Scott and Lydia. Scott’s an only child, and Lydia’s the oldest but her family is… Well, you met them.”

Jordan nods with a stark look. I sure have met the Martins…

Stiles notices he’s gone quiet, a far off look on his face. “You miss your friend Freya.” He turns to Stiles, not knowing what exactly to say or how much he should say on the subject of Freya to him. “Lydia told me what happened. I’m sorry, Jordan. I’m sorry that… I’m sorry you lost a friend like that.”

“Freya’s not lost. She’s just angry. I’ve just been giving her space. That’s what my dad told me to do. He knows how close we are.”

“Sounds like something my own father would say, so I’d have to claim it as sage advice.”

Jordan smiles. Since knowing Stiles and Derek, meeting Lydia and the rest of the pack, Jordan’s felt nothing but happy, safe, and welcomed. Talia and Theo, also, have been nothing but wonderful to him, and treated him and his family like honorary members of their pack for years now. How can the things people say about them, believe about them, be true? “Can I be frank with you?”

Stiles nods, mouth full of fluffy cake.

“Would… Would you ever ask me to do anything I was uncomfortable with…when I become a beta in your pack?”

Stiles thinks carefully about his words. “You can be as involved in this pack as you want to be, but Derek and I will be your Alphas, and we do expect a certain level of commitment when asked.”

“Right,” Jordan says, nodding his head, looking a little sorrowful, as though he had hoped everything Freya said would have been a lie.

“You met Derek’s sister, Valerie, right? At Erica’s birthday party. The brunette that looks like a fashion model that could eat you alive.” Jordan nods with a laugh, recalling her, with Stiles’ accurate description. “And you meet her husband, Jason? Jason is a doctor as well. He’s a surgeon, and human. Jason spent a lot of years trying to keep his distance from the rest of us because he was scared, for himself, his daughters, and for Valerie. He also had an ‘issue’ with the type of pack we are. We all understood that, but it created tension and made things difficult for a time. He recognized that after Derek assured him that he’d never let any harm come to anyone he loves, so long as he has breath in his body. Jason believed that, and knew it to be true. He’s still not as ‘involved’ as his wife, and others, but he’s…receptable now. Flexible as it were. That’s all we ask you to be. Understand?”

Jordan nods, getting Stiles meaning. “Yes. I understand.”

“Good. Besides, Lydia will never allow anyone here to push you further than you’re willing to go.
“Alpha be damned. That’s the thing about banshees, they’re a little beyond the rules.”

“Fitting Lydia would be one.”

“ Took the words right out my mouth.” Stiles digs his fork into his last bite of cake and eats it. “God, that cake was much needed. Thanks.”

“You’re welcome.”

“If only I could eat cake every day. Actually, I think I did my whole junior year of high school. It’s a great stress reliever. I mean, who’s pissed off after cake? That’s like being mad after a blowjob.”

Jordan laughs. “Was high school that stressful you had to eat cake for an entire year?”

“No. I just had shitty eating habits when I was a teenager.”

“What about now? What’s stressing you out now?”

“You asking as a friend, or my doctor?”

“Both.”

“Well, right now, I’m stressed about fainting in the middle of a restaurant and scaring the shit out of my already worried husband. I’m stressed about Cora and Danny trying online dating. I’m stressed about my dad, and Melissa, and Derek’s parents not being here for the baby. I’m stressed that I might not be the best father I want to be and my kids will grow up and hate me and never come home for the holidays. I’m stressed that Christmas is right around the corner, which is usually when everyone is at each other’s throats. I’m stressed about assholes named Haigh—”

“Haigh?”

“Yeah. Don’t worry about it—”

“Kenneth Haigh?”

“…Did Lydia tell you about him…?”

“No. Just… I know him.”

“How?”

“He used to date Freya. They were engaged until she broke it off. He was cheating on her with some vamp cocktail waitress he met at a club,” Jordan says innocently, unaware of the connecting dots he’s just strung together for Stiles.

Stiles’ mind is racing, working everything out, trying to make all the pieces fit. Trying to work all of it out. To fix it.

“Stiles. Is everything alri—”

“…Isaac’s birthday is at the end of the week. We’re having a barbecue at his place. You should invite Freya. She should get the chance to know us. Really know us. That way she can see we’re not the people she thinks were are. There’s no pressure. It’s just a birthday party. The whole pack will be there. Everyone. And you can spend some time with Jason, and get to know him a bit better.”
“You think it’s a good idea, Stiles? I mean, I thought you agreed it would be best to let her think about things on her own?”

“And it’s been about what..? Two weeks since you’re fight? A little phone call won’t hurt.” Stiles hates having to manipulate Jordan, but in all fairness, it’s for the good of his pack, and though Jordan is Lydia’s mate, and intends to be pack, he isn’t yet. So if using Jordan’s connection to Freya to get to Agent Haigh is something he needs to do, then he’s going to do it. “Just a party invite to allow her the chance to meet everyone, and for her and Lydia to build something together. Are they not the two most important women in your life? They should try getting along.”

“I’d love for Lydia and Freya to be friends.”

“Well, maybe they can try again at Isaac’s birthday party. That is if Freya accepts the invite.”

“I’ll ask her. Hopefully, she will.”

“Good.”

Of course Freya will come. Stiles is almost certain of it. For the same reason Jason kept coming back to Valerie after finding out she was a Hale. Curiosity. No matter the moral high ground, curiosity always wins out. The desire to want to know pulls them in and drags them into the lion’s den. They want to know if all the rumors are true. They want to know if all the stories they were told were true. They want to know what the Alpha looks like and just how scary is he. They want to be close to the danger. In the mix of the foray. They want to be the first ones to tell their friends they were there when the Hale pack did this or did that. They want to know, because they secretly want to be apart of it. That’s what allowed Agent Haigh to cheat on Freya, not the vamp girl. It was the desire and danger around her that made her. Stiles figured very little of it was about the vampire herself.

He knows this because it’s what made he and Lydia so keen on joining Derek’s pack. Most of it of course was about Scott’s safety, seeing as how Derek is the one that turned their friend into a wolf, but the other part, the part they never said aloud, was that they found it all to be attractive. Stiles not only wanted to be close to the man his heart and soul wanted, but it didn’t hurt that he was also a dangerous criminal, feared and revered by all. His name, his pack and family name, were known by all and garnered him respect by terror. Stiles should have known then that they were mates. He had never been so wildly attracted to someone in his life, but it wasn’t just the human part of Derek that made his knees go weak, it was the wolf. Especially the wolf. The animal inside him that was primal and vicious. Stiles lost his breath at that; at the beast within, contained by the sexy human with the tender heart and sharp mind. Stiles never stood a chance. And neither does Freya. The darkness will intrigue her, like it does everyone. Some just want a peek behind the curtain, and others want to watch the whole show. Then there are those that want to be in the act, right along with the performers.

Stiles didn’t know which one Freya would be. He just hoped she stuck around long enough for him to figure it out.

“Who are you looking for?”

“What,” Stiles says, distracted.

“Your eyes keep darting toward the house and you smell nervous,” Derek says.
“Oh, uh, no one. I’m not looking for anyone.”

“You know that I can tell when you lie, right?”

“I’m just antsy. That’s all.”

“Your heartbeat sounded weird, which means that was either a half-truth or a deflection.”

*Fuck. Who the hell taught him that?*

“Braeden.”

“What?”

“You think Braeden is coming. Peter, Kira, Ethan, and Malia are already here. I doubt Braeden is going to show up. Let alone by herself. I mean, she didn’t come to Erica’s birthday party, and why would she? We really need to mend fences with her, Stiles. Especially since she’s pack now.”

“I told Jackson the same thing. The holidays are coming up and I want the whole pack together. She can’t be the only one missing.”

“Is that the only reason? You want a full table during Christmas,” Derek teases him.

“No, asshole,” Stiles snaps, hitting his husband’s steel arm. “I also feel like the biggest piece of shit on the planet for what I did to her. I threw ‘werewolf law’ in her face and used my authority against her to make you two break up. I know no amount of sorry is going to make her forgive me, but she is our beta now, and I want her to know what happened had nothing to do with her personally, but I was wrong. Completely wrong.”

“We both acted like jackasses with Braeden, but we’ll fix it. Or at least try to. Soon.” Derek places a sweet, chaste kiss on Stiles’ lips.

“It’s never a good idea for you to kiss me like that in public,” Stiles says against Derek’s lips.

“Why,” Derek asks coyly.

Stiles lips move to Derek’s ear. “Because now all I want to do is have you sit on my cock and work you on it until you roar out my name.”

Derek’s eyes bleed crimson and a low growl erupts from his chest. “Isaac’s bedroom. Now.” Derek grabs Stiles by the forearm and drags him through their friends and family toward the house.

Isaac owned a pretty nice house just outside the city with a large yard, perfect for outdoor parties. Isaac had never taken the opportunity until Jackson had mentioned changing the “venue” for Isaac’s birthday BBQ for a desired change of scenery, and to make use of Isaac’s huge yard.

Initially, he, Danny, and Lydia were supposed to jet set off to Rome for his birthday, but with Stiles being pregnant and Lydia finding her mate, plans to Italy were cancelled in favor of the whole pack being close together at home. Stiles had tried to encourage him to continue on with his original birthday plans, but the stubborn puppy refused, wanting to be as near Stiles and pack as he could be during Stiles’ pregnancy.

Derek had just made it past the threshold, into the house, when John called out to Stiles. Regrettably, he and Derek stopped to acknowledge his father. “Yeah, dad?”

“He, when you get a chance, me, Melissa, and Derek’s parents want to talk to you two.”
“Is everything okay?”

“Yeah. Everything’s fine. We just have something we need to discuss with you two later.”

“Okay... You swear--”

“Everything is okay, Stiles. I promise. Don’t start chewing your thumb over this, okay?”

“I haven’t done that since high school.”

Derek snorts, wordlessly calling Stiles a liar. Stiles shoots him a glare.

“Stiles.”

He turns to see Jordan enter the kitchen with a fair-skinned black woman behind him, trying hard not to appear nervous. Freya. She’s beautiful, and looks like the type of girl Jackson would make a serious play for. Stiles’ eyes quickly dart around to make sure he’s not anywhere near her. He needs to make a good first impression with her, and Jackson's game on women is pretty weak sauce by Stiles’ standards.

“Stiles. Derek. This is my best friend, Freya. Freya, Stiles and Derek Hale.”

Derek quickly shoots Stiles a glare, putting together who it was Stiles was really looking out for. Stiles shifts his eyes quickly, turning them warm and friendly at the girl. “Hi, Freya. Nice to meet you.” He shakes her hand.

Derek does the same. “Pleasure. Any friend of Jordan’s is a friend of ours.”

She gives a tight, polite smile at that.

“Jordan told me you two have been friends since you were little kids.”

“Yeah. 20 years we’re been friends.”

“That’s great. Lydia and I have been friends for about that long. Twenty-two years actually.”

“She said. She said you and her other best friend--”

“Scott.”

“—have been friends for over 20 years. She said you two are the most lovable guys she knows.”

“Well, we were, until Jordan,” he says with mock disapproval, earning a shy smile from the doctor.

Just then, Lydia walks in. She and Jordan peck. He wraps an arm around her waist, pulling her close.

Stiles catches the faint smile on Freya’s face. He knows that smile. She’s happy for her friend. Happy he’s found love. And now he’s happy because he’s found his angle. He’s found the way to dig deep in her and pull out what he needs. “God, you two are cute. It’s sickening.”

“Thank you, Stiles,” Lydia says with an eye roll.

“Oh, come on. Derek, Freya. How disgustingly cute are these two?”

“It is pretty disturbing. Did we ever look like that,” Derek asks.
“Worse. You two were—still are obscene,” Lydia says.

“Had my dad not interrupted us earlier we could have been a better kind of obscene,” Stiles grumbles.

Jordan blushes and Derek’s ears turn pink.

“Do I even want to know what he said,” Lydia asks Jordan. He shakes his head. “Just not here guys,” she says to her Alphas. “I mean, this isn’t the pack house. It’s Isaac’s place.”

“Speaking of which, who is Isaac? I think I should at least say ‘happy birthday’ and thank him for inviting me,” Freya says.

“Oh, he’s outback making s’mores with Laura’s daughters,” Lydia says. “I’ll go get him.”

“I’ll come with you. I should say ‘hello’, too.”

Lydia and Jordan exit out back to fetch Isaac.

Freya’s face shifts into a scowl at Stiles and Derek. She steps closer to them. “Look, I know Jordan told you why I couldn’t give my blessing to he and Lydia, and I appreciate you being nice enough to try and mend fences between us by inviting me. But I really shouldn’t be here. For a number of reasons. I mean, on the surface, Lydia is great—”

“Below the surface she’s pretty great, too,” Stiles can’t help but jab at her curtly.

“She makes Jordan happy—”

“And maybe that’s all you need to focus on,” Derek chimes in, taking Stiles aback with his blunt comment. “We’re not the ones in a relationship with Jordan. We’re not the ones he’s going to marry and have children with. Lydia is. And she’s more than good for him. She makes him whole. She’s the other half of him. They can’t live without each other, so they’re going to make a life together, with or without your approval. They would just like to have it is all.”

If Stiles could, he’d get down on his knees and blow Derek this instant. Here he was making plans to be underhanded and—dare he say it— sneaky, but Derek cut right in with the hardcore truth and threw it in her face like a bucket of ice water.

Before Freya can rebuttal, Lydia and Jordan walk into the kitchen with Isaac behind them...and the most unexpected thing Stiles could think of happens. Right in front of everyone:

Isaac falls to his knees, claws extended, eyes burning canary yellow, fangs extended and snarling out a growl.

Jordan catches Freya as she sinks to the floor, losing her breath and clutching her chest. Her eyes blown wide and swimming with painful tears.


Isaac’s claws scrape against the wood floors, digging aching grooves into it.

Freya’s body convulses in Jordan’s arms as her fists tighten in his shirt.

Isaac’s body is like cinder blocks, heavy weight forcing him further to the floor. Derek rushes to his beta, arm around his slumped body, whispering comforting confidences in Isaac’s pointed ears.
Stiles’ first thought is how over the moon he is for Isaac finding his mate. If anyone deserves happiness beyond belief, it’s him. His second thought is of the panicked look he glimpses on Jackson’s face when he steps inside the house. His third thought—Agent Haigh is officially dealt with.

Chapter End Notes

Can someone help be find the artist for the wolf painting? My research skills are pretty killer, but not Stiles killer, and I can't seem to find them. I'd like to give them credit where credit is due, especially if I'm using their artwork...For anyone who finds them, I owe you one prompt! :)

Secondly, I completely and utterly stole a piece of the epilogue from STAND BY ME as the backstory for the death of Jordan's father when I watched it this week for the 900 millionth time.

Thirdly, I know the birthdays (except Isaac and Derek's) in the fic are non-canon, but hey, it's a non-canon fic, so...Plus, Derek has always seemed to be a Scorpio in my eyes, which is a water sign, and water signs are only compatible with earth signs. Stiles' canon sign is Aries (which makes SOOOOO much sense), which is an air sign and not compatible with Derek. And that, ladies and germs, is my very sad explanation for changing their canon birthdays...instead of simply just saying 'because I felt like it'. LOL
“MINE!”

“Yours,” Freya whispers, unable to help it slip off her tongue.

Isaac makes for her, but Derek and Scott hold him back. “This again,” Scott whines.

Isaac snarls and growls, angry at being kept at bay from his mate. Jordan stands protectively in front of Freya who’s breathing rapidly, eyes transfixed on the wolf in front of her.

She slides from Jordan’s protective shield.

“Freya.” He tries to grab at her but she dodges his hold. “Freya, you shouldn’t—”

But she’s already there, standing right in front of him, not an ounce of fear in her. And all anybody can do is watch.

His wolf slowly begins to clam down, heeling at her presence.

Tenderly, she runs the back of her hand down his face, in nice, easy strokes. “Shhh… I got you. I’m here,” she says softly. “I’m here.”

He shifts back into his human form; Freya’s soothing helpiing to bring him down. Derek and Scott let go of him and step back, a bit amazed at Freya’s ability to anchor Isaac so perfectly. And so quickly, like she's been doing it for years.

Isaac looks at her. Really looks at her, as though the world was created in her eyes, and it was a sight to behold. “I’ve been looking for you.”

“…I know. I’m here now.”

Isaac pulls her into a sweeping kiss. The type of kiss love songs and poetry is written about. The world falls away, and it’s just them. Only them.

It’s too much for Jackson. Far too much. He pushes through Allison and Thomas, flying out the
Stiles’ eyes shift to Derek. Derek nods at him to follow Jackson. *Go. I got this.*

“Don’t Stiles! Just fucking don’t!” Jackson continues on to his car.

“Don’t tell me ‘don’t’. I’m your Alpha, Jackson Henry Whittemore III, and I said stop. Now.”

He does. Wanting to disobey with all his might, but can’t.

A heartbeat of silence passes between them, making the actual gap separating them feel wider...

Stiles crosses the yard to Jackson’s car and stands at the passenger side door. “Let’s get out of here for a minute.”

“…Isaac needs you.”

“Derek’s’ taking care of it. And I’m taking care of you. Now open the fucking door.”

Jackson wants nothing more than to run away from this place right now. He feels like he’s choking on the smell of Isaac and his mate. But he doesn’t want to talk either. If he has to though, it might as well be with Stiles.

He unlocks the car door.

Stiles has only been to Jackson’s place a handful of times. For one, he didn’t like it. It’s didn’t feel homey, but gaudy and impersonal. It felt like a neon sign to slutty golddiggers about how much money Jackson had. Which Stiles hated for a number of reasons. The most practical being that his betas are supposed to be keeping a low profile, making sure there’s less attention on them as possible, and Jackson’s place doesn’t do that.

Stiles was happy that his pups were enjoying their wealth, but they needed to be careful about how they spent it. Jackson liked shiny, flashy, extravagant things, so there was always a discussion with him about whatever his latest purchase was.

The second reason he’d hardly ever been over to Jackson’s place was simply because Jackson never invited him over. Only Lydia, Isaac, and Danny were familiar with it beyond a birthday party, and the housewarming when Jackson first got the house. Mainly because Jackson actually didn’t spend a lot of time there. Only when he wanted to have sex with someone was he home. Any other time, he was either at Danny’s place, or the “pack house.” Derek was surprised at the fact that out of all their betas, Jackson was the one that was frequently around.

Stiles knew why though. He was lonely. And big expensive things don’t fill the void, they just make it bigger. And Stiles and Derek’s house felt like a real home, and helped Jackson forget the void. Even if it was just temporarily.

“I can’t believe you like this movie.”

“It’s a great fucking movie. You’re insane,” Jackson responds. “Derek liked it.”

“Derek doesn’t like anything made past 1983. He doesn't even like *Fight Club*, and all boys like *Fight Club*. ”
“He liked this. He told me. And he liked Gladiator.”

“When did he watch Gladiator?”

Jackson shrugs. “I don’t know. Couple years ago. Pack wasn’t living together then. I remember that.”

“Had I been around, I would have vetoed that movie pick.”

“What’s your deal with Gladiator,” he motions to the giant TV on the wall, “and Braveheart?”

“Braveheart is historically inaccurate and I hate Mel Gibson. And Gladiator is only good during the Joaquin Phoenix parts, other than that…”

“The dude fought a lion, Stiles!”

“CGI!”

“Ugh. I give up on you, Stilinski. You’re not going to ruin one of favorite movies of all time. Not now.” Jackson grabs the large bowl of popcorn between them and dumps a whole bag of Reece’s Pieces into it.

“I like your style. How do you feel about drinking soda through a Twizzler.”

“The same way I feel about dipping French fries in my chocolate milkshakes—I fucking love it,” he says with complete seriousness.

“You better have Twizzlers and not be fucking with me.”

Jackson reaches into the bottom drawer of his nightstand and pulls out a value pack size of Twizzlers and dumps them in Stiles’ lap. Stiles readies to tear into them, but Jackson quickly grabs the bag. “Wait. How much candy are you allowed, or supposed to have?”

“Are you kidding me, Whittemore? You, too?” Stiles pouts and lies back against the mountain of pillows on Jackson’s bed.

“I got granola bars and some yogurt.”

“Fuck you. I want candy… What kind of yogurt? The kind with the fruit on the bottom?”

Jackson nods.

Stiles concedes with a shrug. Jackson climbs off the bed and disappears out the room.

Stiles grabs the remote—“I’m still watching that, Stiles,” Jackson calls. Stiles throws the remote down with a groan.

His eyes wander around the room. “Jesus, this place is ugly,” he whispers to himself.

“Well, then it’s a good think you don’t live here,” Jackson says, entering the room. He hands Stiles two cups of blueberry yogurt, some granola bars, a small bowl of grapes, and large bottle of water.

Stiles looks over at Jackson’s snacks: popcorn (with candy mixed in), Twizzlers, Slim Jims, trail mix, peanut butter cookies, salt and vinegar potato chips, cheese balls, and a two liter bottle of Sunkist orange soda.
“Jealous?”

“Very. Come on. Let me have one Twizzler.”

“Nope. Derek will kill me.”

“He’s not here.”

“He’ll smell it on you, bypass ending you, and murder me instead. Not. Worth. It.”

“Wow. Didn’t know you were a full-blown pussy.”

“Is your reverse psychology really that transparent?”

“Isn’t everyone’s?”

They laugh. A comfortable, easy laugh. One of many private ones Stiles has gotten to share with Jackson over the years. It’s these moments that they both silently wonder how close they could have been all those years ago. If Jackson weren’t so conceited, and Stiles so judgmental. But then they were kids. What did they know?

“Why do you and Scott fight so much?”

Jackson shrugs.

“Really?”

“I don’t know. He just… You know everyone better than they know themselves. Why do you think we fight all the time?”

“Because you’re jealous of each other-- Don’t give me that look. Danny and I have already made our conclusions about it years ago. I just wanted to see how upfront you’d be about it.”

“So, you were testing me. Like what Lydia used to do?”

“No. Not like that,” Stiles says, a little offended. “I wanted to see if you really knew why, or if you needed me to tell you why. It seems you need me to tell you.”

Jackson rolls his eyes.

“Scott never wanted to be a wolf, and from what I understand, was pretty pissed at Derek for making him one for a while. You, on the other hand, saw it as a ‘gift’. Not completely understanding what being turned really means, but you didn’t hate it, and you wanted to be the best wolf you could be. Scott hates that being one is another thing added to the already long list of things you’re good at. He’s never been good at much, and doesn’t think it’s fair that one person is good at so many things.”

“…And why am I jealous of Scott?”

“Aside from all the stuff with him and Isaac that turned you into the evil, green monster? Scott’s good at all the things you’re not. He’s good at the emotional stuff. He’s good at being liked. At being loved…and loved back.”

“And I’m not good at being loved?”

“You know what I meant. He’s open. You can’t keep treating only me and Danny like family, and
the rest of the pack like a bunch of coworkers.”

“I don’t! I love everyone in that house, Stiles! I told you that!”

“What good is it if only I know?”

“I… I’m not mushy, and affectionate. I mean, I want to… I do care. Even when no one thinks I do. I just can’t change overnight.”

“But we do acknowledge you can change? Need to change?”

“…Our pack is strong. It’s taken us a few years to get here, but we’ve been solid ever since you and Derek got married. Me not being able to… I’m not weighing us down. I’m not hurting anyone,” Jackson says. “At least not the way Scott used to,” he mumbles under his breath.

Stiles catches it anyway and rolls his eyes.

Jackson doesn’t seem so much into talking anymore, so Stiles settles into the cushy bed, watching Mel Gibson give formulaic speeches about war and freedom.

His eyes begin to feel heavy, and despite not liking Jackson’s house, his bed is comfy, and it’s warm in the room, made by the fireplace. It’s been a long day. Especially for someone that’s pregnant. He’s just about to doze off when—

“You loved Malia, right?”

“Huh,” he says, shaking awake sleepily.

“You loved Malia, right?”

“Yes,” Stiles answers yawning wide.

“Even when you and Derek met and everything?”

“Up until, yeah. I loved her. Truly. Until I met Derek.”

“And what? You and Derek locked eyes and all of a sudden your feelings for her just…washed away?”

“Thinking about it now…Yes. They did.”

“That’s bullshit! How can you love someone, and the moment this other person shows up, you don’t want anything to do with them? So, what, that means everyone is spending all their time waiting for their mate, or soulmate? They’re just biding time with other people, curing their loneliness, until the real, right thing shows up?”

“I never saw it that way, but…yes. No one compares to a mate. Everything before then sort of--”

“Doesn’t matter?”

“That’s too harsh a way to think about it, Jackson--”

“But it’s the truth. The moment you met Derek, Malia meant nothing.”

“She did mean something. She still means something. She was my first…everything. I still cared about her, and didn’t want to hurt her. That’s one of the reasons it took me and Derek so long to get
to where we are now, because I couldn’t just throw away this girl I shared so much with like she was garbage. She deserved more than that.”

“And you were scared. Of Derek.”

“I was terrified of him,” Stiles says. “I had no idea what these feelings were I had for him, why they were so goddamn strong, if it was love, or just attraction, or what to even do with them. I didn’t know about mates and what was happening between us…but I couldn’t pull away. Not completely. No matter how hard I tried because I was confused. And blamelessly ignorant. I literally feel in love with Derek the first time I met him…and I’m sorry you had to watch that happen with Isaac.”

He’s known Jackson Whittemore for 12 years. He’s seen him cry only twice. This makes number three.

When he and Lydia broke up officially, it was so easy and quiet. No one noticed, and weirdly no one really cared, or minded. It didn’t feel like some “pack foul,” or that the fabric of their closeness was being pulled apart. When Erica and Boyd decided to make their relationship an open one, there was at least a collective sigh and some coaxing from everyone for them to “try and work through your issues,” and “maybe the space will make you two realize how much you love one another” moment.

“I know I’m not his mate. I’ve known that from the beginning, and I know Isaac said he was never in love with me, I just… I thought I could stand a chance. If I was good to him, and it eventually boiled down to me and this other person, he’d at least have to make a choice, and I’d know that I was one of them. But after what you just said, about Derek… I don’t even register to him,” Jackson says, his voice breaking and tears running down his face.

Stiles’ heart breaks. For Jackson and Malia. And Braeden and Kira. Victims of true love finding itself. He knew that this is what they must have felt like, but seeing Jackson here, crying, and heartbroken… It tears him in half. It’s the fifth heartache he’s had to deal with, all over the werewolf gods deciding it’s time love found its way. There’s a trail of broken hearts left in the wake of two people discovering each other. And the worst part about it is that it’s no one’s fault. Not the mystical aspect of it anyway.

Stiles pulled Jackson close and leaned back. Jackson rested his head on Stiles’ belly while Stiles stroked his head soothingly. “Maybe you should go for a run. Kill something big and agile.”

“…No. I want to stay here with you.”

“And wallow?”

“And wallow.”

“Okay. Wallowing’s good. Nothing like a good wallow.”

Jackson manages a small, quiet laugh, “You’re so weird, Stilinski. So weird.”

Stiles shrugged and continued petting Jackson’s head. He’s know for a while now that Jackson’s declarations of Stiles’ personality, where really just hidden ‘thank yous’ and ‘I love yous’. However, he looked forward to the day Jackson would grow up enough, be comfortable with himself enough, to really tell Stiles that he cared.
Stiles feels the warm body beside him abruptly disappear and start rambling in a terrified tone. His eyes slowly lift open. He stretches and yawns. He sits up, catching his husband standing beside him, and Jackson on the other side of the bed appearing very anxious. “Relax, Jackson. Daddy’s not going to spank you for falling asleep next to mommy.”

Derek raises an eyebrow at Stiles.

“Oh, stop it, sourwolf. You’re scaring the puppy.” Stiles gets to his knees and kisses Derek. A passionate, tongue kiss that makes the Alpha moan in his mate’s mouth. Stiles pulls away, “Do I taste like another man to you?”

“No. But you do taste like licorice.”

“Stiles, did you eat those Twizzlers after I fell asleep,” Jackson scolds.

“No.”

“Liar,” both Derek and Jackson accuse.

“Oh, my God! I had three! Three lousy and delicious pieces of candy! You can not completely cut sugar from my diet! That’s why I fainted!”

“It doesn’t mean you should be eating artificial sugar, Stiles,” Derek says.

“This is my nightmare. This is what I meant about pack moving back in.”

“Stiles. We’ve had this argument numerous times, and I don’t want to have it again. You’re just whining now.”

“No, I’m not,” Stiles says…whining.

“Can I take you home now? Isaac needs to talk to you.”

Stiles looks to Jackson. Jackson nods, understandingly.

Stiles slips off the bed. “I have to pee first.” Stiles disappears into the master bathroom.

“...You alright,” Derek asks Jackson.

“No. But I will be. In time.”

“It wasn’t like it was with you and Lydia, the way it was with you and Isaac.”

“No. It wasn’t.”

“I’m sorry. As amazing as mating is, it…it can hurt a lot of people. And I don’t want any of you hurt.”

“I know.”

Derek knows he’s not Stiles. Jackson will never open up to him the way he does with his husband. Not to mention, Derek’s not the greatest at sharing emotions either. He’s a bit closed off, too. Stiles helps though. With both of them apparently.

Stiles comes out of the bathroom and puts his shoes back on. He turns to Jackson, “You make yourself scarce from the house and I’ll hurt you. You know that, right? I know this is hard, but
we’re a family. I need you. Especially now. Understand?"

Jackson lets a small smirk onto his face. “You really are weird, Stilinski.”

“I love you, too. And one of these days I’m going to get you to say it.”

Stiles takes Derek’s hand as they leave.

“Where were you? The most important moment of my life happened and you weren’t there!”

“I know, puppy. I’m so sorry. I did see it. I did see you with her, and it was really beautiful.”

“I wanted you there. To talk to. I mean, Derek was there, and he was great, but…”

Derek’s eyebrows shoot up to his forehead.

“No offense, Derek.”

Derek rolls his eyes, taking a seat in his chair. The constant reminders of him not being able to handle his betas emotional traumas was starting to grate on his nerves over the years. He tries. Isn’t anyone going to give him credit for that?

“Goldilocks. I had to go. Jackson was really upset--”

“Jackson? Jackson! Oh, shit, Jackson!”

“Yeah.”

“Is he… Is he okay?”

Stiles shakes his head. “But he will be. Eventually. I don’t think you’re his end-all-be-all, but right now, yeah, he cares about you a lot.”

“I know. I thought he understood, when I told him at Hale House.”

“Understanding doesn’t mean ‘okay’. No one’s ever okay with not being loved back. It also doesn’t mean giving up hope. Unfortunately. You should know that.”

“Do you think I should talk to him again?”

“Yes, but not now. Fresh wounds and all.”

Isaac nods, feeling guilty about everything suddenly.

“Hey. Tell me about Freya.”

And immediately, his face lights up like a Christmas tree. “We talked for a long time. All night. Then we fell asleep in my bed. Nothing happened. I wanted to, but I know we have to ‘declare’ to you and Derek first. She left in the morning after Jordan made all of us breakfast.”

“Jordan stayed?”

“And Derek.”

“We slept on the couch. We just wanted to make sure everything was okay with them,” Derek adds.
“In other words, maiming and/or raping didn’t occur.”

“Stiles! I would never do that!”

“It happens though. Not often, but in rare cases. With some their wolf is just too strong, and the pull toward their mate too powerful,” Derek tells him.

“And in those rare cases, the wolf was an Alpha and hadn’t found their mate until almost the second quarter of their life.”

“Jordan said he almost lost control when he met Lydia.”

“That was different. Lydia was teasing his wolf on purpose.”

“I know how upset you were at Lydia, and how you still don’t like how you and Derek started, so I want to do this right.”

“I will not be mad at you if—”

“Not just for you and Derek, but for me, too. I want a really good memory of all this.”

“I want you to have that, too.”

Derek clears his throat.

“We both do,” Stiles corrects.

Isaac smiles. “Thanks.”

“STILES!”

Stiles makes his way into Lydia’s old room. Allison, Erica, and Cora are seated on the bed. Oh, shit. Some girly pow-wow that Lydia thinks she can include me in just because I happen to like boys…

“Alright. What is this?”

“Lydia’s trying on lingerie. Tonight’s the night with Jordan,” Allison says.

“Meow,” Erica says in a sexy purr that only she can master.

“Looks like they’re playing ‘doctor’ for real,” Cora giggles.

“Enough of that. I make the puns around here, ladies. What does that have to do with me being here?”

“Our dear, Red Queen, would care for your opinion,” Cora tells him.

Stiles groans. Girly shit. Like he thought.

“Alright, I’m coming out.” Lydia exits the adjoining bathroom into her bedroom…in an electric blue, see-through nightie. “Well…?”

“Uh, it’s, um, great, Lyds. Really cute,” Allison says politely as she can.

“Yeah… Cute,” Erica offers poorly.
“I mean, it’s not, uh, it’s… Yeah, like they said: cute.”

“Stiles?”

“It’s hideous, and completely trashy. Erica wouldn’t even wear that.”

Lydia squeals with delight, planting a big kiss on Stiles’ lips, leaving lipstick all over his mouth. “Thank you! That’s exactly what I was going for!”

“You want to look like cathouse trash,” Allison asks.

"Hey. None of my girls wear anything remotely slutty," Cora corrects Allison.

“Yes. I’m not paying for expensive lingerie just so Jordan can tear it off my body. Hopefully.”

“Always an ulterior motive,” Stiles says with an eye roll.

“In this instance, I prefer to think of it as ‘planning ahead’. Plus, it shows off all the good parts immediately.”

“I don’t see the point of trying to entice a man that’ll be turned on by you even if you wore a burlap sack and didn’t brush your hair for a month.”

“Ugh. That’s because you’re a boy, Stiles.”

“Thank you for recognizing that finally. And now, I shall take my leave. Good day, ladies.” He gives an exaggerated bow and leaves the room.

Stiles is labored and naked body covered in sweat atop the bed. He’s sticky, and his neck bitten and raw. Derek really went to town with the marking and scent marking. He figured he would, with Derek’s wolf having grown possessive over Stiles smelling like Jackson and Jackson’s bed. Then Lydia’s kiss made his mouth taste like her and Derek’s eyes burned scarlet and he dragged Stiles to their bedroom.

Derek made him shower vigorously then tossed him on the bed and took him apart, inch by inch (3 times!) with his mouth, hands, and cock, until Stiles smelled like nothing by Derek and his own cum. If Stiles weren’t already pregnant, he’d swear Derek was attempting to get him pregnant with his persistent and jealous love making.

It was the roughest Derek’s been with him since they found out he was pregnant, and Stiles missed it. He missed Derek claiming him over and over and over again like that. It made him feel desired and worthy. He had spent years ignored and dismissed by attractive men and women, and the most beautiful man he’s ever seen turned out to be his and his alone. The best part was that he wanted Stiles, was attracted to, and coveted the human boy. It turned Stiles on that Derek was so turned on by him, because for all his gangly, flailing, snarky, motor-mouth ways, Derek Hale, ‘werewolf demigod’, appreciated him, and thought Stiles was the sexiest person on the planet.

Derek steps out of the bathroom, naked, with still a sheen of sweat glistening his perfect body. He climbs into bed with Stiles. Stiles rolls into his side, and Derek wraps an arm around him. “You okay? You hurt?”

“No. Far from it.”
“You smelled. Like people that weren’t me.”

“I know.”

“Please tell Lydia to stop kissing you on the mouth.”

“No. Not if the end result is you fucking me into our bed 3 times in an afternoon.”

Stiles lazily runs his fingers through Derek’s chest hair, his nose buried in his skin. It was one of the few times he wished he was a wolf. Just so he’d know what Derek smelled like. He asked Scott to tell him once, but Scott got weird about sniffing Derek for Stiles’ benefit, and couldn’t intelligently describe just the base smell of him that he’s been around for years. Stiles got frustrated with his friend, finding it annoying that he could write sonnets on how Allison smelled of Jasmine and tasted like mangos, but couldn't find a single adjective to describe the root smell of Derek’s scent.

“Five and a half more weeks.”

“I know,” Derek smiled.

“You nervous?”

“No. Excited.”

“Me, too. I think they’re girls.”

“I think they’re fraternal. A boy and a girl.”

“That’d be cool.”

Two simultaneous tunes interrupted them. They both groan and grab their cellphones from the nightstands. “My dad,” Stiles says.

“My parents. They want us to meet them at an address. It’s in Marin County.”

“I got the same text.” Stiles looks over at Derek’s phone. It’s the same address as the one text to him. “You know what’s going on?”

Derek shakes his head.

“Shit. My dad wanted to talk remember?”

“Fuck. Alright. Let’s get dressed. Tell your dad we’ll be there in an hour.”

“Not in five o’clock workday traffic.”

“Two hours then.” Derek climbs out of bed. “Then come take a shower with me,” Derek says with a sly smile before walking into the bathroom.

Yeah, being wanted by Derek Hale is pretty nice.

“Wait. You bought this home? This week?”

Theo and Talia nod at Stiles’ question.
“Why?”

“Isn’t it obvious? We’d like to be closer to you and Derek and the baby while you’re pregnant,” Talia says.

“You didn’t sell Hale House, did you,” Derek nearly shouts.

“Of course not. We raised you and your sisters in that house. We would never; in addition, to a number of other important reason why that will never happen. We did, however, sell the townhouse in New York.”

“Oh, Val, is so pissed when she finds out,” Derek grins.

“Valerie’s attachment to a townhouse 3,000 miles away is not of my concern. What has concerned me, to no end with sleepless nights, is the two of you and the child you’re carrying.”

“Hear, hear,” John adds.

“I’m taking good care of myself and following every rule and guideline Jordan gives,” Stiles tells them, a little annoyed at everyone’s smothering.

“Is that why you fainted,” John asks sarcastically.

Stiles glares at his husband. “I told only Laura,” Derek swears.

“Who told me,” John says.

“Who told us,” Talia says of her and Theo.

“And I told them—all of them— that feeling faint or dizzy during this stage is normal, and if Jordan is not concerned then they shouldn’t be,” Melissa says.

“Thank you, Melissa. Laura is dead,” Stiles threatens.

“Now, tell water not to be wet. You can’t. It’s impossible. Just like me being concerned about my pregnant son. I’ve seen this kid jump off a roof with an umbrella because he saw Julia Andrews do it in a movie with dancing penguins.”

“Hey! I was 10 years old!”

“With a broken leg afterward, which you had the nerve to complain about all summer," John reminds his son.

“Ah. I do remember that. And the terrified look on Scott and Lydia’s faces in the hospital waiting room,” Melissa says.

Derek snorts. “You wanted to be Mary Poppins? You never told me that,” Derek says, trying to bite back a laugh.

“I hate you right now. Truly,” Stiles scowls at Derek.

“The point is,” John returns to the subject at hand, “we’re worried, and excited, and happy and scared. We want—need to be here with you, Stiles.”

“We did the same with Laura when she was pregnant with Soleil, and Valerie when she was pregnant with Rose. There’s always a desire to be close when a pack member is with child.
Especially when that child is the first born. Not to mention the Alpha's child."

“It’s just temporary. Until after the baby is born,” Theo assures him.


“Laura, of course. She’s going to keep watch over the home territory while we’re here,” Theo says.

“Well, at least she’s not alone. You two and Deaton will be there,” Stiles says, nodding at his father and Melissa. “What,” he asks of their weary looks.

“So, this might be the part you don’t like,” Melissa starts. “We’re, uh, not exactly going to, um, be there…in Beacon Hills.”

“What,” Stiles says.

“Where are you going to be,” Derek asks with a perfectly raised eyebrow.

“Oh, my God! Here,” Stiles figures out. “All of you can’t stay here and leave Laura unprotected, and without telling us first.”

“I agree,” Derek adds.

“She’s not unprotected. Laura does have betas—”

“Two. Boyd’s sister and Isaac’s brother.” Stiles reminds.

“—a few ‘foot soldiers’—”

“Four,” he reminds again. “None of which are on the Beacon Hills Police Squad.”

“Actually, that’s no longer true.”

Stiles and Derek are stunted at their parents and the actions they’ve taken without their consent.

“Who did you bring into the fold,” Derek asks.

“Without consulting us first,” Stiles tacks on with a stern tone.

“…Tara,” John says.

“Tara? Tara who used to help me with my math homework,” Stiles asks with wide eyes of the sweet woman who was always nothing but nice to him while the other deputies in the department treated him like a nuisance. She came over their house a few times for dinner. When his mother was still alive.

“Yes. You know she can be trusted.”

“What are you giving her,” Stiles asks.

“We’re paying off her mortgage, and her daughter’s tuition at MIT,” Talia says.

“And she’s running the station while I take a leave of absence to be here with you. She knows all suspicious activity is to be reported to or questioned with Laura and Laura only. Laura does the same. Just as if I were there,” John says.

Stiles and Derek are obviously and rightfully hesitant. Their parents know better than to bring
someone in without them being properly vetted by Danny; they could be a snitch for the FBI, or working with another pack for inside information.

But they were also the people who started this “business,” then handed it down to their children to take over. They built it. They made the rules. Most of which are still followed by Stiles and Derek now. They’re not dumb, or reckless. They’re just…grandparents, wanting to be near the newest addition to their family. It was John and Melissa first grandchild, and Theo and Talia were wolves, being close to pack was a necessity, and apparently tradition with the first born child.

“Can you afford time off from work,” Stiles asks Melissa.

“No, but my 'other' son has been meaning to take care of me for a while. I think it’s about time I let him do that,” she says with a good-humored smile.

Stiles and Derek exchange glances…

“Laura calls about anything, anything at all, and you have to go back home,” Derek says.

“We know that. And we accept it,” Theo says, trying to hide the proud smirk at his son’s authoritative tone despite it being directed at him.

“Okay. So… Who wants to make me lunch?”

Talia raises her hand.

“Anybody but Talia. I’ve had enough Quinoa salad to last me a lifetime.”

Theo snorts—then quiets at his wife’s scowl.

“I’ll make you a nice pasta,” Melissa says. She kisses his cheek and heads to the kitchen.

“I’ll help you,” John says, following her out of the room.

“If you tell me what’s going on between my dad and Melissa I’ll let you two in the room first after I give birth to the twins.”

“They’re dating,” Talia and Theo spill without hesitation.

“Knew it! Wait until I tell Scott!”

“You’re evil, and I hope our children don’t take after you,” Derek says dryly.

“I think the word you're searching for is ‘clever’, or ‘resourceful’ maybe…?”

“No. No ‘evil’ fits. Perfectly.”

Stiles rolls his eyes.

Freya opens the door. Isaac stands on the other side. His face brightens at her presence. “…Hi.”

“Hi.”

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to barge in on you like this, it’s just that I remembered you said you’re home from work around seven, and I really, really wanted to see you.”
She smiles shyly. “No. No, it’s okay. I don’t mind you—”

He cuts her off with a hard kiss. They fall into her apartment. Isaac closes the door with his foot, lips still on Freya as they kiss zealously.

“We didn’t do enough of this last night.”

“I know,” she agrees.

His right hand runs through her hair, the other slides down her back and squeezes her ass.

“Isaac.”

He pulls away. “I’m sorry. Too much?”

She smiles at him. “No.”

He smiles back. “Good.” He leans in, but she hesitates. “What’s the matter? We don’t have to have sex, Freya. That’s not what I’m looking for. I mean, I want to make love to you, but not if you’re not ready. And not before we’ve ‘declared’ ourselves to each other.”

She pulls out of his arms. He takes note of the worried expression on her face. “What’s the matter? Tell me.” She still looks pensive. “Please.”

“…I have absolutely no doubt that we belong together, and probably have been for 100 years. I know that I love you. You’re it for me. I may not be a were, but I understand this. Mating.”

“…But,” he asks, sensing the direction this conversation is heading.

“Jordan told me what happens in a ‘declaration’. I have to be a member of your pack. The Hale pack. I don’t know if I can do that, Isaac.”

“Is this about you being human, because that doesn’t matter. Stiles is human, and Allison, and Danny—”

“I know— I hear about the things you do. The things the Hale pack is capable of. If they’re true, I don’t know if I can willfully be apart of that.”

“Those are just rumors that—”

“Tell me what you do for a living then,” she says with a scowl, not liking his attempt at lying to her.

“I work for Stiles and Derek. They own a chain of laundromats and a few nail salons. And two nightclubs and a restaurant downtown.”

“And what exactly do you do for them?”

“I’m…” He doesn’t want to do this. He doesn’t want to lie to her, but if she feels this way, he can’t tell her the truth either. “Freya. Please.”

“Rule number one: Don’t ever lie to me.”

“Then I can’t tell you. I’m sorry.”

Tears swim in her eyes and Isaac feels like she’s slowly drifting away. It doesn’t help that she’s put
a wide gap between them physically to match how he feels.

Her arms are wrapped around her body, hugging herself as she bites her lips, head down, eyes closed. She’s thinking. Or trying to. Too much is rushing through her head at the moment. Her conviction is fighting with her heart and she’s not sure which one she should let win. She’s tore between telling him he should leave, and wanting him to hold her, kiss her, and whisper against her body how much he loves her. He can see it, all of it, on her face.

“Have… Have you ever hurt anyone before?”

“No. Not anyone innocent.” He approaches her and pulls her arms away from wrapping herself up in a secure ‘hug’. He’s her security now. His eyes shift to their beta yellow. “See? I’m not lying. If I were, my eyes would be blue.”

“Jordan’s are blue.”

“Are they?”

She nods.

“He hurt someone after he was turned. Before he knew control. A homeless guy in the park at night. The judge found him guilty, but knew he had pity on Jordan because he was turned randomly and wasn’t taught to heel his wolf. He spent a year in jail, and then had to go to B.A.H.D.W. for a year, plus outpatient therapy… He still goes to therapy.”

“I didn’t know that.”

“Taking a life is a big deal. It can cripple you in ways you’ve never imagined.”

He pulls her closer, wrapping her in his arms. “I’m not a bad guy, Freya. No matter what you hear. All that matters is you and me.”

“That’s what Jordan said about him and Lydia when he asked for my blessing. I couldn’t understand how he could ignore the things he was aware of, and still love Lydia. And still want to be apart of her pack.”

“Is that how you feel?”

“Is me being in your pack important to you?”

“…Yes.”

“Can’t it be just you and me? Can’t I be with you without being in the pack?”

“No. It doesn’t work like that;” he says sadly. “With were’s, packs are everything. Belonging to them is more than important; it’s needed. Without a pack, a wolf could go insane. Or die from the insanity. That’s why places like B.A.H.D.W. exist.” He runs his hand gently down her hair. “I wish you were a wolf so you’d understand.”

Her eyes look deep into his as she leans into his touch. She's looking for something. An answer. A solution. Anything, and then-- “…Okay.”

“’Okay’ what?”

“Make me a wolf so I’d understand.”
Isaac is at a loss for words. His eyes dart all over her face, trying to decipher if she’s joking or not. “Say that again.”

“Make me a wolf so I’d understand.” He listens to her heartbeat. She’s not joking. She’s serious.

“Freya--”

“For us to be together, I have to be apart of your pack. But I have a moral objection to being in your pack. I know that’s something that won’t go away with becoming a wolf, but maybe it’ll give me a little clarity to see what you and Jordan see by being apart of it. Maybe if I were a wolf, in the pack, I could know how best to live with the truth, despite my objection to it. And if Jordan’s in the pack, too, he can--”

He cuts her off again with another hard kiss. He saw it on her face. The turmoil she was battling about the pack and who she is as a person, and it scared him. He was afraid he wouldn’t find the words to convince her, to make her stay with him, and know he’s not a monster. A predator, but not a monster.

Then she took him by surprise. She loved him that much. Wanted to be with him that much. She’d volunteer to be turned, for him. To better understand what he hoped, but couldn’t get across to her. He knew, too, that her being made a wolf wouldn’t make her worries and upset disappear, but it might settle her. It might soften her indignation and make her more malleable of his family. It would take a while, a good while, for her to get where Jason was now. He knew that, but he loved that she’d try. He loved that he meant that much to her.

They had fallen to the sofa, his hand up her sleepshirt, when he drew away from her, moving off the couch.

“What’s the matter,” she asks, slightly out of breath, her shirt rumpled and hitched up, exposing the flesh of her smooth stomach and panties.

“If I stay I’ll fuck you so hard and so deep into this couch you’ll be sore for a week.”

“Nothing you just said seemed like a problem.”

He couldn’t help but grin. “I thought we were doing this right.”

She sighs. “You’re right. You’re right. We have to go about this correctly. Especially if I’m going to be made a wolf.” She sits up, fixing her clothes.

Isaac extends his hand, helping her off the sofa. She walks him to the door. He turns around and gives her a sweet kiss that she melts into like a burning candle.

“Dinner tomorrow night,” he asks.

“Yes.”

“I’ll call you.” He turns to leave when—

“Isaac.” Freya reaches under her sleepshirt and pulls down her panties. She tosses them to Isaac before bidding him a ‘goodnight’ with a wicked grin and closing the door.

Jordan brushed his teeth at the sink in the master bathroom, feeling a bit worn out, and that the
simple task of even brushing his teeth was too taxing at the moment. Long day. Before dealing with a long patient list—one of which was pregnant with triplets and another on her 7th child—he stayed all night at Isaac’s house to look after Freya. Freya and Isaac hunkered down in Isaac’s room with the door shut until morning. He and Derek tuned them out, refusing to intrude on their conversations, but no doubt kept and ear out for anything that sounded out of the ordinary.

It took a while for him to get to sleep and got to know Derek a little better because of it. He had never met Talia and Theo’s kids growing up. Despite, their mothers being good friends. Talia and Alicia would invite each another’s children to their birthday parties, or coming-of-age soirées, but it was always hard coordinating everybody’s schedules. Not to mention, they lived a good distance away and as active children (on both sides) always had something or other to do, whether it was sports, summer camp, swimming lessons, debate team, AP classes, etc. So, when Derek and Stiles walked into his office with a referral from Talia and the last name Hale, he was excited to finally meet him.

Derek had always been a floating name mentioned by his parents when visiting or over the phone when their mothers would call. By the time they were adults, Derek had formed into this notorious name known throughout NorCal, associated with brutal crimes and ugly payback. He was admittedly surprised to meet anything but the monster Derek was portrayed as in whispers and newspaper articles. He was quiet, intelligent, and pretty even-tempered except when it came to his husband. Stiles was obviously his anchor, his weak spot, and he took the care and safety of his mate very seriously. He had to; their hearts were tethered together. If something ever happened to Stiles, it would destroy Derek. He knew that in the way they interacted with each other: the playful teasing, soft kisses of affection that were so customary they were hardly noticed by anyone else, and the fact that they were never far apart from each other in a room. At least not for long. He knew they couldn’t live without one another because he knew he couldn’t live without Lydia.

He found it amazing how a girl he’d only known for 7 weeks can make him feel that strongly about her, and have such a profound presence in his life.

He washed his hands quickly and shut out the light before stepping into the bedroom. The sight on his bed stopped him in his tracks and nearly knocked the wind out of him:

Lydia lay on the bed in her blue nightie. “I think we’ve waited long enough, don’t you?”

The exhaustion he felt a moment ago became a distant memory at what lay before his eyes—Lydia, half-naked, in cheap lingerie, on his bed in a seductive pose.

He crosses the room to her, standing at the end of the bed. Lydia crawls toward him, with her best enticing gaze. She reaches for the fly to his pants—

He stops her cold with a hand on her wrist, that turns into a gentle hand hold.

She lifts up kissing him wildly, and messily, smearing her lipstick all over his face.

He pulls back, then places a soft, sweet kiss on her mouth.

She slips her tongue in his mouth, gripping the back of his head, trying to push her entire self into her kiss, but Jordan removes her hand tenderly and slows down their kiss, taking control.

Lydia follows his patient lead, until her hands make their way beneath his undershirt against his back. She digs her nails in and drags them down to his ass, sliding her hand in the back of his pants, grabbing his cheeks.
Jordan breaks their kiss and brings her hand from his pants. He eases her hands to her sides then takes a step back from her. He grabs the hem of his shirt and lifts it over his head and off his body.

Lydia bites her lip to suppress a whimper at the hard muscle of her mate’s chest and stomach. She wants to lick every crevasse of every hard line of tissue, then drag her nails down him, leaving passion scratches that look like claw marks. But he’s too far away for her to reach without falling off the bed like some klutzy first-timer.

He unbuttons his pants and pulls them down with his boxers, stepping out of them, and kicking them to the side. He removes his socks, standing before her completely naked.

Lydia slowly unties the bow at the center of her nightie between her breasts. She teases, opening it just enough without exposing her bare breasts to him.

Jordan steps closer. He lightly removes the top of her nightie off her body, dropping it to the floor. “You’re so beautiful, Lydia,” he says, with the earnest of gazes. He leans into her, an arm around her back as he guides to the bed, following her.

He hovers over her, staring, looking right into her eyes. His hand rises, and a gentle finger traces her face, studying every inch and saving it to memory.

She wants to squirm and fidget. She’s uncomfortable. He’s making her uncomfortable. She feels exposed. Vulnerable. More so than when she chased after his car that night, or when she cried herself to sleep after they met her family, because he’s looking at her. Really looking at her, and seeing her.

His finger traces her lips and she can’t help but look back at him, the same way he’s looking at her, because he’s smiling. He’s smiling like she’s the most amazing creature he’s ever seen. He’s smiling like every tiny inch of her is a new discovery. He’s smiling at the instantaneous kiss her lips gives the soft pad of his finger.

And she settles, because she understands now. She understands why he grabbed her wrist, why he pulled his hand away from his hair, slowed their kiss down, and took a step back. He wanted this: her in his arms, knowing she belongs there, and that there’s no other place she should be. Ever. They had a lifetime ahead of them to tear each other asunder with clawing, biting, scratching, and pulling; they didn’t need to do it tonight. Tonight isn’t about that, and shouldn’t be about that.

“You’re beautiful, too,” she says. Her hand runs along his face that pinks with a shy smile.

“You heartbeat’s changed. Are you okay now?”

She nods.

“Can I make love to you now?”

She sits up. A chaste kiss on his lips that turns deliberate and sensual, tasting more like a vow than unspoken permission.

Lydia falls back onto the bed, her lips never leaving Jordon’s lips. His knuckles graze smoothly along her skin, from her cheek, to her collarbone, to the valley between her breasts, down her silky stomach and arriving at the junction between her legs with the same easy, delicate touch that traveled to get there, making her moan against his mouth with trembling lips.

Two fingers rub the triangle hidden beneath the see-through material. Lydia’s breathless body wiggles at the soft stroke causing her to moan in long pants.
The sheer fabric moistens and Jordan’s two teasing fingers slip into her underwear and repeats the same aching touch against her sensitive skin.

He mouths at her neck with a hand still down her panties, squeezing at the swollen button at the top of her pussy. Lydia moans and shakes, fisting the pillows around her head.

His hand disappears, along with the hot, wet feel of his breath on her neck. He slides her panties off, tossing them over the side of the bed. Her knees widen and he settles between them placing kiss after kiss on her belly.

His lips meets her inner thighs and she hooks her legs over his shoulders.

Her heavy-lidded eyes catch his as he licks the flush, soft skin of her right thigh. “Mark me.”

“Here,” he asks with nothing but want in his voice.

She nods. “Please.”

His eyes turn that brilliant shade of azure blue and his fangs drop. Jordan skims his pointed incisors along her inner thigh drawing two lines of blood. He laps at them with his tongue. A growl emerges from him, “Mine.”

“Only yours.”

Jordan’s mouth moves to her wetness with one, long, slow lick that sends lightening down Lydia’s spine, making her back bow off the bed.

Another, tantalizing lick… Then another… Another… Another… Another…

“Jordan… Please…”

The tip of his tongue circles around her clit in a lazy orbit. Lydia’s body responds in shock waves of pleasure, fisting the pillows tighter and tighter as her knuckles turn pale.

His mouth closes around her dark pink button, sucking intently as his index finger finds her wet hole, spiraling just outside it with only the tip.

Lydia is done. It’s been too long. She’s been waiting for this since they met, and his deliberate attempt at romance is driving her insane. She wants too much and his ministrations on her body—no matter how skilled to perfection they may be—are far too resigned for her to continue on as patiently as he can. She comes. She comes hard and fast, feeling her orgasm break through her being without warning with a loud moan that rattles the windows.

Jordan doesn’t give. His hot mouth still licks and sucks, pushing two long fingers inside her with an unforgiving and relentless rhythm. Lydia, overstimulated and wrecked, comes a second time with a brutal grip on Jason’s hair and tears running down her face.

He draws his fingers from her sensitive pussy, bringing them to his mouth to suck her cum from his fingers greedily, the taste and smell of her crowding around his senses is making his wolf pace with wanttakeminewanttakeminewanttakeminewanttakeminewanttakeminewanttakeminewant.

He heels his wolf for a moment. Lydia hasn’t moved from the fetal position in the last 60 seconds other than to sigh and whimper at the aftershocks of her orgasms. He sweeps a loving hand over her red locks, pushing them aside to see her flushed face and dark green eyes. “I love you,” he tells her.
“I love you, too,” she replies. “Make love to me.”

He bends down to kiss her.

She opens her legs, allowing him in the middle of her knees.

He rubs the tip of his hard cock up and down her pink box as she holds tight to his shoulders. “Oh, God… Jordan… Please…” She’s never begged so much with a man before.

Then she feels it, the bulbous, wet head push slowly inside her. Her knees meet his hips coupled with a sharp intake of breath, feeling him stretch her slick, honey walls.

He starts tentatively, driving Lydia crazy with need, and his wolf clawing at his chest to be let loose. To claim the girl like the animal he is, but Jordan holds him back, not ready for him to be set loose on his mate…

Lydia meets him stroke for stroke, desperate for him to make her feel as good as she had minutes ago when she sang his name and cried tears at the volcano erupting inside her.

Jordan’s movements become more persistent at the intense eye contact he holds with her. She sees him. Just like he saw her, and how vulnerable she was, how exposed she felt under his gaze, followed by the reassurance he gave her with his touch. She wants to do that for him. She wants him to feel safe. To know that with her there is no place safer. She needs him to know youwouldneverhurtme youwouldneverhurtme youwouldneverhurtme… She bore her message into his eyes, hoping he hears her. Hoping he listens and knows.

He bends down to kiss her. It’s a different kind of kiss, full of gratitude and happiness. He did hear her.

Their foreheads touch. Jordan’s hands flat on the bed on either side of her small shoulders. He pushes in quick and rough, making his mate moan.

He does it again.

And again.

And again.

Again.

Again.

Harder.

Faster.

Harder.

Faster.


“Touch yourself.”

Lydia taps two fingers against his mouth. He opens and slicks her fingers with his saliva.
Lydia’s fingers reach between their sweat-soaked bodies as Jordan continues pounding into her tirelessly, and rubs her clit. She moans and withers under him, painting a gorgeous mental picture for the wolf.

He grabs the headboard to leverage. *Harderfasterharderfasterharderfaster…* He hits that special spot. Lydia stops touching herself at the sudden and repeated push on her arousal to dig her nails into the wolf’s sides with a scream. Her climax crashes through her like a collision, making her toes curl.

Jordan lets go of the headboard to wrap his arms under her, bringing her close to his body, continuing to ravage her without mercy.

Lydia is a mop. She’s boneless and spent. She can barely hang on to Jordan’s shoulders; arms feeling like soppy, wet dough. They weren’t supposed to do this. He wanted to show her sweet and romantic, and she was to accept it, accept being unguarded and trust him to take care of her. But Lydia had to push Jordan’s fears aside and in the process let the wolf loose to possess her.

“So close… So… Argh, Lydia…” he growled.

“Come. Come for me. Come for me, Jordan,” she says, remembering how to speak. She wants him to. She wants to see the look. The blessed-out look of pleasure on his face at having had her, his mate.

Jordan slipped from her wetness and Lydia fell into the bed. He maneuvered up her body and jerked his penis, hovering right above her creamy, alabaster breasts, now blooming rose-colored with heat and pleasure.

Lydia pushes his hand away and takes his fat cock into her own hand. Jordan braces himself against the wall behind her. She knew he wasn’t being degrading or kinky, it was a werewolf thing. He needed to not only mark her with a bite, a scar, but with his scent, so other weres could smell him on her and know that she was taken. Know that she was claimed, marked, and when they were through, she’d submit and be nothing but his and his only.

Jordan roared above her, claws digging into the plaster as hot, ropes of cum coated Lydia’s breasts. He collapses into a heap beside her. She grabs his head and brings his lips to hers in a kiss.

“I love you,” he says out-of-breath, but with a satisfied smile.

“Is the wolf happy?”

“He’s over the moon. Pun intended. Stay. I’ll get you a wet cloth to clean up.” Jordan climbs out a bed, a bit dizzy on his feet a moment, before making his way into the bathroom.

He returns and climbs onto the bed with her. He presses a warm cloth on her chest, cleaning his excitement from her body. “I’m sorry I didn’t ask.”

“You don’t need to. I understand.”

“I wish my ex-girlfriend was as understanding as you about it.”

“I don’t ever want to hear about you scent marking another woman. Especially after we just made love.”

“Yes, ma’am. Message received.”
“Good.”

He smiles. Her self-assured, over confidence is endearing to him, yet fearful to others. He can’t help but be a little amused.

“I want to submit now.”

“Right now?”

She nods.

“You don’t have to right after. We can--”

“No. Now. I want to.”

He tosses the cloth on the nightstand and steps off the bed. He extends his hand to her. She takes it, climbing off the bed. “Should I be wearing clothes? I special gown or something?”

“Funny enough, this part we’re both supposed to be naked for.”

“Look at that, we already planned ahead.”

He laughs.

“So, what happens?”

“You kneel before me.” She does. “And I say the sacred mating vow and you reply, then bare your neck, and I ‘accept’ your promise and devotion to me.”

“Sounds like wedding vows.”

“Well, technically, mating rituals with weres is a marriage. We sort of became ‘were-engaged’ when I declared you to Stiles and Derek.”

“Oh…”

“Is that okay? Does that bother you?”

“No. Of course not. I just wish I wore a better outfit that day now.”

He laughs again. How could he not love this woman?

“Alright, come on. Say the vows.”

“Hold on. I have to get the paper Derek gave me.” He grabs the book off the dresser across the room. Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island*, his favorite book, she noted.

Between the pages is a slip of torn notebook paper. He grabs the paper and returns to his place before Lydia. “Lydia Ashley Martin, you have been declared as mine, and mine alone. You have been claimed, and marked as mine and mine alone. Now, you must devote your whole and complete self to me, as I have devoted my whole and complete self to you, by making you mine. Do you belong to me and me alone?”

“Yes.”

“Have you forsaken all others?”
“Yes.”

“Do you trust me? As your ally through this world, as your friend, as your lover, and as your mate?

“Yes.”

“Then bare your neck, and submit to me.”

She tilts her head back, exposing her neck.

“Lydia Ashley Martin, you are my anchor. My tether for when the world around me gets too heavy and chaotic. I need you, as you need me,” Lydia can hear his voice getting shaky. It makes the sting of tears burn at the back of her throat.

“If bad luck should befall us, may we meet in another lifetime, stronger than before.” Jordan puts the slip of paper on the bed. He bites his own fingers and quickly runs the bloody digits from her trachea to just under her chin before his wounds knit back together.

Lydia’s head falls back down, along with the tears she was fighting against. Jordan wipes them away with his thumb. His face, too, damp with emotion. He bends down, kissing her demurely.

He lifts her into his arms and plops her down on the bed with a bounce. Lydia whelp, then giggles.

Jordan opens the nightstand drawer. He takes out a small, black, velvet box and hands it to her. “J-Jordan…is…is-is…is this what I think it is?”

“I’d much rather it be ‘What you hope it is’.”

Lydia opens the box carefully. She nearly faints at the gorgeous ring inside. “Jordan… When?”

“After the day you came over here to apologize about dinner with the pack. The next morning, when you went to work, I asked my mother for my grandmother’s ring. Do you like it?”

“Yes. It’s beautiful. And yes, I will marry you.”

“I didn’t get the chance to ask.”

“Yes, you did. You asked me the day we met. And I said ‘yes’ then, too.”

He kisses her. He was wrong. He hasn’t only known Lydia for 7 weeks. He’s known her for centuries, because only a mate can hear what’s really being said in the midst of silence when they first meet.

Chapter End Notes

B.A.H.D.W. stands for Bay Area Hospital for Displaced Wolves, which will play a greater role in the fic later when a certain tiny wolf makes an appearance :) 

By the way, the artist for the painting I linked in the fic is Blaz Plorenta who created that lovely piece of fantasy art. Thank you once again QueenBee4Ever :) 

p.s.-- I owe you guys a flashback scene.
October (a)

Chapter Summary

Freya is included in some pack bonding, Derek discovers something about Jordan, and Lydia has a secret she fears telling her mate.

Chapter Notes

WARNING: subtle, but apparent mentions of miscarriages and infertility!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Isaac, excuse us for a minute please,” Stiles says.

Isacc looks nervously between Freya and his Alphas. “I-I’d rather stay.”

“Isaac. You know I was only asking to be polite, don’t you?”

He does. He knows Stiles, and he knows when Stiles is being finite in his authority. Reluctantly, he breaks from his chair. He pecks Freya on her forehead. “I’ll be right outside,” he tells her, and closes the door on his way out of Derek’s office.

Freya tries to not fidget under Stiles and Derek’s glare.

“Take your clothes off, please,” Stiles says nonchalantly.

“W-What?”

“Take your clothes off please. You can keep your bra and panties on.”

Both Stiles and Derek looked at her expectedly while Freya’s mouth hangs open in stunted shock…until she understood why they were asking.

With an annoyed sigh, she stood and removed her clothes, keep her underclothes on like Stiles told her she could, then twirled around so they could see her back as well. There was a long, ugly scar running from the middle of her back to her hip. It wasn’t a claw-like scar. It was too neat, and clean. Stiles figured it was from a blade, knife of some kind.

“Box cutter. Inmate got a hold of it during a riot and snuck up on me from behind,” she says, answering the unspoken question.

“You can sit,” Derek tells her.

She turns back around and sits back down. “See? No wire. Want to check my purse?”

“Danny’s already doing that,” Stiles says seriously.
“Of course,” she says, rolling her eyes.

“You’re not making the best impression right now on someone that you’re asking a favor from,” Derek says.

“I’m doing this for Isaac. Because I love him. And I wouldn’t call it a favor.”

“How much do you love Isaac,” Stiles asks her.

“Enough to ask Alpha Hale to make me a werewolf.”

“And why is that exactly?”

“I think being a wolf would better help me to understand your pack. Why Isaac and Jordan are apart of it, and why being apart of it is so important to them.”

“And as a human you can’t grasp that?”

“Your pack? This pack? No.”

“Yet, you’re asking to not only be apart of it, but want to be declared by one of it’s high-ranking members, and made a wolf? In that order,” Stiles asks sarcastically.

“I know being made a wolf will not cure me of my conviction, but it might help to better understand something, be more susceptible to something that Isaac lives and breathes for. It matters to him, so it matters to me. He said I didn’t understand because I wasn’t a wolf. I’m asking you this for clarity and for my relationship with Isaac. I love him, and can’t live without him. And he can’t live without this pack, so I need to change something between us, so that neither of us ends up in misery. Pack or not, without each other we both end up at the nuthouse.”

She loves him. She’d die for him. She’d lie, cheat, steal, and kill for Isaac. Stiles knows down to his very core she would. Not just because she’s his mate, but because he hears it in the way her voice shakes, they way her hands tick, and leg fidgets at the mere mention of not having him. Of going insane without him. Stiles has been there. It was hell. The type of hell he wouldn’t wish on his worst enemy... Maybe.

Derek senses it as well, which must be why he tells her— “I’ll give you ‘the bite’. But not any time soon. I need you to engage in some ‘pack bonding’ first. Plus, it gives me, Stiles, and Boyd time to acclimate you into becoming a were, and familiar with our rules and how we operate. Since you’re mated to a were ‘the bite’ will more than likely take.”

Freya nods, understanding.

“I’d like to make you a wolf before Isaac ‘declares’ you.”

“So you want us to wait on that?”

“Yes. I’ll speak to Isaac about it though. He’d be less likely to get upset if I do it,” Stiles says.

“…He calls you ‘mom’ when he talks about you sometimes… I see why,” Freya says to Stiles.

“I love that puppy. All of them, but Isaac… He’s needed a more focused kind of attention, for a long time. You two finding each other makes it clear it’s time for him to grow out of it, or that he has. He needs to be more independent and stand on his own two feet. Just like you need to be more open, and less critical. You both are going to help each other be better people. That’s what mates
do,” Stiles says.

She nods.

“You can dress now,” Stiles tells Freya.

She puts her clothes back on.

Derek approaches the door. Sure enough, Isaac is on the other side. Derek steps aside to let him in. Isaac immediately kisses Freya and takes her hand as he returns to the seat next to her.

Derek closes the door, and returns to his own chair. “I’m going to give Freya ‘the bite’.”

Isaac smiles brightly.

“But Stiles and I have some conditions first…”

April 2017

Derek’s eyes blew wide at the scarred and disfigured face staring back at him as Stiles threw the brown dust of mistletoe in Jennifer’s face. He wobbled on his feet a bit, dizzy, as though he were zapped awake, coming out of a coma, or deep sleep. His head was spinning with the memory of everything that had happened since meeting her.

She lied. Tricked him. Cast a spell on him, and killed innocent humans out of revenge against him and his pack, trying to frame him for all those murders.

His eyes bled crimson. His claws snapped out, but before he could move a centimeter, Stiles had a fist full of her hair in his left hand, yanking her from the floor. Her frightened face turned to Derek with wet tears pooling under her chin.

Stiles leaned into her ear and whispered something—"I told you not to hurt him. You should have listened"—before swiftly dragging the business end of his father’s old, combat knife across her throat!

And Derek sees it. It’s only a glimmer, but it was enough. He sees the glint of brutality in the boy’s eyes. Of apathy and violence. Of hatred and bloodlust. It’s only for a few seconds, but he saw it. He saw the love of his life kill without the faintest hint of cruelty. Or care. And it was for him. It was because of him. Stiles’ willingness to protect, to guard…it was frightening, and made the air around them cold.

Stiles let go of the hurtful grip on her long, brown locks, and Derek watched as her hands flew up to her neck, trying to stop the river of blood that poured from her neck. It ran all over her scarred hands, and splotched her white top cherry red.

She gasped and gurgled, rasping out pleas to Derek, who could only watch as her last breath exhausted from her mouth before she crumbled to his living room floor in a puddle of her own blood.

Derek’s eyes found the honey-brown colored ones he missed all these last weeks.

“One told you she wasn’t to be trusted.”
Stiles took off his flannel shirt and wrapped it around the knife. He then took his cellphone from his pocket and speed dialed a number.

“Hey… Yeah. Tell Scott and Jackson to get over to Derek’s at nightfall, and tell Danny we need a ‘cleaner’… Yeah… Okay… No, she was darach, she needs to be burned, not buried, so no fuck ups from those two, otherwise, she’ll come back… Yeah. That’s what Marin said… Okay… Thanks.” Stiles hung up.

“We,” Derek asked.

“Clearly, you need me. So, yeah, ‘we’.” Stiles stalked over to Derek and kissed him. Kissed him like he owned him.

Derek’s hands carded through Stiles hair as Stiles fist gripped Derek’s shirt. They pulled and grabbed at each other like with a hunger so rapacious it made Derek’s hands shake.

Stiles broke their kiss and pushed Derek out of his personal space. “That’s how a mate kisses you.”

Derek watched as Stiles strode out of his apartment.

“Cora and Boyd, can you two please clean up,” Stiles says.

The two betas nod, and begin clearing the table of empty plates. There’s never a drop of sauce left when Stiles makes lasagna rolls.

“There’s pumpkin pudding for dessert. You guys can dive into that while you watch Jackson’s movie pick. Lydia,” Stiles says as he stands, breaking from the table.

Lydia looks surprised, then curious as to why Stiles would call on her.

She follows him into the house.

They enter Derek’s office and Stiles closes the door.

“What’s up,” she asks.

“I don’t know. You tell me. You didn’t touch your dinner and you were staring off into space the whole time. Not to mention, you’re spending the night here tonight.”

“Because I moved back in while you’re pregnant, remember?”

“But you’ve been at Jordan’s almost every night for the past 8 weeks.”

“I wanted to sleep here tonight. That’s all.”

“Lyds. Stop. You’re a shit liar, and it’s because you don’t do it often, so not now. Tell me what’s wrong. You and the good doctor fighting?”

“No.”

“Then what?”

Sorrow takes a hold of her face and her eyes turn to glass. “Please don’t be mad at me.”
“Lydia, what’s wrong,” he asks, worried.

“I didn’t tell him,” she says, voice breaking and tears running down her face. “I couldn’t.”

Stiles sits her down in the cushy chair. “Tell him what?”

“About…” She covers her mouth to stifle her sobs, and Stiles knows what she means. He sits on the ottoman before the armchair and pulls her into a hug.

“I’m not mad at you, Lydia. Never. But you have to tell him.”

“I know, but he keeps talking about children, and I just… I just smile at him and nod, and say ‘yes’, but… I know I’d never lose him, Stiles. It’s not that. I just can’t bare the look. The disappointed look on his face.”

“He’d understand, Lydia. I promise you. He’s an obstetrician, for God’s sake.”

“It makes me feel like I’m not good enough for him.”

Stiles lets go of her, grabs her face, to tilt her head up and look at him. “Don’t. You. Ever. Understand? Ever. I will never listen to that, and I will never allow you to think that, so don’t,” he says with a stern seriousness that’s almost frightening.

“I’ve never been so scared. I’ve fought vampires with you, and stared down Omegas and hunters and deranged mermaids, and evil witches, but this…”

“…I love you. Scott loves you. And we’re not the only ones who do anymore. Know that, and understand it. He might be disappointed, but he’ll still love you, just as much as he did before you told him. Please believe that. And believe you’re more than what he deserves.”

“Now, you’re just being biased. You were after all, in love with me until you were seventeen,” she says, trying to smile. Trying to make light in the room suddenly turned heavy.

“True, you are a handful, but you are more than what most women are.”

“And that is?”

“Exceptional.”

She runs a loving, well-manicured hand down his face. "...I must have been a nun in another life, or saved some whales or something. You're too good to me, Stilinski-Hale. Imagine if I had loved you the way you wanted me to back then. We could take over the world.”

Stiles chuckles. "I'd worry for the world if we ran it." He kisses her hand. "You were never meant for me, Red Queen. Not like that."

"No. I guess not...but this is good."

"This is great."

She moves to the ottoman next to him. He holds her close as she leans her head on his shoulder. They don't need to speak. They're beyond that. It's just about knowing the other is there, and won't let go.
Stiles walks into the bedroom. Derek was lying on the covers, a pregnancy book in his hands.

“The twins are about the size of a lemon. And can wiggle their toes. And it says your appetite should increase by now. Which might explain the four servings of lasagna rolls you had at dinner.”

Stiles playfully smacks Derek ‘round his head. “Asshole.”

Derek smirks at him. “You kick Jackson’s ass,” he asks.

“I find it bothersome that the only decent chess opponent in this pack is Peter.”

“Ouch.”

Stiles climbs on the bed with Derek and tucks under his arm. “Oh, please. You practically cried the first time we played chess. You know you’re no match for me.”

“You could be nice and let me win sometimes.”

“Where’s the fun in that? That’s why you like to play with Jackson so much, because he sucks.”

“I like to play with Jackson so much because it helps him to comprehend strategy better. It’s Scott I like to torture by beating constantly.”

Stiles snorts. “Explains why he always hides when you break the board out.”

Stiles settles a little more comfortably against Derek.

“You okay?”

“Really tired.”

“Everything okay with Lydia?”

“…She hasn’t told Jordan yet.”

“About what?”

“About why she flew all the way to Spain to talk to me while we were on vacation.”

“Shit.” Derek sets his book down on the nightstand. “She going to tell him?”

“Yes. She has to. She’s trying to build up courage. She’s so terrified. She feels worthless.”

“Why? That’s not her soul-purpose in life. It’s not any woman’s. It’s just…something she’s capable of.”

“Well, technically she’s not capable of it. Hence, her anguish.”

“…Laura got told the same thing by her doctor.”

Stiles sits up, looking right at his husband. “What? When?”

“After she had one. Way before she met Thomas. A guy she dated all through UCLA.”

“Was he a supe?”

“No. Human. They broke up a little while afterward. I don’t think it had anything to do with them
splitting up, but Laura took it that way. She took it real hard. That’s why she moved back home. After she graduated she was going to move to New York City, but she had a breakdown, and moved back in with our parents.”

“I didn’t know that.”

“She never told anyone. Just me. She didn’t even tell mom and dad why she wanted to move back in. She just did, and they never said anything, but they knew something was wrong, just didn’t want to press it with her. She felt like Lydia. Like she was worthless. Like no one would ever want her or something.”

“Maybe Lydia should talk to her.”

“No. Laura would murder me if she knew I told you. Just like you weren’t supposed to tell me about Lydia.”

“The two of them have to know we can’t keep secrets from each other. There’s got to be a loophole in the secret-keeping contract when it comes to someone’s mate. I’m sure Jordan probably knows things about me that I wish he didn’t.”

“The answer is ‘no’, and you are not going to fight me on this. Please.”

Stiles holds up his hand in surrender, then rests his head back down on Derek’s chest.

“She’ll tell him, Stiles, and you know, maybe, he’ll be disappointed, and little sad, but they’ll work it out. He’s not going to abandon her.”

“I know...” Stiles can't help it. His mind wandered and he ended up there, questioning. Wondering. Two important women in his life felt inferior and incomplete. Would I have felt that way, too? What if—”

“Stop.”

Stiles shoots up from Derek’s chest. “You don’t even know what I was going to say.”

“Yes. I do. Just like you already know what my answer would have been to your ridiculous hypothetical.” Derek tenderly runs the pad of his thumb along Stiles’ bottom lip. “I love you. Just know that much, if you don’t know anything else.”

Stiles kisses him.

Derek deepens the kiss, rolling on top of his mate.

Stiles helps Derek out of his shirt as Derek settles between his thighs…

Freya doesn’t know what she expected: blood everywhere, ripped body parts being stuffed into dark, garbage bags, Jackson and Scott roughing up so poor schmo who owed them a rack of money, a drug factory with naked wereis packaging magical drugs in a dimly lit basement, underage weregirls and boys in a drug haze as they “service” slimy clienteles, a wolfsbane den… Maybe… But she certainly didn’t expect a comfortable family dinner and Taboo.

Stiles made Shepherd’s Pie for dinner, and a chocolate-strawberry tart for dessert that made Freya want to change religions. And she wasn’t the only one. She noticed everyone at the table had
empty plates and asked for seconds.

She observed at first, watching as they interacted with each other, and was admittedly taken aback by the ‘family’ aspect of their relationship with one another: Scott and Jackson fought like bickering brothers, in between Jackson glaring at her, and Stiles occasionally leaning over to him and whispering in his ear when he did. Jackson seemed to calm at bit, but avoid looking in her direction afterward.

Cora spent her whole dinner—and Derek’s—pestering him about something with one of their clubs. She was asking for more money, presumably, and trying to make a legit case for needing it, but Derek seemed stern in his decision to refuse. Yet, Cora continued to ‘work’ on him.

Stiles spoke mostly to his father and mother-in-law, Talia, in between trying to end to Jackson’s snarling in her direction. While Boyd and Isaac listen intently to a story Theo tells them about a rouge Omega he faced down once.

Lydia and Jordan cooed over one another most of the dinner. Freya thought it was sweet, but surprising. She never figured Lydia for the ‘cooing’ type.

Allison. Now, Allison seemed like the type of girl that would ‘coo’ over a boy, but she and Erica spoke at length about Allison’s knife collection. Apparently, she had a few antique knives, handed down to her from generations of women in her family. Freya recalled Isaac briefly mentioning her being a former hunter, and Freya being amazed at a former hunter joining a werewolf pack. But then she caught a glimpse of the shared, loving looks Allison and Scott gave each other, and it became clearer to her: Allison fell in love. With a wolf. As she had. And in that moment, there was no one she wanted to get to know more.

“So, Freya, you were in the military with Jordan,” Danny asks, knocking her out of her daze, and creating a hush over the once noisy table.

Isaac squeezes her hand beneath the table, sensing her being taken off-guard, and smelling her nervousness.

“Uh, yeah, but not really. We went to military school. West Point. It’s like the Yale University of military schools, so we were kind of surrounded by rich brats trying to look cool and patriotic, but really weren’t.”

John laughs.

“My dad was in the military. Marine Corp,” Stiles answers in regards to his father’s laugh. “He’s not a fan of preppy, military schools.”

“Neither am I, but I enjoyed being MP.”

“Did you not want to go into something else, like SWAT, or DoD, or the FBI,” John asks her.

“I thought about the FBI--" Stiles chokes on his dinner a bit. Derek shoots him a nervous glare across the room. Stiles waves him off. What? The irony of her answer threw me.

"--but was off-put by a brief stint with SWAT. It was a complete boys’ club and…made me really uncomfortable being there. I was thrown out of the program,” Freya answers.

“Why were you kicked out of the program,” Erica asks.
“She punched the shit out of her instructor when he grabbed her inappropriately,” Isaac says proudly.

“Nice,” Erica beams.

“Good girl,” John says with a smile over his wine glass.

“Are your parents in the military,” Danny asks.

“My dad is a lieutenant in the Army.”

“He serve,” John asks.

“Yes, sir. In the first Gulf War,” Freya answers. “You, sir?”

John nods.

“Well, then thank you for your service, sir.”

John gives a faint, humble nod that warms Stiles’ heart.

“Are your siblings in the military, too,” Erica asks.

“No. I’m an only child.”

“Lucky,” Erica scoffs.

“Hear, hear,” Lydia says under breath.

“Don’t act like you don’t love the hell out of Garrett and Carrie, Erica. I’ve seen the way you are with them, you giant marshmallow,” Stiles says.

“Doesn’t mean they don’t drive me crazy. Do you know Garrett has his own YouTube channel?”

The entire table answers with a resounding, and exciting ‘yes’, having seen the channel.

“You should be proud of your brother, Erica. He’s a brave young man. What he’s doing is admirable,” Theo says.

“I know,” Erica concedes. “I am proud of him.”

“What’s your brother’s YouTube channel about,” Freya asks.

“He’s videotaping his experience working as a woman’s rights advocate in the Middle East.”

“Wow.” Because what else do you say to someone attempting to encourage feminism and women’s rights in a part of the world that finds such things to not only be a cultural taboo, but a religious one as well, and from a straight, white male no less. Freya feels a heaving amount of crumbling rocks falling from her wall of preconceived expectations tonight…

“Yeah, and my sister dropped out of USC to go work for Greenpeace last year,” Erica says with a proud smirk.

“Impressive.”

Erica shrugs, but everyone knows it’s her way of saying: Yeah. It really, really is… “I still think being a corrections officer is kind of badass, too. Which prison do you work at?”
“FCI Dublin,” Freya answers.

“The women’s prison,” Jackson asks with a scoff, as though it being a women’s prison made her job less harsh, or noteworthy.

“Yes.”

“Isn’t that the prison that had that terrible riot a few years ago there,” Melissa asks innocently.

Freya takes note of everyone’s downcast eyes, suddenly their plates have become incredibly interesting… Freya was a new guard at the time of the riot. She had only been on the job for a year when rival pack members got into a beef. Freya never found out what said fight was about, but it sparked a pack war within the concrete walls. Freya never thought the riot training she received upon getting the job would ever be something she’d have to use. FCI Dublin was a federal prison, not a maximum security facility. Yet, there she was, in full riot gear, subduing inmates, trying to establish order, locking down doors and whole wings of the prison, only to have a freshman inmate tackle her from behind and drag a box cutter down her back, slipping under her vest.

After paid medical leave and a few trips to the shrink to give her the “okay” to return to work, did she begin to hear rumblings about low-level members of the Hale Pack initiating the whole thing with a trio of crew members in a rival pack from Nevada, the Carlisle Pack, or 702s, as they were called by some. It was rumored a couple girls were tasked to kill the mate of the Alpha of the Carlisle Pack who was arrested in San Francisco for theft, and so tried and sentenced to a stint in prison in California at FCI Dublin. The Carlisle Pack thought the Hale Pack had set up the Nevada Alpha’s mate to be arrested and sent to prison out of her territory, thus sparking a feud. Inside the prison, and out.

By the lowered gazes, it would appear said rumors were in deed facts. Even Isaac adverted his eyes from her.

“That’s right. It was really weird. A handful of girls had a beef and next thing I knew, the whole prison was live.”

“Well, that must have been terrifying—”

“I don’t think Freya wants to relive horror stories from work at the dinner table,” John says, taking Melissa’s hand and giving it a gentle squeeze with a telepathic stare.

Melissa picks up on the ‘signal’. “Oh, you know, right. I’m sorry. I hate talking shop when I’m at home, too. Especially about the parts of work I hate the most.”

“What do you do,” Freya asks, wanting to ignore the awkwardness as much as everyone else.

“I’m an RN at Beacon Hills Medical Center. Well, I was. I’m sort of retired now.”

Freya catches Scott and Allison smiling at Melissa, happy she’s no longer working and can relax and can be taken care of by them now.

“Early retirement sounds amazing. What do you plan on doing?”

“Oh, uh, travel. Once this one delivers,” Melissa says, pointing to Stiles.

“I’m not due until April, and have no misgivings about any grandparent here getting on with their lives until the twins are at least 2 years old,” Stiles says.
“He’s right,” Melissa says to Freya. “I’m all over those two kids the minute they’re born.”

“You’ll have to wait in line,” John says.

“A long line,” Theo adds.

The room’s uncomfortable feel shifts to pleasant, and then the table is once again filled with laughter and conversation.

Isaac leans over and kisses Freya’s cheek.

Stiles and Scott are not allowed on the same team. They know each other too well, and the game will be over before it begins if they were to play as one. Stiles and Derek are also not allowed on the same team. It appears that when they pair up, their match-up can go either way: they end up fighting and ruining the entire night for everyone, or they end up kicking ass, resulting in them exploring each other’s mouths and making everyone else uncomfortable.

So Lydia divvies everyone up to how she sees fit: she and Jordan, Scott and Allison, Freya and Isaac, Jackson and Danny, Derek and Cora, Boyd and Erica, John and Melissa, and Talia and Theo. Stiles is left the odd man out, effectively allowing him to sub into which every group he wants to for each round.

Freya finds it funny that all the couples, including her and Isaac, seem to be doing pretty well in the game, except Scott and Allison. Scott gets flustered, unable to resists saying the words on the cards, and Allison finds it too adorable to not laugh at, which results in them running their time out and not scoring points.

At one point, Stiles subs into Derek and Cora’s team, who are in last place and snarking at one another. He and Derek play two rounds together, pushing them into third place, before Cora subs back in.

Isaac and Freya wind up in second place, with Jackson and Danny ahead. During the next round, Isaac and Freya score big, with Freya guessing all of Isaac’s cards. Jackson, out of nowhere, makes a scene about the game being “stupid,” and walks out of the room. Stiles breaks from his seat and chases after him.

The room goes quiet a moment.

“Maybe you should—” Freya starts.

“No. No. Stiles is good with him. I’ll talk to him later,” Isaac tells her. He pecks her lips.

“I think this is a good place to end the game. Everyone still alive? Up for a movie,” Lydia asks.

“I think a movie is a good idea,” Theo says, trying to shift the room’s temperament again.

“Great! Um, guest choice. Freya,” Lydia says.

“Oh, uh… I like comedies. Classic comedies,” she says.

“How classic,” Derek asks, testing her movie prowess.

“Ignore him, or he’ll suggest His Girl Friday or Bringing Up Baby to feed his Cary Grant fetish,” Cora says with an eye roll. “Ow,” Cora exclaims when Derek pinches her arm.
“I like those movies, but I was thinking more Caddyshack, Revenge of the Nerds, or National Lampoon’s Vacation. Movies like that.”

“I think Stiles has Revenge of the Nerds somewhere…” Scott says, skimming the DVD shelf. “Ha. Got it.”

“Should we wait for him to—”

“I’m sure Stiles would insist that we carry on without him,” John reassures. “Anyone want popcorn?”

All hands go up.

“Lydia, help me find where Stiles puts everything in that kitchen of his.”

Lydia crosses the room to join John in the kitchen.

“Did you have a good time,” Isaac asks. During the movie, Freya snuggled up with Isaac as everyone watched the film. She was warm and cozy under the blanket with him. At one point, she caught Jordan's eye and he winked at her. She rolled her eyes and he smiled, pulling Lydia closer. She was surprised at herself for being so comfortable around a bunch of strangers, but she figured it didn't help that her best friend and mate were there as well. Yet, she couldn't deny it felt like something else made her feel at ease too. Something familiar, but she couldn't exactly name.

“It wasn’t what I expected… It was nice,” Freya answers.

“What did you initially expect,” he asks, pulling away from the Stiles and Derek’s house and turning toward the main road.

The last thing she wants to do is tell him what she really expected— sex trafficking and a conveyor belt of drug smuggling in the backyard— so she goes with evasive. “I don’t know. Not everyone being so…family-like.”

“I told you: packs are families. At least ours is. A good pack is.”

“…Isaac. You told me you and Scott used to date, and that you were in love with him. Were you in love with Jackson?”

“No. Which is why he acted like he did. And will probably continue acting that way. For a long time.”

“He’s in love with you.”

“Yes, but I never felt the same way back unfortunately.”

“And then I come along and—”

“It’s not your fault, and has nothing to do with you.”

“It may not be my fault, but his hostility toward me has everything to do with me. He hates that I exist. At least while he still has feelings for you. I ruined the fantasy.”

“What fantasy?”
“The one where you realize you’re actually in love with him, and he sweeps you off your feet and you live happily ever after in his arms. Only a person that still has hope, the fantasy, acts as though they’ve been wronged. That’s how feels: cheated, of his expectations, and stupid for having them.”

“Stiles said something similar to that. I was mean to Kira at first. Then to Allison when she came back. I used Jackson to help me ignore what I still felt for Scott. I feel guilty because he had feelings the whole time, and I didn’t.”

“Did you know he was in love with you?”

“No. Had I, I would have ended whatever was between us sooner.”

She takes his hand and laces their fingers.

“I’m sorry if Jackson made you uncomfortable.”

“He didn’t. He doesn’t. I get it. I’d have a hard time getting over you, too, if I were him,” Freya says.

He blushing. He brings the back of her hand to his lips and kisses it.

“Will you spend the night?”

“Yes,” he answers.

“Remember: no claiming until I’m a wolf,” she teases.


Freya laughs.

May 2017

“Derek…” Stiles moaned as Derek pushed in and out of his slick, wet pucker with a pace so slow, and so full of passion, Stiles was on the verge of tears. He shouldn’t have been there. He shouldn’t have been doing this. He shouldn’t have been doing it to Derek, but the werewolf was all he could think about lately.

He tried to keep his distance, but he couldn’t. His heart and body kept calling out for him, wanting to be near him. Wanting to be kissed, and touched, and held by him.

But Stiles was stuck. Stuck in some sort of mate-limbo. He wanted Derek, needed him, but his thoughts and doubts and insecurities moved around in his head like a pinball machine while his heart beat a rhythm that sounded like Derek’s name being whispered in his ears as he slept.

That’s how he ended up there. He had gone to bed, finally falling asleep after a long day, when he woke up in a panic, hearing Derek’s name echo in his head. Without thinking, he slipped on his shoes, grabbed his keys and went over to Derek’s apartment.

He banged on the door loudly, waking up the whole building it seemed.

Derek answered and Stiles flung himself onto the older man, pressing his hungry lips onto bearded face.
Derek pulled him toward the bedroom and they undressed each other...

After their first time together, tearing and clawing and bruising one another in between fucking the life out each other, Stiles refused to let it happen again. Not after Derek told him they weren’t mates, and he loved Jennifer and that Stiles wasn’t worthy of being in his pack.

But then Jennifer turned out to be a darach that had Derek under a blinding love spell. So Stiles slit her throat and let her bleed out on Derek’s living room floor.

And despite the circumstance, Derek showed up at Stiles and Lydia’s place to apologize to Stiles. They fucked on the living room floor. Then again in Stiles’ bed.

This was the fourth time (ninth, if to be technical). It should be the last. Stiles knew it should. Especially if he wasn’t going to give Derek what he desperately needed. Truth be told, it was what they both need.

“Stiles. Please,” Derek begged, still rocking into the younger man.

“Derek—”

Derek hushed the worrying tone from Stiles mouth with a kiss.

“Please. Say ‘yes’, baby. Say ‘yes’.”

Derek bumped against Stiles’ prostate and Stiles’ head dug into the pillow as he moaned softly.

“Please.” Derek kissed Stiles’ neck. “Please… Submit, baby… I need you to…”

“Derek… I can’t… I—”

Derek pulled out of Stiles harshly, making Stiles wince, and climbed out of the bed. “Then what the hell are you doing here, Stiles?! Why are you here?!”

“I couldn’t sleep! I kept hearing you, and wanted to be with you!”

“No. You came over here for an easy fuck.”

“No, I didn’t! Take that back! Right fucking now, Derek!”

“What else am I supposed to think?! You push and you pull me and I just fucking let you!”

“You make it sound like I’m playing games with you!”

“That’s exactly what you’re doing!”

Stiles jumped out of bed and was in Derek’s face in a flash. “I am not Lydia.”

“Really? You sure about that? She had to have learned it from somewhere.”

Stiles slaps Derek across his face! ‘Werewolf strength and tolerance’ being what it is, left Stiles more hurt than by his slap than Derek, in spite of Stiles’ refusal to show it.

“You don’t reserve the right to be pissed about any of this. I do. I’m the one that keeps trying with you, Stiles, and you’re the one that keeps pulling away… but it’s my fault, because I keep enabling you to do it. Like when you show up at my door at two in the morning and we make love.”
Derek’s eyes filled with tears, and Stiles just wants to slink into a hole.

“You still haven’t told me you love me…but maybe you don’t. Maybe I need to give up hope that you do. Because you don’t treat people you love like this, Stiles.”

Stiles’ hands shook. He trembled at the finite tone in the wolf’s voice. And he couldn’t bear it.

“Derek—”

“Go.”

“Derek, wait—”

“GO! NOW!”

Stiles grabbed his clothes and scrambled out of the room!

 Tears ran down Derek’s face as he listened to his front door open, then close...

Freya drummed her nails on her wine glass, still peering out the kitchen window. She hasn’t moved from that spot in 15 minutes, worrying her bottom lip. Stiles couldn’t help the corner of his mouth turning up in a smirk. He knows that look. He used to wear that look. Occasionally, he still does.

“They’re fine, Freya.” She whips around to face him, a little stunned, as though she forgot he were even in the room with her. “I promise you. This is far from Isaac’s first run. He’s not a new pup anymore.”

“I know,” she says, lying to herself, trying to sound cool and collected. “It’s just… It’s dark out there. And there are a lot of cliffs and gorges.”

“Well, I do live on top of a very tall hill…”

“Right,” she says, glancing back out the window quickly. “Thought I heard something. Are you sure they’re alright? You know…running…naked…in the dark…through trees?”

“Isaac’s been a wolf for a decade now. He’ll be fine. And I can promise you, completely and utterly, that my husband will look out for him. He’s their Alpha. Kind of his job.” He takes her hand. “Come on.” Stiles leads her away from the window, and out of the kitchen.


“Weres don’t really have a sexual orientation. Some do, but most don’t. They’re pretty open sexually, because with them that’s not what it’s about. It’s more about a personal connection. A feeling,” Lydia tries to clarify. “Weres only ascribe to an orientation if they feel as though if they were human they’d still be only attracted to a particular group of people like they are as a were.”

“Like Boyd for instance. Boyd identifies himself as straight because he feels that even if he were human, he’d still be only attracted to women, and was only attracted to women when he was human,” Allison says, shoving a big bite of the Lemon-Blueberry cake Stiles made in her mouth.

“Right,” Lydia agrees. “But say Jackson for instance—"
“Bad example. Jackson told me even when he was human he wasn’t strictly hetero,” Stiles interrupts.

Danny nods in agreement.

“I knew it! I’ve seen him check you out more than once, Danny,” Lydia says.

“And I told him ages ago, I don’t see him that way. He’s just my best friend, my brother. That’s it, and that’s all it’ll ever be,” Danny responds.

“Okay, then, Scott, is a good example. Scott, when he was human identified himself as straight. Then when he was made a werewolf, his sexual orientation became more grey, and less black and white. His wolf draws him to whomever it feels it needs; male, female, supe be damned. Allison being female is just circumstance. Had she been male, his wolf would still be drawn to her as his mate. That’s what we mean by ‘not really gay’. Weres are pulled to who completes them, not who completes them and has the ‘appropriate’ genitalia,” Lydia tells Freya.

“Gender versus person,” Stiles concludes with a mouth full of fluffy cake.

“So, it doesn’t bother you that Scott has had sexual relationships with both men and women,” Freya asks Allison.

Allison shakes her head. “No. Does it bother you? I mean, is it weird that our boyfriends used to bang?”

Stiles snorts.

“No. Isaac was his own person, with own experiences, and his own past before I met him. I would never hold anything against him that happened before me. That’s what crazy girls do. Besides, I think him being with another guy is…kind of hot.”

“You are going to fit in here like a glove,” Danny tells her.

“Alright. If I tell you guys something, you have to swear it stays in the ‘Squishy-Human Circle,’” Allison says.

They all nod in agreement. Even Freya, who leans a little bit closer, aching for the big secret.

“Scott has two dick pics of Isaac still on his phone. When I asked him about it, he said he couldn’t bring himself to delete them ‘because Isaac kind of has the most beautiful dick I’ve ever seen’,” Allison says snickering.

They all laugh.

“You have got to show me,” Freya says.

“No. Not before he ‘claims’ you. I don’t want to ruin it,” Allison says.

“It’s just a penis. Nothing will be ruined.”

“Oh, I beg to differ,” Lydia says. “When I first saw Jordan’s penis, I wanted to bow to it and build statues in its honor.”

“Scott’s got a pretty nice cock,” Allison offers.

“How big is it,” Danny asks.

“And now I’m weirded-out,” Stiles says.

“It’s average; about a good 6 inches, but it’s a straight shoot and pink all over, so I love it,” Allison answers Danny. “Cut, too.”

“I suddenly don’t want anymore cake,” Stiles grimaces.

“Says the boy who wrote ‘An Ode to Dicks’ for an essay in our Econ class when we were in high school,” Lydia reminds her best friend.

“That was about dicks in general; not Scottie’s junk.”

“Can I hear that story later,” Freya asks referring to Stiles school essay.

“So, Stiles…” Allison starts with a kittenish glint in her eyes.

“Oh, no! I will not discuss the father of my children’s cock with you harpies.”

“Oh, please. You used to talk all the time about Derek’s penis to me. Quit it with the modesty just because we have a ‘guest’.”

“I haven’t discussed my sex life with Derek to you in a long time, Red Queen.”

“Bullshit! You told me the other day about how much harder you come with being pregnant.”

“I think I hate you.”

“Spill.”

“Or show a picture if you have one,” Danny says.

“Oh, I bet you have the dirtiest pictures, Stilinski-hale,” Lydia says with too much glee in her voice.

“I do. And you’ll never see them,” Stiles beams.

“Give me 10 minutes in this house by myself, and I bet you I could find them, probably with a few other goodies.”

“I know I hate you.”

“Jordan says your pussy taste like raspberry jam and looks like a pink calla lily,” Freya says to Lydia.

Lydia gasps.

“Thank you, Freya.” Stiles hi-fives the caramel-colored beauty.

Allison and Danny laugh.

Derek bursts into the room, jolting Stiles awake in a panic from the abrupt noise! “What the hell’s
going on?”

“We have a problem.” Derek’s still naked from his full moon run with the betas. Stiles looks over at the clock on the nightstand. It’s almost six-thirty in the morning. The sun is barely peeking out from the horizon.

“Okay. What is it?”

Derek slides on a pair of pants and a T-shirt. “Not here. Office.”

“Fuck. This is serious.”

Stiles climbs out of bed and follows Derek to his office.

Derek closes the door.

“You’re scaring me. What is it?”

“Jordan. He’s mine. He’s my beta.”

“Yes…but not officially until he and Lydia are married.”

“No. I mean, 10 years ago on Halloween when I bit our betas, there was a 6th person I bit. I never found them. It was Jordan, Stiles.”

“Okay. Wait. You’re jumping to conclusions. First, are you sure you bit a sixth human that night?”

“Yes,” Derek nods. “I was trying to track his smell, but lost the scent when it rained.”

“You can’t remember what he looked like?”

“No, Stiles! It was the same night I became a True Alpha. I was feral, running around Golden Gate Park at two in the morning! I wasn’t thinking because I was out of mind and my wolf took over! I lost control!”

“Okay. Stop freaking out. I can’t think when you do.”

Derek nods, anchoring himself with Stiles’ touch, his closeness.

“Why do you think the sixth person you bit is Jordan?”

“When we were in the forest he mentioned that he was in the city the night he got bit. He was at a Halloween party on a blind date. His date got wasted and spent the whole time crying about some ex-boyfriend she was still in love with. Jordan put her in a cab and called Freya to come pick him up, but she wasn’t answering her phone so he thought he’d wait for her to respond because a cab all the way to his place would cost too much. He started wandering around the city aimlessly and ended up—”

“—at Golden Gate Park,” Stiles finishes. “Shit.”

“He must have been the first person I bit actually, because Scott was the last and the two of you ran away.”

“I recall.”

“I ran after Jordan, but that’s when it started raining and I lost his scent. He said the anniversary of
him being turned is the same as our betas’ anniversary—Halloween.”

“And he didn’t put two-and-two together?”

“Scott started to say something about the park, but I shut him up before he could.”

“He’s going to put this shit together, Derek, if Lydia hasn’t already.”

“Fuck… We have to deny. We can’t tell him.”

“Why?”

“Stiles, he spent 18 months in prison, then another year at that hell house called an institution, and still goes to therapy all because I bit him, couldn’t find him, teach him control, and as a result, he killed an ‘innocent’. He will hate me, Stiles.”

Stiles crosses his arms. “Are you an Alpha?”

“Stiles—”

“Answer. Are you an Alpha?”

“Yes,” he barks reluctantly.

“A True Alpha?”

“Yes.”

“Are you a Hale?”

“Yes. I’m a Hale.”

“Then own your mistake, apologize, and make him your brother like you did with Scott. Tell him you’ll never abandon him—again—and you’re his family now, like you did with Isaac. Tell him he’s where he belongs now, and he matters, like you did with Boyd. Tell him he doesn’t have to be scared anymore like you did with Jackson. And tell him he’s strong and capable and fearless like you did with Erica. In other words, sack up! Remind him why he should trust you and be in this family. Our pack. There’s a reason you’re the Alpha.”

“I starting to think you’re the Alpha… I don’t want to cause a problem between him and Lydia. I definitely don’t want to cause a problem with Freya, either. I’m still teaching her about werewolves. I’m supposed to take her to meet Marin at the end of the week. Plus, we still need her to give up some intel on Haigh if she’s got any.”

“Big Bad, look, he is going to be pissed, and it is going to suck, but it won’t last long… hopefully. Whether he’s angry with you or not, he’s marrying Lydia. He’ll be pack, and a pack can’t function with a wayward beta. He’ll eventually get over it, and learn to behave. Do you know why?”

“Because Lydia is a scary,” Derek answers jokingly.

“True, but no. It’s because he’s got us, and we’re damn good at this.”
October was really supposed to be just one chapter, but when I mapped it out, there was too much going on during the Halloween part of it, so I had to break it up. So, next week will solely be about Derek and Stiles' annual Halloween party/Betas' werewolf-aversary.

My inspiration has always been for this fic (both parts) that Derek and Stiles are a lot like Frank and Claire from the US version of HOUSE OF CARDS! ...I'd actually really like to see that now that I think about it... A long fic with Stiles as 'Frank' and Derek as 'Claire'... Is there a such thing as a 'writer's chubby', or something equivalent, because I might have one with that whole HoC fic idea.

p.s.-- Happy New Year!!!
Lydia sat on the edge of bed trying to remember all the delicate words she wanted to use. “Be open, but informative. Speak to him using medical terminology so he feels comfortable. Don’t cry. Don’t make him coddle you. You don’t need to be coddle. You’re an adult. Just breathe. Breathe…” she whispered to herself.

The bathroom door opened. Jordan walked out in a pair of boxers. “You okay? I thought I heard you talking to yourself.”

She takes a deep breath, closing her eyes, pushing down that burning at the back of her throat that wants to rise and swell in her eyes.

“Lydia…?”

“I need to tell you something.”

He takes a seat on the bed beside her. “Is everything alright?”

“Please, just know that I wasn’t trying to lead you on, or lie to you. I just… It’s become very hard for me to talk about, but I have to talk about it with you, because it affects us, and what we’re growing towards, and building with one another.”

He takes her hand into his. “Lydia. This isn’t a sales pitch. You’re not telling you boss about some business lunch you blew. It’s me, and you. Just tell me.”

“Right… Right…” she says nodding, fighting back that burn in her throat. “Um… About 5 years ago, I was seeing this guy, briefly, but then things didn’t work out. He thought I was ‘too much’—whatever that means—and I thought he was a mama’s boy. Anyway, a couple weeks after we broke up…I, uh… I found out I was pregnant… And how I found out was by having a miscarriage in the ladies’ room at Coach.”
"Jesus, Lydia. I'm so sorry, my love."

The burn is gone and the pools in her eyes have given way to tears that run down her cheeks.

“And then it happened again, a year later, with a different boyfriend. I told him, and he said that maybe it was ‘for the best because we weren’t marriage and kid material. Together, or separately’. And he was right. That’s how I felt. I never wanted kids. I never saw myself as a mother. I wasn’t happy that it happened, either time, but I felt as though it was something that should have happened because of how I felt.”

He squeezes her hand.

“But I wanted to know if everything was alright with me, and to be quite honest, I wanted to know why it didn’t take. So I went to the doctor, and they ran some test, and he told me that… He told me that I have a 20% chance of getting pregnant and bringing a baby to full term,” she says, her voice cracking with hurt and pain. “He said I was healthy, and I was fine, but that I had ‘an irregular ovulation’. A genetic ovulation disorder called PCOS.”

She sniffs, trying her damndest not to break down, but it’s hard. Her deepest secret has been exposed to the man she loves, and she feels like a disappointment.

“I’m so sorry, Jordan. I know you want kids, and until I met you I didn’t, but now that I have you, it’s all I think about and—”

“Stop. Please. Don’t apologize to me. Especially about this. Especially not about something you had no control over. Now, take a deep breath, and then look at me, okay?”

She takes two deep breathes. Then looks him in his light eyes that smile at her with so much warmth…

“The doctor you went to see, how long had you been going to that doctor?”

“Since I was sixteen.”

“Does you doctor have supe patients?”

“No. I don’t think so...”

“When did you find out you were a banshee?”

“About 9 years ago, when I asked Derek to make me a werewolf.”

“Okay, first, we’re going to have to get you an OB/GYN that specializes in supes, and supe infertility. Your regular doctor is not equipped to handle supe sensibilities.”

“Jordan, it doesn’t matter. I can’t have--”

“Knowing you, and with your best friend being pregnant, I’m sure you know the likelihood of bringing a child to full-term increases when a human mates with a supe? And two supes together further increase that number.”

“Yes, I know that, but I’m not a supe.”

“Yes, you are. You think just because you’re not immortal, or can practice magic, that you’re not one? You have a power. It will never let you heal yourself, or cast a love spell for a forlorn friend, but you do have a power, and you are a supe. As am I. Which brings your ability to bare a child to
about a 45% chance. Eating right, exercising, and keeping yourself away from stress will bring that number up to 65%, Lydia. I do this everyday, for a living, I know the statistics, and yes, sometimes they matter a great deal, but they’re not predictors. They’re averages. And since meeting you, I know that you’re an above average woman, and will dedicate yourself religiously to something you want. Like wanting to give birth to our child. And you know what, if that doesn’t happen, that’s okay. Every child needs a good home. Our home will be the best home. We could give a real good kid who needs it, a real good life. Our child doesn’t have to be genetically both of ours. They just being ours is enough. Understand, my love?”

She stares at him for a moment, a surreal look on her face, unable to comprehend how she’s been fated, with possibly the most sincere man on the planet (second only to Scott and his puppy face). Lydia slides off the bed. She takes off her nightgown. Then her underwear.

“We’re not going to try for a child tonight.” She pushes him back against the bed and straddles him. She helps him pull his boxers down. “But if it happens, pat yourself on the back, because it was what you just said that did it.”

“I was just being honest. I meant it,” he says, moving her fiery hair from her face.

“I know. I didn’t see it.”

“See what?”

“The look. The look of complete hurt, right before you try to make me feel better.”

“You may or may not having the ability to have a child wouldn't offend me. It just means we’d have to find another way. I’m fine with that, so long as you’re the mother. So long as we’re in it together.”

“We are.”

“Then the mechanics don’t matter.”

A tear falls from her eye. He wipes it away with his thumb. “No more of that. It’s unnecessary.”

“I told Stiles once that I didn’t deserve love. He said I was wrong… Always thought that boy was too clever.” She bends down to kiss him. “I love you.”

“I love you, too, Lydia.”

He leans up and kisses her.

Derek doesn’t want Stiles to be a woman. Stiles is all-male and he loves it. It’s not to say that if Stiles were female he wouldn’t love him, or be just as sexually attracted to him as he is as a man, but as stands in this presence, this lifetime, this universe, Stiles is a guy, and Derek is so in love with him that it’s indescribable, and is so attracted to him, it aches.

…But, Derek would be lying if he didn’t admit to himself that the slightly “feminine” gender stereotypes Stiles exhibits at times isn’t a complete turn on for him, such as: being called “mom” by his betas, treating them as a stern, but caring “mother figure” would, cooking, household chores, and most of all, being pregnant with his children. He’d never say such things to Stiles aloud,
fearing a verbal lashing from his husband on gender roles, in addition, to a rant about “perceived masculinity” in Western culture (which would further aggravate the Alpha, given that he is MARRIED TO A MAN, and therefore, breaking said notions).

Though, at times he does suspect, Stiles is aware of Derek’s…kink (?), seeing as how it’s 20 minutes before their guests are to arrive, and Derek has him pressed up against the wall while he fucks him so hard the mirror atop the dresser beside them falls and shatters.

Derek keeps at it as Stiles claws at his back. Stiles eyes shift to a tangerine orange, making Derek grip him hard, and fuck him faster.

“Shit! Derek!”

Stiles is all moans and screams, making Derek’s wolf growl.

He’s pretty sure the caterers and wait staff downstairs can no doubt hear them, but ask him if he gives a fuck...

It started 6 years ago, on Halloween. Derek didn’t really have an opinion on what costumes he and Stiles wore to the party, and so he gave Stiles free-reign to pick out their outfits. He knew such a thing could be dangerous, but figuring Stiles, he assumed they’d end up going as Batman and Robin, or Han Solo and Luke Skywalker or something.

The night of the party, Stiles handed him a black, garment bag, winked at him, then disappeared into the bathroom with his own dress bag. Derek opened the bag, and rolled his eyes—a wolf costume.

Derek was initially offended, then annoyed that Stiles bought him the costume, and expected him to wear it. First, he was a wolf; he didn’t need a costume, he can just shift, if that’s what he wanted him to be for Halloween. Second, the costume was all faux fur and gnashing teeth and claws. It looked like the horrible wolfman stereotypes weres have been trying to fight against for a long time. Stiles knew how Derek felt about things like that, so he was irritated at the idea that his husband would blinding forget that and expect him to wear it at their party. To Derek, it would be like Boyd dressed like a "street thug," or Danny wearing something like, cut-off jean shorts and body glitter.

He banged on the door, telling Stiles there was no way in hell he was going to wear the costume, and that he was pissed Stiles even thought he should. Stiles told him through the door that “if you don’t like that costume, you can wear the other one, or we’ll come up with something else to fit the theme.”

Derek barely noticed a third black, dress bag on the bed, and was curious as to what “theme” Stiles was referring to…

Before he could even get the zipper down on the third dress bag, to see what the costume was, Stiles came out of the bathroom in his costume.

He’s fought Stiles tooth-and-nail about it since this very day, but has always admitted (begrudgingly) to himself that the second Stiles stepped out of the bathroom, his eyes flashed garnet red and fangs dropped as a low growl rumbled from him.

**Little. Red. Riding. Hood.**

He should have known.
And should have been more prepared in his reaction.

It wasn’t the slutty, short dress, cleavage-enhancing bodice, with the knee-high, white socks kind of costume, but rather the one from that crap movie Erica made them all watch as her pack movie night pick. Stiles was in a long, baby blue period dress with an equally long, red cloak and a long, blonde wig on his head. There was light make-up on his face, barely noticeable, but his lips were a more prominent, soft pink. Like watermelon.

He saw the playful smirk on Stiles’ face…but he couldn’t speak. He could barely breath, let alone form words to engage in banter with his troublemaking husband.

Stiles told him if he didn’t want to wear the wolf get-up, he could wear what’s in the third bag.

Derek finally moved and opened the third bag— lumberjack. Stiles is definitely playing with him.

He then teased Derek that they could quickly throw something together if he wanted to be the ‘grandmother’ in the fable.

Derek answered Stiles’ teasing by undressing and putting on the lumberjack costume.

At the beginning of the party, Derek and Stiles were stuck by each other’s side, playing good hosts, and receiving a few compliments and laughs at their costumes, even from Theo, who Derek thought would be mostly offended. His father knew it was all in good fun, but stated he was glad Derek “went as the lumberjack, and not the wolf. Now, that would offend me.”

As the party progressed, he and Stiles separated, mingling with their guests. Yet, Derek’s eyes didn’t leave his husband the whole night. His mind kept wandering to filthy fantasies about Stiles in his costume, and the million things he wanted to do to him while he wore it.

Stiles didn’t make it any better, or wasn’t trying to, catching Derek’s eye across the room and smirking at him as though he knew exactly what Derek was thinking. The whole thing was making Derek’s arousal potent, and he knew others could smell it on him when mid-sentence they’d stop talking then follow his eye line to where Stiles was in the room, and chuckle at Derek.

It got worse when one of “Cora’s girls,” dressed like a ballerina plastered herself to Stiles, making the horrible decision to flirt with him. Stiles teasingly flirted with her back, whispering in her ear, touching her arm, her hair, and smiling at everything she said. She even took Stiles drink from his hand and sipped from it, then giggled, scooting closer to him.

Derek’s glass shattered in his hand! A waiter immediately ran to pick up the broken shards off the floor as Derek’s blood red eyes focused on his husband and the ballerina. He stalked toward them on the tufted coffee table. Without a word, he grabbed Stiles by his arm and dragged him outside!

He pulled him all the way around the house, to a corner just under the balcony. He turned Stiles around to face the corner and lifted up his dress.

Derek lost his breath again at Stiles wearing red, ruffled panties underneath it. He should have known. Stiles never does anything half-assed.

He wanted so badly to rip them off with his claws, but was nearly choking at seeing Stiles in them. The bright color contrasting with his pale skin, and fitting so perfectly on his lithe body… He pulled them to the side with one hand, and then spit three times into the other. His slicked his cock with his saliva, then pushed deep into Stiles so hard, his blunt, human nails dug into the stone wall for purchase. That’s how Derek wanted him: besieged, begging, and sore in the morning.
Derek fucked him deep, and brutal, causing Stiles to whine, more than moan. The younger man could barely get Derek’s name out of his mouth, let alone respond to Derek’s dirty talk, referring to Stiles as ‘Little Red’.

Stiles keened at the nickname, bringing Derek’s fingers to mouth to suck and bite, before Derek slid them into the front of Stiles’ panties and stroked his cock.

Stiles was close to coming when Derek wrapped his left hand around his neck, claws grazing the skin there, while his right hand splayed on his stomach, holding him there. He tried to slide his own hand down the front of his panties, but the piercing nails at his throat, that got a little deeper, warned him not to.

Derek bit down on the junction between Stiles’ neck and shoulder.

Stiles came, wetting his panties.

Derek’s hand moved to the wet spot of the underwear, making Stiles shudder, being overly sensitive there at the moment.

Derek thrusted twice into his mate, before howling his orgasm into the crisp, autumn night…

Derek wouldn’t let Stiles change out of his underwear as “punishment” for purposely making his wolf jealous and needy, then found Cora to tell her to get the ballerina out of his house before he kills her. Without question, Cora and a guard escorted her from the house.

The following year, Danny threw a “gender-bending” theme party for his birthday, where the women had to come dressed in a male oriented costume and the men vice versa. Again, Derek had no idea what he and Stiles’ costumes would be, but found himself wrecked with desire when Stiles chose for them to go as ‘Wendy’ from Peter and Wendy, and Tinkerbell. They were barely in the car before Derek ripped Stiles' wings off, trying to fuck him in the backseat.

That same year for Halloween they went as Alice and The Mad Hatter… They had to stop at Target so that Stiles could get white stockings, seeing as how Derek tore them off with his claws. The next year, they were Han Solo and Princess Leia. Derek left bruises all along Stiles’ neck that John shook his head at when he arrived at the house. They were Hugh Hefner and a Playboy Bunny the year after, and Gomez and Morticia Addams from The Addams Family the following year.

So it was no surprise to Derek that whatever costume Stiles chose this year was sure enough going to practically make him go feral when he saw it.

Stiles was dragged by Lydia, Allison, Freya, and Cora into the master bedroom in a clamor, taking it hostage for over an hour, and refusing to allow Derek to look at his costume until they were done.

After what felt like an eternity (Derek trying to occupy himself by answering questions the caterers and delivery guys had, knowing full well Lydia and Cora are better at handing such things), the bathroom door opened. Lydia spilled out first, dressed as a WWII nurse. Then Allison as Cleopatra, Cora was dressed like a 'rockabilly chick' (which truth be told, Derek didn't find much different from what she normally wore, with the exception of the fake tattoos on her arm and chest), while Freya came out next, dressed as a cheerleader. All four ladies disappeared downstairs.

Derek’s hands were sweaty and shaking, dying to see Stiles’ costume. For a brief moment, he felt
like he should be concerned about his intense sexual desire to see his husband dressed in female oriented costumes, but pushed it aside when Stiles opened the door.

“Jesus Christ,” Derek mumbled.

“Ta-Da,” Stiles laughed. “I didn’t want to wear make up, but Lydia and Allison were insistent that if I was going to wear this costume I had to wear it. This shit feels like dried pancake batter on my face.”

All Derek could do was swallow hard at the sight before him.

“Freya adjusted the bottom part so the baby bump doesn’t show too much and look weird. I think she did a good job. You know she told me her grandmother was a seamstress for Lady Bird Johnson?”

Derek isn’t listening to a single word floating out of Stiles’ mouth. Because his dear husband, his mate, decided that this year he was going as Ariel from The Little Mermaid.

Stiles is mid-sentence, rambling about something having to do with The Great Society, when Derek pushes him against the wall, hoists him up so that his legs wrap around his waist, and hikes up the green, sequined “fin.” Derek moans when his hands touch soft lace.

“You alright there, Big Bad,” Stiles asks with a teasing tone. He knows exactly what he’s doing to Derek. He does it every year, pushing Derek more and more over the edge.

That first year was just a joke, to get a rise out him, playing on the whole werewolf mythology he knew Derek hated. It wasn’t until some girl dressed like a ballarina began drunkenly flirting with him that he even thought to take it further into something sexual. Stiles knows he shouldn't have been flirting with the chesty, blonde girl. Derek had a notorious jealous streak (that admittedly, turned him on…a lot), and his "poking" at his mate could have caused serious harm to come to the ignorant girl. She got off pretty light, just being thrown out of the party, seeing as how her offense could be construed as a “challenge,” and she would have had to physically fight the Alpha had he and others taken it that way.

Derek tapped at Stiles’ red painted lips. “Open,” he barks.

Stiles parts his lips and Derek slips two fingers inside his mouth. Stiles sucks on them ardently, getting them wet.

Derek finally pulls his fingers from Stiles’ mouth, stained red by his lipstick, and slides them under his “fin.” Derek’s other hand pulls his panties to the side, while his wet digits circle Stiles’ tight, pink hole…

For the last 7 years, the Hale Pack has thrown their annual Halloween party at Red Grove, a Napa Valley mansion, Derek bought at Stiles’ (unintentional) suggestion after one particularly brutal showdown with a coven of evil witches. Derek’s nice and neat bachelor pad became overwrought with his beaten, bloody, and bruised betas at the end of it. Stiles made a simple, flippant comment to him about getting a vacation home somewhere quiet where they could all unwind for a few days after such vicious encounters, especially Derek, who was non-too-thrilled with having his nice apartment invaded with unwelcome guests. Beta or no beta.

Previously, the Halloween party was held at a banquet hall, or resort; never at a pack member’s
home, especially given all of the Hale Pack were invited. Every single member, from every “house.” From Derek down to the lowest man on the totem pole (basic numbers runners and drug peddlers), which approximated about 350 people.

At the time, Derek threw the first Halloween party there under the impression he was going to sell the place off. He bought it at Stiles’ behest, and during that angst-y time in his “relationship” with Stiles, Derek was already dating Braeden and was preparing himself for a romantic life without his intended mate. He thought he’d start buy selling off the mansion he bought with Stiles in mind, but first thought to throw a huge party there first. What did he care if it was at a property he owned and stayed at at times? He was selling it, and would no longer be its owner/occasional occupant.

But then the property was taking too long to create interest and sell, and Stiles confessed to being madly in love with Derek, forcing him to break up with Braeden. So Derek kept the house as a vacation home, a getaway from the craziness of the city and pack business, just for he and Stiles.

The following year, the months leading up to Halloween, were jammed packed with pack business and turf wars with other packs who migrated from Nevada, Texas, and Arizona. By the time Lydia and Cora got around to planning the party, everything in or around the city, was booked. Derek knew with his name and power, he could easily persuade a booking agent, or event planner into giving him a venue and tossing out the person(s) who had already made a reservation for the space and put down a deposit for it, but he refused to be a dick about it, and simply suggested they have it again at Red Grove, but be very uptight about security.

His father hated the idea and warned Derek against it as strongly as he could, but Derek was Alpha now. It was his pack, his call, his decision. Derek stuck to his guns (a rarity when debating with his father), and held the annual party at Red Grove, beefing up security to White House levels, not allowing cellphones into the house, and not allowing in pack members who didn’t RSVP themselves and a potential date (strangers), to give Danny enough time to run a background check on them. Pack members were also not allowed to discuss the upcoming party with anyone except their date. And upon arriving at the house, outsiders were “reminded” that if they spoke about, or gave the address to, friends/family of theirs, a very threatening member of the pack will personally pay them a visit to remind them of their promise.

The party is well underway, with half the guests already there and enjoying Halloween-themed cocktails and appetizers. Lydia and Jordan play host and hostess at the front door for an absent Stiles and Derek. Jordan is dressed as a sailor to Lydia’s WWII nurse, emulating the famous Times Square photo.

John and Melissa approach them. They’re dressed like Fred and Wilma Flintstone. “You guys are greeting everybody? Where’s Stiles and Derek,” John asks.

“Uh… They’re a little… indisposed at the moment,” Jordan says delicately.

John rolls his eyes. “Every damn year.”

Melissa laughs.

“So what are they dressed as this year,” John asks.

Before either Lydia or Jordan can answer, Stiles and Derek come flying down the stairs; Derek in his Prince Eric costume. Stiles flips his wig onto his head, it going askew and lopsided.
“Sorry. We were—”

“Indisposed. We know,” John says giving his son and son-in-law an incredulous look.

Stiles and Derek blush.

“Well, I got to say, I like this costume better than the one you told me you were originally thinking of wearing,” John says.

“What was the original costume,” Derek asks Stiles.

“A nun and a priest,” Stiles answers.

Derek raises an intrigued eyebrow.

“Oh, Jeez. I believe the party is this way. Thank Lydia and Jordan for being hospitable for you,” John says, taking Melissa’s arm.


She adjusts his wig properly.

“Better,” she says with a smile, before letting John escort her further into the house.

“You heard your awesome parents. Thank us,” Lydia says.

Stiles rolls his eyes, but pecks her cheek.

She smiles. “You’re welcome.” Lydia and Jordan disappear further into the house as Derek and Stiles stake their place at the door, greeting each guest as they arrive.

Stiles, Derek, Talia, and Theo are talking when Erica approaches carrying a fish bowl with various dollar bills in it. Theo and Talia are dressed as Bert and Mary from Mary Poppins, making Derek snicker, thinking of John’s story about Stiles breaking his leg, trying to fly off their roof with an umbrella when he was a kid.

Stiles fixes him with a glare, but Derek still can’t help the grin he has wrapped around his cocktail.

Stiles turns his attention to his beta. “Erica. What’s your costume? A sexy, teddy bear?”

“No. I’m a lion. A werelion.”

Derek chokes on his drink, Talia turns wide-eyed, and Stiles’ mouth hangs open.

“Are you now,” Theo asks with a bit of bitterness on his tongue.

“You know, you’re like the 5th person here that’s asked me what I am,” Erica whines.

“Maybe because werelions don’t look so…revealing,” Theo says.

Stiles knows Theo Hale to be a very patient, understanding man. He also knows that Erica has no clue that her outfit is offending him, hence the sharpness in his tone at the moment. However, Stiles gets it. Theo's had to hide what he is, all his life, and is one of the very last of his kind. Werelions were practically royalty, but because of a grieving witch, are now nearly extinct.
Generations after generations of weres are made to think, to believe, that werelions are long gone, and the respect and command they once had amongst supes has evaporated over time because of that. So much so, that an innocent costume worn by an uninformed young woman feels a little like daggers to the heart.

“Well, I’m a sexy werelion. I don’t want to wear a whole lion get up. I need to show the 'girls' off when I can. They’ll be down to my knees when I’m 50 years old. Better get some mileage out of them while I can,” she laughs with a mock lion’s roar.

If Stiles can hear the low purr emit from Theo, he knows the rest of them hear it.

“You okay, Theo,” Erica asks, hearing it as Stiles thought.

“Uh, Erica,” Stiles starts. “How much in donations have you gotten so far,” he asks nodding to the fish bowl in her hand, and wanting to change the subject as quickly as he can.

Erica removes a folded slip of paper from her cleavage. “I haven’t gotten less than 100 bones from anyone, and I collected from 112 people so far, so I got $11,200 dollars and counting. I don’t know how many people Freya’s collected from, but she talked to more of them than me. This whole ‘pledge’ thing is great,” Erica chuckles.

“Freya is not a pledge. She’s familiarizing herself with pack business, and those in the pack. In addition, to a little fun,” Derek corrects.

“You say ‘potato’…” A waiter with a tray of "spooky" shots floats by. Erica manages to swipe one off his tray before he floats off. She downs it, then drops the empty shot glass on another waiter’s tray that smoothly walks by. “Alright. Enough chitchat. Got to get back to business.”

And with that, Erica is off.

“Excuse me,” Theo says, then breaks toward the patio doors.

Talia follows after him.

Stiles takes notice of the melancholy look on his husband’s face. “I can’t imagine how hard it is for him.”

“Erica didn’t know.”

“I know, but still… He lives in shadows, and it’s just him and nine others, that each live on separate parts of the globe. Watching over and taking care of everything, everyone, and no one knows. Can know. They have to think you’re dead…”

“I know,” Derek says, still looking just as somber.

“Sorry. I was aiming to take that look off your face. Not make it worse.”

Derek laughs. He pulls Stiles into him, and they wrap their arms around one another. “Your understanding is enough,” Derek whispers in Stiles’ ear.

“Should we go out there?”

“No. My mom’s got it. She’s been helping him deal with it for 42 years now. She’s the only one capable of giving him what he needs at the moment.”

Stiles nods.
“You’re like that for me you know.”

“Of course I am. Isn’t that what an anchor is?”

Derek smiles fondly at the boy in his arms. “Yes.”

Stiles kisses him.

“Whoo! It’s hot in there. Or maybe I had one too many candy corn martinis,” Allison says entering the balcony. “What are you doing out here? Shouldn’t you be in there, finding a dark corner to make out with Isaac in?”

Freya laughs. “Should I be?”

“To be honest with you, that’s mainly what happens every year at these Halloween parties. At least with the inner pack circle. Scott and I already had sex in the laundry room.”

“I wonder why that is? Not just here, but every costume party I’ve ever gone to…”

“It’s the mask. The ‘new persona’. They different ‘you’, the character that’s freer than you’ve ever been, and not conforming to social norms. You pretend to be someone else for a night, and let them take over the decisions you’re too scared to make.”

“I don’t think any of you are afraid of having public sex. Especially Stiles and Derek.”

Allison laughs. “Stiles and Derek are different. Stiles is already an exhibitionist, and Derek is turned on by his exhibitionism, so it’s encouraged. Like dressing up as a woman every Halloween and fucking each other’s brains out.”

“They’ve got to have the most amazing sex.”

“I always thought so, but was proved right, beyond a shadow of a doubt, earlier this year. We were staying at Hale House in Beacon Hills. Stiles and Derek took over the pool house from Jackson and Boyd one night. You could hear them going at it all day, and all night, until the sun came up. The wolves had to wear ear plugs, but me and Lydia listened,” she says with a wink.

Freya laughs.

“How big is the pot right now,” Allison asks, nodding to the fish bowl of donations in Freya’s hands.

“I got a hundred bucks from everyone, and I collected from about 130 people, so about $13,000. Erica’s still collecting inside.”

“She loves showing off her tits and getting those boys— and a few girls— to open up their wallets every year. I’m really impressed though. Wow. We might beat our record from last year!”

Freya nods, but the look on her face is far off, weary.

“What’s the matter?”

“…Can I be honest with you about some things?”

Allison nods.
“I’m dressed like a cheerleader, collecting charity donations for the Hale Pack, who’s Alpha-mate is dressed like Ariel from *The Little Mermaid*— and looks amazing by the way—at their annual Halloween party… Which is the most fun I’ve had in a long time. I didn’t expect this. I didn’t think it’d be… I don’t know. I just… It’s normal. I’m kind of thrown off by that. By everything.”

“Anybody ever mention to you how I came to be in the pack?”

“No.”

“I was sent as a spy. For my family. They’re a hunting clan… What’s left of us anyway… My grandfather and aunt trained me as a hunter, and to hate the Hales more than anything on the planet. Hate them like a plague. Like a disease. Like vermin. I loathed them to my very core. How could I not? I’ve been told my whole life that they’re responsible for my mother’s death, and need to be extinguished, along with every other supe on the Earth.”

“That… That sounds like a hate group.”

“Pretty much. Borderline cult, too, if it weren’t for other, more objective hunters out there. We were a small sect, but have a long history. Good standing amongst other clans around the world; a well-known name. So, we kept our supe-hatred under wraps, just within the family, or other hunters we knew were just like us.”

“When’d all that change for you?”

“When my aunt and grandfather groomed me to take over as matriarch of our clan. My aunt Kate was strong, but didn’t have the ‘discipline’ it took to lead. She was hot-headed and stubborn. She knew that, so it was up to me to lead. My first mission was to seduce the new Alpha of the Hale Pack, kill him, then his father.”

“Jesus.”

“Yeah. Heavy stuff for a 17 year old girl.”

“Seventeen?!”

Allison nods.

“My aunt Kate was helping me with intel, and recon work, and seduction techniques. She bragged to me how she had seduced Derek when he was a teenager, nearly killing him and his sister, Laura, and Thomas. It’s what enabled the Hales to come after them, trying to only protect their own. And it’s how my mother was killed. She was in the fight. No one would tell me who killed her, and my family didn’t see who it was, fighting their own battles, but in the end, my grandfather told me it didn’t matter. ‘A Hale killed your mother, so you must avenge’, ” Allison says, shaking her head at her grandfather’s fire and brimstone words being remembered.

“I’m so sorry.”

Allison waves her off, fighting back the tears threatening to fall from her brown eyes. “I was young. All the memories I have of her are good ones. That can’t be destroyed. And I know what the consequence of my family’s actions brought with them, and has for centuries. Happens, when all you know is hate, instead of love… God! That was really cheesy! Like Hallmark card, cheesy,” she laughs.

“No. It wasn’t. It was plain truth. It was beautiful.”
Allison takes Freya’s hand and squeezes it. Freya squeezes right back. She likes her. Everyone’s been fairly decent to her, but Allison’s the one that’s been exceedingly nice, sincerely trying to integrate Freya in the pack. Into their tight-knit family. She seems to understand something about Freya that’s never needed explaining. Never needed to be said aloud. And Freya feels the same about her. Maybe it’s why their boyfriends used to date. Maybe there’s something interconnecting between the four of them: Scott loves Allison, and when he didn’t have her, he sought out Isaac. Isaac loved Scott, but wasn’t loved back, and found Freya as a result, when his heart had mended and was ready to love again. And Freya feels close to Allison; a kinship or sisterhood with her. Maybe there’s something bonding between them all... She doesn’t know. She could be overreacting, too exposed recently to magic and all its charms, assuming that simple friendships are somehow strengthen by unseen/unknown forces.

She’s never had a sibling, and quite possibly all she’s feeling, is what two sisters would feel for one another. No wonder they called themselves ‘family’. They were.

“I stayed pretty out of sight from the Hales since my mother died. My dad shipped me off to France to stay with relatives. He didn’t want me near any of that anymore. He visited during the summers though. And Christmas. He let me come back to the states when I graduated high school. That’s when the ‘plan’ was set in motion, and my aunt started grooming me. They found out Cora was going to **Berkeley**, so I was now going to Berkeley. Make friends with her, get her to trust me, then introduce me to her brother, the Alpha. And from there…”

“Wow. Seventeen, and they wanted you to be both spy and assassin.”

“Whenever people start telling me how screwed up their families are I always laugh. Most of the time they’re not and someone’s just speaking in hyperbole. Or too stupid to know a good home when they’re in one.”

“Agreed. I used to be like that. When I was a teenager. Jordan was always good a centering me, when I went off on tangents about some stupid thing or another my parents wouldn’t let do.”

“Seeing Derek with his parents, Scott with Melissa, or Stiles with John… I used to think: ‘What I wouldn’t do to trade’… But we’re working on it. Me and my dad. Mending fences and building bridges. It’s hard, but we’re doing alright.”

“Good. Especially after all that. What changed,” Freya asks.

Allison’s face brightens into a wide smile. “I was home for Christmas break from Berkeley. I was walking through the mall with Cora, buying my father’s Christmas gift, when I saw this boy. This boy with horrible hair and a shy smile. The moment he looked at me, I crumbled to the ground. I never felt such pain. When it was over, Cora told me it looked like I had a seizure,” she chuckles. “I was lying on that, blinding white floor, shaking and crying, and couldn’t stop staring at him. He was clutching his chest, and I could see claws, and his eyes were the color of lemons. All I could think was ‘No. Not him. Not a werewolf.’ I was making the panic worse. That’s why it hurt so much, why it looked like a seizure, because I was already denying him.”

She takes a deep breath, remembering that moment. “He tried to come after me, like how Isaac tried to get to you. I screamed ‘No’ so loud it startled him, and he stopped. Cora stepped between us and told Scott to leave. To go to Derek, at Hale House. I hid behind Cora. He looked so hurt, but ran off like she told him to. I told my family that Derek already had a mate and I was too late. Which was true. Stiles and Derek had already met by that point.”

She smiles again at the memory. "Scott had bugged Cora to the point of exhaustion and she gave him my number. I was having coffee with my aunt when he called me. I didn’t answer, but she saw
me ignore the call, and the seven text messages that followed. She asked me who it was, and I told her ‘some boy Cora knows that likes me’. I was trying to dismiss it, but for some reason aunt Kate was really interested. I guess because I always talked to her about boys, and this time I was being really evasive. I finally told her he was a werewolf, and in the Hale Pack. Thus, my new mission was born: get to Derek by using Scott.”

“Oh, my God, Allison… Your mate?”

She nods. “I tried to play both sides for a while, for about a year, but Stiles figured me out right before my breaking point. Right before I was supposed to kill Derek. I will never forget the look on Scott’s face when Stiles and Derek told him. I never felt so low. He turned his back to me when Derek threw me out of the pack. I’m lucky that’s all he did. Any of them. I broke a lot of people’s trust that day. None hurt me more than the people in this pack.”

Freya nods. She can see why hurting her mate would break her down more than the staunch nutjobs that raised her.

“I wanted to tell you all this, because I get it. You get told one thing about someone, or a group of people, most of your life, and when you’re confronted with the reality of it all, it’s…overwhelming. Takes you back. Makes you think everything you’ve ever been told is a lie. And make no mistake, we are most things you’ve heard about us, but we're more of the things you haven’t.”

“…I don’t think either Derek or Stiles could have put it any better.”

“I’ve learned a lot from them. They were rocky at first, but they got the hang of it all very quickly. And they’ve built something here, with us, that I’d fight to the death for. You will, too. And you’ll understand so much more when you’re a wolf.”

“I hope so. Thank you, Allison.”

Allison takes the fish bowl from Freya’s hands and sits it on the ground. She opens her arms, and they hug.

“There you two are.”

They look to see Scott and Isaac entering onto the balcony with them. Scott is dressed as Mark Antony to Allison’s Cleopatra, and Isaac’s costume matches Freya’s, as an American football player.

“We were looking for you two,” Scott says.

“I was looking for you, so Erica doesn’t get to you first,” Isaac says to Freya, placing a kiss on her neck.

“Shit! I need to help her finish the donations. Come help me. Thanks, Allison.” Freya grabs the fish bowl and Isaac’s hand, then runs back into the house.

“Is she okay,” Scott asks.

“Yeah. She just needed a history lesson, and to not feel so alone,” Allison says.

“Good. I’m glad. I’m glad Isaac is happy.”

“You tell him that,” she asks.
“Yes. Don’t think he gave much of a shit though.”

“Can you blame him? Or Kira? You were a dick. We both were.”

“Yeah. We got some making up to do. If Malia can forgive Stiles…”

“Yeah, but Braeden-- good luck to him on that one.”

“Tell me about it,” Scott agrees.


“Are you serious, Stiles,” Peter says with a raise in his eyebrow.

“She’s pack. She should be here. She’s already missed every other event.”

“Did you really expect her to come,” Peter asks.

“…No. Doesn’t mean she shouldn’t though,” he grumbles like a petulant child.

“I’m not going to make her do anything she’s not comfortable with, and you know that if you want something from her, you’re going to have to ask her directly.”

“I know. Was just hoping for a coward’s way out. Or a nosy third party to intervene,” he says with beaming hope in his eyes at Peter.

“What did I just say? Ordinarily, I’d love to be involved and revel in the complete awkwardness and chaos, but sitting on the sidelines is just as entertaining sometimes, too.”

Stiles grabs Peter’s shirt, drawing him in close, gently running the tip of his nose along his jawline. “Ah, come on, Petey. For me,” he says in a seductive voice.

“This is so beneath you.”

“But you like it,” Stiles smirks.

He does. God help him, but he does.

Stiles’ lips hover just a hair over Peter’s mouth. “Just tell her to come to the fundraiser next month.”

“I… I’d rather watch you squirm in front of her in person.”

“Ugh!” Stiles lets go of Peter with a shove.

Peter laughs.

“You’re a jackass, you know that?”

“Why? Because I think you should clean up your own mess like a good, little boy? Or because I won’t let your 30 seconds of horrible flirting persuade me otherwise?”

“Both. And my flirting is not horrible.”

“You came on too strong and too sudden. You know the best way to seduce someone is subtle, and
drawn out.”

Stiles rolls his eyes. He knows Peter is right. It rattles something in him that Peter is the one who seems to see him a bit more clearly than most at times.

“If it makes you feel better, I’m flying at half-mast due to the attention.”

“No, Peter. It doesn’t,” Stiles responds, annoyed. “I’m 4 months pregnant and dressed like a mermaid, wearing lipstick. This does it for you?”

“Doesn’t it for Derek,” Peter says with a sly grin.

Stiles runs his hand smoothly down Peter’s face, bringing his ear to his painted mouth. “In more ways than you could imagine,” he whispers, before shoving Peter away again and going back into the house.

Peter snickers. He loves playing games with Stiles. A worthy opponent if ever there were one.

August 2017

“So your solution is to runaway?”

“I’m not running away--”

“Bullshit!”

“I’m doing a semester abroad! That’s it!”

“You never said a single word about any of this. Ever, Stiles! And suddenly, you want to trek off to London for a whole goddamn year!”

“Do I need your permission?!”

“Yes! As your Alpha and as my Emissary, you need to ask me if you can fly across the damn world and stay there for a whole fucking year, Stiles!”

“I’m not your Emissary! Laura is!”

“Oh, come off it, Stiles! You practically took over for her the day we met! She lives in Beacon Hills, and is better off as the pack’s consigliere. You need to be here!”

“I need to finish school, Derek!”

“And what’s wrong with you doing it here, on campus, at Stanford, like you’ve been doing?!”

“Look, college is about experiences--”

“Shut up! I’m not your father! Don’t try to bullshit me, it’s degrading!”

Stiles wanted to snap back, but Derek was right. That’s what he was doing. He should know better than to try lying to a werewolf. Least of all one that’s his mate.
“Fine. The truth is I can’t give you what you want, Derek. And maybe you’re right. Maybe I’m playing games with you, and that’s not fair. I have to make a decision to be with you or not.”

“And you leaving is you choosing not to be,” Derek asks. His voice shaky and raw.

“No. I don’t have that many answers for you, but I know it’s not that.”

“Then what? You want me to wait for you? I’ve been doing that, Stiles.”

“I know… I just… I need space. From all this, and us, and you.”

“Running away. Like I said.”

“Fine. Call it that.”

“That’s what it is! You’d rather get on a plane and move away than tell me you love me. Can’t you see why I’m a little pissed about all this?”

Derek tried to take a deep breath, to quell the rage bubbling to the surface, but he couldn’t. He grabbed the vase off his coffee table and threw it against the wall! Ceramic shards, plant water, and flowers crumbled to the hardwood floor.

Stiles watched as Derek breathed, trying to tamper it all down…

His eyes faded back to green, claws retracted, and fangs returned to blunt, human teeth.

“When are you leaving?”

“The end of this month.”

Derek chuckled wryly, as though he knew not to expect a different answer. “How long ago did you make this decision?”

“…March.”

“When I stared seeing Jennifer. You really are a shit, you know that?”

Tears flood Stiles’ eyes. He’s hurting Derek, and deserves to feel horrible because of it. Derek’s been nothing but good to him, and all he’s ever done is give him mixed signals and heartache in return. It’s why he thinks he should leave; so he doesn’t hurt him anymore than he already has.

Derek approached him. “I really wish I knew what goes on in here a lot of the time,” he said, pointing to Stiles’ head. “We’re supposed to be mates, but I can’t figure you out. Just when I think I understand… This. Something like this.”

Derek sat on the sofa. Head back, eyes closed, hands scrubbing up and down his face. Exhausted, and at the end of his rope.

“Do you know anyone in London?”

“No,” Stiles said in a brittle, broken tone, as tears fell down his cheeks.

“I know an Alpha there. Robin. Just go to her if you need anything. I’ll tell her about you.”

“Derek—”
“If the next words out of your mouth aren’t ‘I love you. I’m not leaving’, then don’t. Please.”

“…Can I stay? Or do you want me to go?”

“I really don’t care, Stiles. Truly.”

Stiles has put him through the ringer far too often over the last couple years. Derek’s breaking down. Pieces of him giving up; too angry and hurt to care anymore.

Stiles hesitantly took a seat at the opposite end of the sofa, trying to sit as far away from Derek as he can, not wanting to upset him further with his presence by being too close.

“Don’t say a single word to me. Nothing. Just…sit. Okay?” Derek finally turned to look at Stiles.

Stiles nodded.

He slouched down a bit, relieving himself of his uncomfortable, stiff posture.

He wanted so much for Derek to put his head in his lap, to run his fingers through his sable-colored hair, letting the wolf’s eyes fall closed and drift to sleep while he traced every part of his face with his finger, getting lost in the dark beard around his lips.

He loves Derek. He knows he does. Derek knows he does. He just won’t allow himself to. To give himself over, and be vulnerable and open.

So the least-- the very least-- he can do is give Derek a bit of peace. Even if it’s sitting beside him in silence.

As much as the party can fit, gathers into the living room. Some crowd the second floor, looking over the railing; others have spilled into the kitchen, but strain their ears to hear Stiles and Derek as they stand on the fireplace.

Lydia suggested that they make their speeches outside, on the patio, so everyone can see and hear, but Stiles started complaining about being cold and wanting to remain indoors for the duration of the party.

“First, of all, thank you all for coming tonight,” Stiles says, followed by loud cheers and applause. “We love throwing the Hale Pack Halloween party every year, which we could not do without our very helpful betas, Miss Lydia Martin and Miss Cora Hale.”

Lydia and Cora give a wave and bow to the hooting crowd before melding back into it.

“We do this every year for a number of reasons. The first, to say ‘thank you’ to all of you. It’s all of you, every single one of you, that keeps this pack as strong and as dominate as it is, and we appreciate that. We appreciate you.”

“There are wolves, coyotes, kitsunes, druids, banshees, and humans, all in this pack. That may make us different, but it doesn’t make us any less solid. Or less successful, or any less family. We’re not great in spite of those things; we’re great because of them. We are the second largest pack in this country, and the fourth largest in the world. And we’re most the profitable overall. I think that says something about us—“
“That we’re fucking badass,” Ethan shouts, dressed as a cowboy.

Cheers and hollering fill the house. Even Boyd, dressed as Sir Lancelot, joins in on the cheering, proud of his pack.

Stiles settles down the rowdy drunk crowd.

“I think it does,” Stiles says finally. “I think it means that we are badass, and deserve to be. We deserve to be who we are, and proud to be in this pack.”

Derek takes Stiles’ hand. “For those of you that don’t know, the Alpha-mate is with child.” He’s interrupted by a few catcalls and whistles. Namely from Laura and Thomas, who are dressed as Snow White and the Prince. “So I have a greater need to keep strong the pack that was passed on to me by my father and mother, Theo and Talia Hale, and my father-in-law, John Stilinski. Three people whose prowess I could never match, but hope I make very proud anyway.”

John, Talia, Theo, Melissa, and Deaton (dressed as a jailbird) each raise their glass to him and Stiles.

“Now, the lovely Erica and Freya will have the floor for a minute,” Derek says.

Erica and Freya approach the fireplace to a few catcalls and whistles that make Isaac snarl.

“There are 355 guests at this party tonight, and every single one of you gave a generous donation. Some more than others, and some less than others. We won’t say any names—Cora—”

Cora is shot a death-glare from her parents, making her cower.

“—but most of you gave plenty. Our highest donations were from, of course, our Alphas, John Stilinski, Peter Hale—

Peter winks at Stiles…who rolls his eyes.

“—and Scott McCall,” Erica finishes.

Scott gives Stiles a thumbs up and a goofy grin, which he acknowledges with his own silly grin.

“Tonight, we have raised $50,000 to be donated next month for FTD research and treatment,” Freya adds.

Applause and cheers.

Stiles and his father share a proud, but mournful smile. Derek takes notice and leans over to kiss Stiles’ temple.

“It’s the highest we’ve ever raised at the Halloween party in the last 6 years, so be proud, Hale Pack,” Erica beams.

“Thank you, Erica. And thank you, Freya,” Derek says. He and Stiles kiss both girls on the cheek before they mold themselves back into the cluster of guests.

“Tonight we’re also celebrating the 10 year anniversary of my betas Scott McCall, Vernon Boyd, Erica Reyes, Isaac Lahey, and Jackson Whittemore being made wolves.”

A collective howl of solidarity sounds from any and every wolf in the place.
Derek’s eyes find Jordan, who smiles respectfully at him. “I am proud, of all five you. I am proud that you’re in this pack, this family. I am proud to have been the one to turn you. You deserve to be wolves. The best wolves. And that’s what you are.”

He means every bit of it to Jordan, as he does the rest of his betas.

“Stiles and I, love being you’re Alphas, and look forward to more years of being so,” Derek finishes.

Erica wipes away mascara-laced tears from her face.

“Wait. Doesn’t this also make this the 10 year anniversary of someone being a True Alpha,” Aidan announces teasingly.

Another set of hoots and hollers.

“The only thing I’ll say to that is that being an Alpha has afforded me a lot of things. None more priceless than my mate, and my pack.”

Nearly every girl in the place ‘awwws’. Except Lydia who rolls her eyes at the precious noise. “Oh, for heaven’s sake,” she grumbles.

Jordan gives her a light smack on her butt. His way of telling her to “be nice.” She curls herself closer to him.

“Alright. Enough sappy shit. Let’s get to it with the prize for best costume,” Stiles says. “The winner gets 10 grand, courtesy of their Alpha, Mr. Derek Hale. So, Malia.”

Malia, in a **sexy devil costume**, saunters up toward Stiles and Derek. They hand her a piece of paper. “Stiles and Derek have chosen 4 runners up, and one grand prize winner. The four runners up will each receive a mystery box to be opened after the grand prize winner is announced. So, the fourth runner up is **Adam & Eve** from the San Francisco house.”

A couple dressed as Adam & Eve rush up to claim their prize. Malia hands them a white box, no bigger than a bread box, with question marks all over it.

“Our third runner up is **pregnant zombie** from Sacramento house.”

Valerie and Jason, dressed as **Bonnie and Clyde**, cheer loudly.

“I can not believe you voted for that one,” Derek whispers to Stiles.

“She did a kickass job with it.”

“Creeps me out so much.”

Stiles snickers at Derek being really uncomfortable with their guest’s costume.

“Second runner up is **Maleficent**,” Malia squeals.

Kira happily rushes to claim her mystery box. Malia hugs her and screams like she just won Miss America.

She calms down when Stiles and Peter shoot her odd looks.

“Sorry. First runner up— Where’s Waldo!”
Low and behold, Jackson Whittemore, dressed as Where’s Waldo.

“And, the grand prize goes to… Bert & Mary from Beacon Hills house!”

Loud cheers and applause as Talia and Theo collect their cash prize.

Malia shushes the crowd. The room gradually quiets down.

“Runners up, you may now open your mystery boxes,” Malia says.

They each lift the lid to their box— only to have slimy, green goop shoot out at them and explode all over their faces!

The room collectively shares a good-natured laugh, but Stiles…is…cracking…up.

“Stiles,” Derek snaps at his mate, knowing that evil cackle he’s braying means he’s behind the prank.

“It worked, Scotty! It was great! So damn perfect.”

“Trick-or-Treat,” Scott shouts.

Stiles can hardly breathe he’s laughing so hard. Scott and Peter are right along with him.

John and Theo are trying really hard not to laugh…and failing. Because no matter how hard the "winners" try to wipe the goo off their faces, it seems to get worse.

“Stiles, the moment you drop those kids, you are going to pay,” Jackson says.

But Stiles is bowled over in a fit of laughter with tears coming down his face, and his wig completely fallen off. Jackson’s threat of revenge means very little to him at the moment.

“Well, better than actual green puke,” Erica shrugs.

Allison trudges into the kitchen, looking worse for wear. Her make up is smeared, her face in a scowl, she’s barefoot, and still wearing the bottom half of her costume with one of Scott’s T-shirts.

Hangover.

Danny’s making coffee. And not looking any better. He still has zombie make up on his face.

“Oh, thank God, you made coffee,” she says to him.

“Stiles did actually. I had the rest and decided to make more assuming someone else would no doubt be feeling just as bad as me.”

“Well, then bless you both. Where is our Alpha-mate?”

“He went back upstairs to bed with Derek.”

“Haven’t those two fucked each other enough? I heard them around 7AM this morning.”

“I think they’re actually asleep now,” he manages a smile.
“How do we get so wasted at this thing every year?”

Danny shrugs as he pours her a cup of black coffee.

The backdoor opens. Cora walks in…topless, and looking like death.

“I don’t know where it is, I just know that I lost it,” she says, referring to her missing top. She grabs the dishtowel hooked on the handles of the fridge and wraps it around her breasts.

“Want some coffee,” Danny asks Cora.

“That's a human hangover method. I need a werewolf one.”

“Which would be…” Danny asks.

“A long run. Followed by a lot of puking.”

“That’s what Scott and Boyd are doing now,” Allison says.

“They went for a run,” Danny asks.

“No. They’re puking. Somewhere between five and seven in the morning, Boyd wandered in our room and passed out on the floor. I got up just now to get coffee and they both were in the guest bathroom spewing their guts out.”

Just then, Malia races into the kitchen and vomits in the sink.

“Is ralphing in the sink a thing now? Did Stiles start a trend,” Cora says sarcastically.

Malia finishes, turns on the faucet, and rinses her mouth out. “How do we get so wasted at this thing every year?”

Allison, Danny, and Cora just shrug.

Stiles exits the master bathroom, into the bedroom. Derek is in a T-shirt and sweatpants, pulling on a pair of running shoes.

“Jesus. All that make up was bitch to get off. Where are you going?”

“A run. With Jordan. I’m going to tell him.”

“Oh, fuck that. Not by yourself.” Stiles opens the closet and grabs his shoes.

“Stiles. What are you doing?”

“Baking a quiche. What’s it look like I’m doing?”

“You’re not coming with me.”

Stiles merely scoffs.

“I’m serious, Stiles.”

“Good. We can both be serious together.”
“Stiles,” Derek growls in his best Alpha tone.

“No, Derek. Jordan, as mild-mannered and sweet a guy he is, has probably got a lot of pent-up anger in him about being turned and the mess it made of his life. He’s probably still having nightmares about it, which is why he continues going to therapy. He’s a good man that accidentally took someone’s life because without asking, he got turned into a werewolf and couldn’t control himself. I don’t want you alone, miles from me, with him.”

“You know I can defend myself.”

“I also know that Alpha, Beta, Omega are really just titles. One wrong move and you’re lost to me forever,” Stiles says with a shaky breath.

Derek knows Stiles is on the verge of a panic attack if he doesn’t compromise quickly. He grips Stiles’ shoulders and sits him on the bed, bending at the knees to meet him at eye-level.

“I can not let you go with me, but I’ll take Boyd, okay?”

“Boyd is hungover.”

“Which he’ll get over rather quickly if we’re attacked by Jordan. Trust me. Please, baby.”

Stiles nervous bounces his leg, arms crossed over his chest… “BOYD!”

Stiles breaks from the bed and paces…

Boyd comes in.

Stiles nods at him to shut the door. He does.

“You hungover? Because you need to not be right now.”

“What’s going on,” Boyd asks.

“I have to talk to Jordan about something important. He might take it the wrong way, so I need you to come with me.”

“Is he your ‘lost beta’,” Boyd asks.

“You told Boyd before you told me?!” Stiles swats Derek’s arm.

“Yes,” Derek answers Boyd, ignoring Stiles.

Boyd nods, but looks pensive.

“What is it,” Derek asks.

“I don’t know if taking him out into the wilderness and breaking bad news to him is such a good idea.”

“See? Told you,” Stiles says to his husband.

“I just wanted to talk to him about it alone. With no one around. A man-to-man talk. Or wolf-to-wolf, whatever.”

“I think it’d be better if you both had your mates present. They’re your anchors. They’ll calm you
both down if it gets too heated. And if it starts to look like it’s getting beyond control, I can jump in, and we’ll have Lydia and Scott take him home.”

“This is exactly why you’re No. 2.”

“Well, clearly, Stiles is okay with that idea, so alright. Let’s go with it. Tell Lydia and Jordon to come to the office downstairs please.”

Boyd nods, and leaves the room.

Lydia and Jordan come into the office. Lydia looks like she spent all night and well into the morning hovering over a toilet bowl. She’s wearing yoga pants with holes in them, and an old US Army T-shirt that must belong to Jordan.

“You okay, Red Queen,” Stiles asks.

“I pray for death.”

Jordan runs the back of his hand against her cheek. She softens, giving him a small smile.

_Maybe Boyd’s plan really will work. It’s certainly better than being alone in the tall trees with an angry werewolf_, Stiles thinks.

“I wanted to talk to you about something, Jordan. Something really important that’s affected your life for some time now, and has made me the director of it,” Derek says.

Lydia’s attention turns to pure concentration, and that’s when Stiles knows she knows.

“…I bit Scott, Boyd, Erica, Isaac, and Jackson on Halloween ten years ago. The night I turned into a True Alpha. I was feral, in complete wolf form, running around in the dark, scared, confused, and radiating with a new power I had yet to learn to control. My actions disrupted my betas lives, for good and bad, but I ultimately let them see that being turned into a werewolf has made their lives interesting in more ways than one, and with it came responsibility, discipline, and a family that would be there for them no matter what, and make them a better were.”

“I believe that,” Jordan says, nodding.

“Good, because there’s something else I have to say. That night, I was at Golden Gate Park. I was at the park, and I think you were the first person I bit.”

“W-What? N-No. Peter told me last night where you were. He said you were in Muir Woods.”

“Oh, shit, Peter. The one time you try to be helpful…” Stiles groans.

“I wasn’t, Jordan. I was at Golden Gate Park. I was at a bar with Cora. I got a little too drunk and decided to go back to her place, but got lost. Then the Alpha transformation started taking over while I was walking around. I ended up at the park, trying to find a dark place to shift. You came into the woods not long after.”

“No…” Jordan says in disbelief.

Lydia takes his hand. “Remember when I said Omegas can’t turn humans? Their status is weak, as is their power. They don’t have the capability to turn someone. Only Alphas can.”
“I’m sorry, Jordan. After I bit you, I went looking for you, but lost track of your scent when it started raining. I couldn’t go out into the street, so I stayed in the park. I looked for you for a long time, but without remembering your face, or knowing your name, my search couldn’t turn anything up.”

Jordan’s mind is racing, heart pounding. His eyes are darting around in his head as he stares at the carpet, nostrils flaring.

Stiles turns to Derek. *How’s he dealing?*

Derek shakes his head. *It’s not good.*

Jordan is either on the verge of a full-blown panic attack, or a heartbeat away from wolfing out of Derek.

He chooses the latter.

Within a blink of an eye, Jordan has his claws dug into Derek’s side and pinned atop his desk! Lydia pleads with Jordan to let Derek go, screaming and crying!

Derek throws Jordan off him! He lands on the coffee table, breaking it with impact!

Boyd and Scott are in the room now. Scott grabs both Stiles and Lydia, carrying them out the room as they both plead to be let back in the office!

The home office door breaks off the hinges as Jordan comes flying through it! Boyd is on him before he can have a second thought, let alone a first one. They’re wrestling around, snarling and clawing at one another!

Stiles whispers something in an unidentified language into Scott’s ear. Scott’s arms turn limp. The rest of him like a rag doll as he slumps to the floor unconscious!

Stiles runs into the kitchen!

Derek, bleeding from his abdomen, stands in the office doorway. He roars loudly, forcing all the weres to cover their ears and fall to their knees in submission. Even Jordan.

The command stops. Jordan looks up and sees a “vulnerable” Alpha. He leaps from the floor at him—and is forced back 15 feet, landing on his back!

There’s a long line of mountain ash between Derek and everyone else. Stiles. Clutching a tin labeled *Pirouette wafers* containing mountain ash. He runs to Derek, holding him for dear life.

“I’m okay. I’m fine,” Derek tries to reassure his trembling mate.


There’s claw slashes down the front of Jordan’s shirt, and a huge, bleeding gash on his forehead that’s slowly knitting itself back together. Lydia holds him up, letting him use her as a crutch. “Fuck you. And fuck your pack,” Jordan growls at Derek.

“Any time you want to talk, I’m here,” Derek says sincerely.

“Go to hell.”
Stiles and Lydia exchange glances. They’ve known each other long enough to have an entire conversation without words. They’ll call one another when everything clams down, and they’re alone.

Lydia and Jordan walk out the front door.

Freya watches Jordan leave. She and Isaac exchange looks.

He nods at the front door. Go. It’s okay. I understand.

She kisses him quick before grabbing her shoes and purse, then run out the door after her best friend and his fiancée.

“So...what the fuck was that about,” Jackson asks he silent room. “And what you do to McCall, Stiles?”

“He’ll be fine in 5 minutes,” Stiles answers. He looks up at Derek who’s still gripped hard in his arms.

Derek knows what he’s asking without having to saying. He raises the hem of his shirt. No more blood. No more wound. He’s good.

Relieved, Stiles rest his forehead on Derek’s shoulder and takes a deep breath. “...So, is this a bad time to tell you I felt the twins move?”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the long wait on this chapter. Took longer than anticipated. Sex scenes-- get me every time...but I feel so lost without them.

I feel like every woman I know has at some point been told by some doctor that she can’t have a children, including my mother...right before they get pregnant and have like four kids over the next 15 years. Who the hell are these ill-informed docs?!

Derek's panty/crossdressing kink spawned from the whole Little Red Riding Hood nicknaming they have for one another, but also from a PWP fic idea I had where Derek really likes when Stiles wears lace panties... So it morphed into this as something I wanted to be both sexy and funny. But it feels a little odd within the fic, like the characters wouldn't do that, or be into that, so I might cut it and replace it with something else. Thought I'd get you guys' (is that right? that's not right, right? like that's horrible English and a terrible possessive... I don't know...) opinion of it first. Enough people like it, or think it's funny, I'll keep it. If not, I'll toss it by week's end.

No biggie :)

Looking up links for all these costumes, I got to see hipster versions of them, and actual clothes alternatives of them, and that was actually really cool. Might have to try some of them... Or at least pin them on my Pinterest or something. Lol

November will deal with Derek's birthday, a fight between Jordan/Lydia/Freya, Freya being made a werewolf, a charity fundraiser the pack attends, a family emergency Derek has to return to Beacon Hills for, and of course, Thanksgiving...with Braeden.
Questions/comments, hit me up here, or on Tumblr. You know how I roll :)
“Derek,” Stiles laughs. “It’s been an hour. We have to get going.”

“I know. I just want to feel it again.”

Stiles runs his lean fingers through Derek’s soot-colored hair as the Alpha’s head lies on his mates’ stomach, hand pressed against the baby bump.

“You’ve felt them move twice now. Come on, papa-wolf, we have to go. We have a 40 minute drive ahead of us.”

“Alright,” Derek sighs, reluctantly removing himself from Stiles’ belly.

Stiles sits up. He swings his legs around to touch his feet onto the floor, then stands, groaning with a hand at the small of his back.

“You okay?”

“My goddamn back hurts.”

Derek snorts.

“Oh, yeah. Hilarious.”

“It’s not. It’s just that… You’re very pregnant.”

“I hadn’t noticed.”

“And I find you entering the stage of ‘very pregnant’ endearing…and a little funny.”

“You’re so carrying next time.”

Derek pulls Stiles into his arms. “When we come home, I will draw you a hot bath and make you [cauliflower chowder soup](https://example.com), then rub you feet while you watch some ridiculous superhero movie on Netflix. How does that sound?”

“That sounds amazing.”

Derek kisses Stiles’ neck. An electronic tune chimes! Stiles’ phone.

He moves to the nightstand and picks it up. “…Well, that’s not a coincidence at all.”

“What?”
“Jordan just cancelled our appointment.”

“As we were just about to get in the car and drive down there…? Okay. He can be pissed at me all he wants, but he can’t do this to you and our babies. He’s your doctor. You need your physician to check up on you and make sure everything is okay,” Derek says, his voice rising.

Stiles touches his arm, bringing him in close, anchoring him. “Hey. It’s okay. It’s one appointment. Everything came to a head just yesterday. He needs time, and that’s okay. I can give him this one time, okay? We can give him this one time.”

Derek breathes in deep. “If I feel like he’s being petty, and that it might cause damaging repercussions to you or our children, I will break him in half.”

“I understand. In the mean time, come put your hand back on my belly.”

Derek’s not an idiot. He knows Stiles is trying to clam him down, distract him. And he also knows he needs it, and that Stiles is right. It was only yesterday that he told Jordan he was really his Alpha and turned him 10 years ago. The doctor is angry and hurt. He needs space, and time. This isn’t one of those situations were he and Stiles can bombarded their target with lectures and pep talks, or even violence. Jordan has to come to them.

Derek just wishes he didn’t get the feeling it was going to be a long time coming when he did.

“Where’s Lydia?”

“Not here,” Jordan says flatly.

“I see that. Why,” Freya asks.

“She thought it best if she stayed the night somewhere else tonight.”

“…You okay with that?”

“Am I okay with snapping at my fiancée to the point where she feels she should sleep somewhere else? No. Am I okay with finding out that a man I respected and admired is actually the one that ruined my life a decade ago? No. Am I okay that said fiancée is a beta to said life-ruiner? No. I am not okay, Frey. I am actually really pissed. More pissed than I’ve ever been.”

“More than Shelly pissed?”

“More than Shelly pissed.”

Freya knows being beyond "Shelly-pissed" is a big deal. Shelly being Jordan's high-maintenance, cheating, verbally abusive ex-girlfriend. She takes a seat beside her friend and takes his hand. “Do we need alcohol?”

“We need a lot of alcohol.”

“Alright. I’ll get the tequila.”

Freya breaks from the sofa and heads toward the kitchen.
“What do they say,” Stiles asks.

“It’s all just a bunch of garbled rants about how I’m an asshole, and he hopes I choke on wolfsbane. Freya called me this morning to apologize for him. They were drinking last night, and Lydia stayed the night with us, so…”

“Oh, I’m so sorry, Derek,” Melissa says sympathetically.

“He’s hurting right now. All I can do is wait for him to calm down until he’s ready to talk.”

“And when will that be? He’s already cancelled Stiles’ appointment,” John says over ham and cheese quiche.

“You think he’ll take it further,” Theo asks.

“I think he’s not only hurt, but pissed. Royally pissed. I mean, you inadvertently took away his freedom for almost two years, then he was at B.A.H.D.W. for another year, and has been in therapy since. He’s a nice guy that killed an innocent man, and feels that never would have happened had you not bit him.”

“So you think he’d try and hurt me? Violently,” Derek asks his father-in-law.

“Aside from him doing so at Red Grove? I don’t know. What I am saying though, is that I understand you waiting on him to come to you, but just know that you’ll probably be waiting for a very long time.”

“Probably until hell freezes over,” Theo piggybacks onto John’s concern.

“And the devil gives free sleigh rides,” John adds. “But I’d also like for you to be cautious.”

“Very cautious,” Melissa says. “Jordan is a good man, but he feels betrayed, and cheated by you. If not violence, he could find other ways to hurt you.”

“I don’t think he’s petty,’ Stiles says.

“Did he not cancel your appointment yesterday,” John asks.

“It was the day after he found out. He needs time. I think you all are jumping to conclusions about him too soon,” Stiles tells their parents.

“I don’t think we are,” John says. “And knowing you, you’ve had every last worry that’s been spread all over this table in your heard since the moment Derek told Jordan that he was the one that bit him.”

Stiles has got nothing. His father does know him too well.

“And I’m willing to assume that you’re also worried about Lydia,” John says.

“Lydia will never leave us,” Stiles says confidently.

“But she can’t have a mate that won’t join into her pack, and she can’t be in a pack that doesn’t trust her mate enough to let him join,” Theo says.

This was Derek’s biggest fear about this whole ordeal: the heaviness and pulling back and forth, wearing the banshee down and corrupting her head and her heart. He loves Lydia, like he loves all his betas, but he knows she holds a special place in Stiles’ heart, and it’d crush them both if
something drastic had to happen, like Lydia leaving the Hale Pack, or Jordan’s outright refusal to join. Mates or not, things like that can put a severe strain on a marriage.

Derek looks over at Stiles. He looks a little queasy at the thought of Lydia in the midst of all this turmoil. The idea of losing her, or causing her unhappiness with her mate, is making Stiles uneasy.

Derek rests a hand on Stiles’ belly. Stiles places his hand on top.

Derek can already feel Stiles’ worries relax a bit at their contact, and the reminder of the children growing in Stiles’ belly.

“Then there’s Freya and Isaac to consider,” Theo says. “Are you still turning her?”

“She hasn’t asked me not to. We’re doing it on the New Moon.”

“And how is Isaac with all this,” Theo asks.

“On pins and needles. He’s trying to be cool about it all, but he’s having a stroke internally, worried Jordan will convince Freya not to be made a werewolf and refuse to join pack,” Derek says.

“You feel that from him? Jesus,” Stiles says, sounding a bit stressed.

Derek feels Stiles’ uneasiness again and places a kiss on his neck, scratching at the nape with his fingers.

“From what I’ve seen of Freya, she’s her own woman, with her own opinions. If she didn’t want to be turned into a were, she would have said so. And I doubt Jordan could influence her otherwise,” Theo says.

“Exactly what I tried to get through to Isaac. I think he just needs to reaffirm that with Freya.”

“Possibly,” John agrees, sipping his coffee.

“That better be decaf,” Stiles chides his father.

John rolls his eyes at his son.

“Mom, what do you think? You’ve been quiet,” Derek says, addressing Talia.

“I’ve known Jordan Parrish since he was born. I agree with everyone here: he’s a really good man; sweet, honest, and humble…but he is hurting right now. And angry. Anger makes people do irrational things. I don’t believe Jordan would ever cause harm to a soul— his attack on an innocent notwithstanding— but when you’ve been harboring that much fury for so long, and part of your life was lost causing it, it’s hard to predict one’s actions. Even those of a very lovely young man. The best thing for him right now is to be close to his anchor. Lydia keeping her distance isn’t good. She grounds him, even when they disagree.”

“Your mother’s right,” Theo says. “If it takes him an eternity to come around and talk to you, if Lydia is there beside him, it’ll go a lot easier between the two of you.”

“She just shouldn’t try and influence him, or make him feel as though he’s the one that’s wrong in all this, which I assume is what happened and why she stayed the night in her old room last night,” John says.

This is why. This is why their parents ran their “business” so successfully for 25 years before
handing it all over to Stiles and Derek. They’re smart, practical, and intuitive people. They see all angles of a problem, and how best to approach it. Sometimes viciously, and sometimes a little more diplomatic. Derek wonders if his father had ever doubted himself, or found himself vexed by a certain situation. He had always assumed his flawless parents always had an answer, or knew the right way to take on something big and complex. He knew they were imperfect like every other sentient being on the planet, but in these moments he couldn’t help but feel as though they were metaphorical giants.

Derek nods along, taking everything that was said into consideration.

“Oh, shit,” Stiles grumbles beside him.

“What,” Derek asks.

“Well, this is interesting…”

The table takes note of a man and woman in dark suits approaching them.

“I had no idea you ate here. I came for their strawberry danishes. Heard they were to die for,” says Agent Haigh. “It’s nice to see you again, Mr. Stilinski-Hale. How are you?”

“Fine.”

“And pregnant. Didn’t notice that when I visited.”

“I’m in my second trimester now. Twins,” Stiles says with a big, fake smile.

“Wow. You don’t say?”

Stiles raises an eyebrow at the agent.

“Well, aren’t you going to introduce me?”

“Where are my manners? Derek, sweetie, this is Agent Haigh.”

Hearing his name makes Derek’s head snap into complete attention. He glares at the man as the metal spoon in his hand bends to the point of breaking in half. His eyes fade red.

“Whoa. Red eyes. Easy there, friend. Flashing them to a federal agent is considered assault you know,” Agent Haigh grins.

Stiles grips Derek’s hand under the table.

Gradually, Derek’s eyes fade back to their normal, sea foam green color.

“There we go. This is just a friendly chat,” Agent Haigh says.

“Like the one you had with my pregnant mate when you ‘visited’,” Derek asks.

Agent Haigh leans down over the table, close to Derek, face-to-face. Such a stance is considered confrontational to weres. Especially an Alpha. It’s disrespectful. Agent Haigh knows this. Everyone knows this.

“I think this conversation is much friendlier,” he says with a wicked smile that would look so much better on Peter.
Stiles feels the prick of pointed claws poke into his hand.

Agent Haigh stands at full height. “Well, who else are you lunching with, Mr. Stilinski-Hale?”

“These are my in-laws, Talia and Theo Hale, my father, John Stilinski, and my ‘surrogate mother’, Melissa McCall…but then you already know that.”

“Do I?”

“I think you do,” Stiles says, trying hard to smile and not break his glass of lemonade over Agent Haigh’s face.

“You give me too much credit.”

“I give you none actually. Just the acknowledgement of sloppy recon and access to files left behind by a dead agent.”

The table snorts and snickers at Stiles’ dig at Agent Haigh.

“Kate said you were funny.”

“I doubt that.”

“Oh, but she did. She said funny, ridiculously smart, and brutally violent; even more so than your husband.”

“Allegedly.”

“We’ll put quotations around that.”

“If it makes you feel better.”

“Is there something you wanted, Agent Haigh? I could have sworn you said something about a strawberry danish,” John says.

He looks long and hard at John and Melissa. “What’s a small town cop and registered nurse doing mixed up with a group like this?”

“What group might that be,” Melissa asks.


“Are you referring to my son and son-in-law,” John asks.

“He did after all spend time in prison for nearly beating a man to death a baseball bat.”

“Allegedly,” John says.

“With quotations,” Stiles says. He and his father share a smirk, telling where Stiles gets his smart-ass humor from.

“I don’t know what it is you think my family has done, or are capable of, but I assure you that you’re wrong. Kate Argent went looking for things that weren’t there, and perished tragically because of it,” Theo says calmly.

“Is that a threat, Alpha Hale,” Agent Haigh’s partner asks.
“Mr. Hale. My son is the Alpha.”

“Is that a threat, Mr. Hale,” she asks again.

“I would never threaten a federal agent,” he says so politely it sounds like nothing but a threat. “But I would heed them a warning.”

“Was Kate Argent given the same warning?”

“What was there to warn her about,” Derek asks, all innocent smiles and charm.

“I don’t know. Her impending death if she continued to investigate your little crime syndicate,” Haigh asks sarcastically.

“I’m very unaware of any ‘crime syndicate’ you’re referencing. And I thought Agent Argent’s death was ruled an accident…” Derek says.

“Nope. Still an open case. Seems their might be evidence of foul-play. Isn’t that right, sheriff,” Haigh says turning to John.

“I’m unaware of such. I’m on extended leave to be closer to my son while he’s pregnant. You’ll have to direct all your questions to the acting sheriff of Beacon Hills in regards to Kate’s… untimely death,” John responds.

“I did. She seems to think Kate’s death was an accident as well.”

“Well, there you go.”

“I do, however, have yet to speak to Kate’s remaining family members: her brother and fellow agent, along with her niece, Allison.”

“Allison is a lovely girl,” Talia says. “I’m sure she’ll be nothing but cooperative. Isn’t that right, Melissa?”

“Absolutely,” Melissa says, shooting Haigh a friendly grin.

“Good. I look forward to speaking with her. Personally.”

Haigh turns to leave—

“Agent Haigh. We may be creatures, but we’re not monsters,” Stiles says.

“Not like the ones that hang out in vampire dens,” Derek adds with a grin.

Haigh nearly turns white at the knowing smile on Derek’s face.

“Enjoy the rest of your afternoon,” Derek says.

The table watches Haigh nearly stumble out of the café, his partner behind him.

“Ow!”

Derek releases Stiles’ hand. There are four needle pricks blossoming with blood at the base of Stiles’ palm. Derek whispers an apology into Stiles’ hand before kissing it gently.

“Well…at least we know he’s not nearly as bright as Kate and Chris,” Talia says.
“Kate and Chris weren’t bright. They were hunters; they were blessed with background on us already. That’s what drove their case as far as it did,” Stiles says.

“He’s an idiot, with weak scare tactics. This guy should be easy to take down. We just need to figure out how,” John says.

“We do. Just maybe not in the middle of a café at midday,” Theo says.

“Agreed,” Melissa says.

Derek politely grabs the attention of their waiter, signaling him wanting their check.

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August 2017

Stiles,

I’m angry, and hurt. I still don’t understand why you felt the need to do this; why you felt it best to leave my side, when we both know where you belong is right here. With me. Together. And maybe I’ll never understand it, but if it’s what you need to make things clearer for you, to make you understand and see and know what it is I’ve known since meeting you, then I will support your decision in any way you need me to.

You’re twenty-one now, and I know what it’s like to be that age and wanting the freedom that comes with it. I know you need to figure things out and have fun; my regret is not being apart of those plans somehow. I’m not trying to make you feel guilty (though I think I’d be in the right to do so). I’m just letting you know that I understand, but just wish you’d let me discover those things with you as your mate.

I just hope you get the time and space and answers you need from this, and come back to me with fresh eyes and an open heart. You’re everything to me, and not having you near is heartbreaking, but if it means that when you return our life together will begin, than I can use that hope to keep me strong, and wait for you.

I love you. Always.

Derek

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Jordan opens the door. Lydia. On the other side with her overnight bag.

“...Hi.”

“Hi,’ she says. “Can I come in?”

He steps aside to let her in.

“You look miserable.” She thinks to what Stiles told her about Jordan needing her closeness now more than ever. He practically demanded she return to Jordan's place, believing she and Jordan being apart was causing more harm than good in their relationship. She couldn't help but to agree.

He closes the door. “I am miserable.” The “because you weren’t here” is implied.
“I’m sorry.”

“For?”

“All of this. I’m sorry. I’m sorry I fled to the pack house. I’m sorry I didn’t answer your calls—”

“Drunken rambles and crying jags. I’m glad you didn’t.”

“I’m sorry Derek bit you—”

“Don’t apologize for him!”

“He’s my Alpha, Jordan! I know him! He’s not selfish, or vindictive! This is hurting him, too!”

“Like 18 months in jail?! Like a whole year in a mental institute?! Like twice a week therapy sessions to discuss waking up in the middle of the night screaming and suicidal thoughts when my mind wanders in the shower?! Like that?!”

She didn’t know he had suicidal thoughts. It stuns her a bit, mainly out of ignorance, but she’s truly not surprised he’s felt that way. Jordan’s a great guy. The quintessential “nice guy.” Of course taking the life of an ‘innocent’ would affect him in such a way. That’s what all the anger and bitterness and short-sightedness toward Derek was about.

“…No. Of course not. I just… He didn’t do it on purpose. He didn’t set out to hurt you or anyone else. He was transforming. He was feral. He didn’t know what was happening to him. Just like you didn’t when you killed that man by accident. I just want you to know that.”

“I do…and I don’t really care, Lydia.”

“I need you to though.”

“Why?”

She thought the answer would be apparent… “Because he’s my Alpha.”

“Maybe you need a new one.”

“I told you, Jordan: I will never leave my pack.”

“Not even for your mate?”

“They’re my family.”

“You don’t need them, Lydia. You’re not a wolf. It makes no difference to you if you’re in a pack or not.”

She twitches, taken aback by his statement.

“Excuse me? It makes a whole lot of fucking difference to me,” she snaps. “My two best friends, my ‘platonic soulmates’, my brothers, are in that pack. We have been through every kind of hell and triumph together since we were 6 years old. I held Stiles’ hand when they took his mother off life support when we were eleven. Every Father’s Day we would take Scott to Six Flags so he didn’t feel so shitty about having the most aloof father in all of NorCal. Those two boys came with me to the drugstore to help me buy tampons when I got my first period, because my mother was too damn drunk to do so herself. I lost my virginity to Jackson. Allison is first girl I’ve ever made friends with who didn’t come to hate me after a month. Cora was my role model all through high
school. I’m the first person Danny ever told he was gay when he was 13 years old. Until you, Isaac and Boyd were the only shining examples I had of what a decent, good-hearted man looked like. Erica reminds me every day that a woman can be both sexy and badass. John is practically my father, and Derek has done nothing but show me what real leadership looks like when it finds love to anchor and reel in all the egotism that can corrupt an Alpha, and destroy a pack.”

She steps closer to him; serious, and determined. “You are the man I’d give my life for, but they are the people that make sure I never have to. They protect me, and I protect them. Don’t ever ask me again to abandon them.”

“…Fine. But I can’t be apart of it.”

“If that’s how you feel now, then okay.”

“I don’t think I could ever change my mind.”

“I think this whole situation has made it clear that no one knows what the future holds…but I refuse to be pulled in two directions with it.”

“What are we supposed to do then?”

“I’ve had an entire childhood of tug-of-war. You promised me we wouldn’t be like that.”

“And I meant it.”

“Then just keep your promise.” She runs her hand softly along his face. “I love you. That doesn’t change.”

“That hasn’t changed for me either. I don’t think it ever could.”

“Then we should remind each other of that every day.”

“Do you need to be reminded?”

“No, but it’ll soften things when there are ugly parts.”

He feels guilty. Their marriage will be harder at times because she’s pack to the Hales, and he’s lost the respect he once had for them within the blink of an eye. They're mated, and should be in the same pack, but he can’t. He can’t bring himself to still be apart of it with her. Doing so would mean his time in jail meant nothing. That his time at B.A.H.D.W meant nothing. That the life he took meant nothing. It meant everything to him. It changed him.

He’s stronger now. Successful and happy, but 10 years ago still looms over him at times. It still wakes him up in a cold sweat in the dead of night sometimes. It still makes him hesitant about tall, dark trees and being alone in them sometimes.

He can’t get over that. Not for some time. A long time. There’s blame to be executed, and he’s finally found where it belonged. There was something justifiable in that to him. It wasn’t peaceful by any means, but it did feel conclusive.

“I’m going to take a shower.”

“You’re staying the night,” he asks, happy, but surprised.

“Why wouldn’t I share a bed with my future husband?”
Jordan watches as she ascends the stairs. Like she’s been there all along.

“How could you think that, Isaac?!”

“I just… I know how close you two are. And I thought that maybe…” he shrugs at her.

“I’m my own person, Isaac, and I made a commitment to you. I love Jordy. He’s my brother, but he doesn’t make decisions for me. And as much as I want to sometimes, I don’t make decisions for him either.”

 “…I just didn’t want him to make you feel as though this was the wrong decision for you to make.”

“I made this choice because I love you. I love us. I want us to be closer, and I want to understand the things I don’t get. Being turned into a wolf is a huge commitment. I’ve thought about. We’ve thought about it together. I’m doing this, for you and me. Jordy has no sway over that.”

“He hates Derek now. I don’t want him to be angry with you for being in our pack. I don’t want to come between anyone.”

“I love that it matters to you,” Freya says sincerely.

“Why wouldn’t it?”

She shrugs. “I don’t imagine it would to most men.”

“I’m not most men. I’m your man.”

She smiles. He sounded so finite and confident… “There’s got to be some sort of loophole in this whole mating ritual thing. Every time I’m with you I feel like tearing my own skin off.”

“I know what you mean. My wolf has been on edge since we met.”

“What’s that feel like?”

“Fight and fuck feel the same a lot of the time to a wolf; anxious, intense, aggressive.”

“What keeps you from going crazy?”

“Control. My anchor. Which is you.”

“What if I’m the thing making your wolf on edge,” she asks with a vixen-y smile.

“Then the best thing to do is create distance… Especially since you smell so good.”

His eyes fade into a golden yellow.

“Stiles was right. That is hot,” she says in a shaky breath.

Arousal seeps off her, permeating the air with smell of candy canes. Isaac’s fangs extend.

“You should go,” he says with a primitive snarl in his tone.

“Right,” she agrees… But she hasn’t moved, enthralled with Isaac shifting at the thought of them having sex.
“Now, Freya,” he growls, low, but urgent.

“Okay.” She grabs her purse and forgoes a kiss ‘goodbye’ knowing he’s a split second from throwing her on the couch and ripping her clothes off… Not that she would mind—ever—but there’s a right way to do things, and a wrong way. They knew what was asked of them with her being turned and made pack. They were told to wait, and agreed to do so. She couldn’t have the first test of her being able to follow an order fall apart just because she’s aroused by her mate. Very aroused.

And Isaac more than anything wanted to make Stiles and Derek proud. They were the “parents” he never had, and always wanted. She couldn’t rob him of the opportunity to beam happily when they tell him how pleased they are of him, having found love and been ready for it.

It was a test of both their wills.

She bothered not to look back, smile, or wave to him as she left the house. Such a simple gesture could open the flood gates and drown them both.

Isaac takes a deep breath, trying to center himself, gain control, but also smelling the air, finding Freya’s scent thin upon it like the tail of a shooting star.

“Cold shower,” he tells himself. “Ice, cold shower.”

He peels his clothes off, hurrying to the bathroom.

Chapter End Notes

Next week: Freya being turned and made pack. The sex of the twins!!! xoxoxo
Freya is made pack, Jordan's actions hurt Stiles and Derek, angering Lydia, and our boys find out the sex of the twins.

Her big toe digs a groove into something damp and soft, malleable and spoiled. Dirt. Soil. Her fingertips feel it, too. So does her knees, sweeping through the earth and crunchy, dead leaves beneath her, slowly waking her sore body.

She hears birds singing sweetly in the trees, squirrels scampering around and hurrying up tree bark, and the distant chatter of two hikers.

A gusty breeze sweeps the smell of something foul toward her. Animal. Skunk.


Her hands dig further into the ground, trying to find purchase, bracing herself to stand on weak legs. She pushes tender joints and muscles, lifting her body from the cold ground. She stands, taking a breath, trying to focus. There’s so much noise, and everything…smells.

The playful hopping of footsteps bounds toward her. She snaps her attention toward it. Eyes as bright as a Tuscan sun. Fox.

It’s frozen, staring at her, waiting, scared. Panicked. She can smell its fear and worry.

She takes a half step toward it, no hostility in her movement, just curiosity. The red canidae does an about-face and sprints off like he was on fire back where he came.

She wants to run and chase, going after him. Catch him, and sink her teeth past his fur and into his flesh, tasting his warm, terrified blood. But a gust of wind kicks up around her feet, huffs a memorable scent that swirls around her, reaching her nose. The smell aches inside her and burns heavy and bright. She feels it everywhere, touching her inside and out, creating goosepimples on her skin.

Without thinking, she takes off running. That scent. That earthy smell of cotton, birch, and blueberries taking over her senses, pulling her, calling her.

She’s running full speed, faster than she’s ever ran in her life, and barely out of breath.
She breaks through a clearing, running, chasing that scent…

She reaches the top of a hill and sees it. A house. The house.

The scent stronger and whispering against her bare skin.

The sun is peeking over the horizon. Sunrise.

Her feet kick up dirt and rocks as she hurries toward the large house of beige stone and red siding.

She passes by the pool, and toward the spaced, stone steps toward the breezeway. She turns to her left, looking into the kitchen/family room. The smell. That scent. Him. Mate.

He’s up in a flash and at the door, yanking it open. She grabs him, pulling him forward. Her cheek rubbing against his cheek, then his neck. Her nose dragging along his jawline, neck, and face. His hands are on her hips, holding her there, letting her breathe in his scent, rubbing against him, to smell like him. Like them.

He lifts her up, legs wrapped around his waist, carrying her past the kitchen. She nips, and licks, and bites at his neck. He keens at her affection, holding her tighter and spiking the air with the smell of mint.

She growls at his arousal, licking into his mouth as he carries her up the stairs.

Her head snaps up from his neck, sniffing the air. Others. She smells ‘others’.

“It’s okay. I got you. No one’s going to hurt you,” he says, petting her head, carrying her into the bathroom and closing the door. He locks it.

He sets her to her feet, but she won’t give him space, still wrapped around him, nuzzling his neck.

He reluctantly pulls her off him, just at arm’s length. He nearly collapses at the frown on her face of the distance he put between them.

He quickly removes his shirt and pajama pants. He’s naked. As is she.

He takes her hand, leading her to the shower. “Come on. It’s okay.”

They step inside and he closes the glass door. “This is the first time I’ve seen you naked.” He pulls her into his arms. “You’re beautiful.” He dips his head, kissing her gently on her lips.

His fingers slide up her back, running the length of her scar. “I know it’s weird, but I love this. This imperfection on your otherwise perfect body. It’s…gorgeous. I wish I could explain it better.”

She rubs her face into his bare chest, placing a kiss over his heart.

He reaches behind her and twists the nozzle. Water sprays down on them. She screams, jolting in his arms! He holds her close, shushing into her hair.

“It’s okay. I’m here. It’s just water. I’m here…”

Black dirt and dust swirl around the drain. Bits of leaves fall at her feet as soapy, brown water splashes on the white floor.

She tilts her head up, letting the cascading water beat against her face. His hands massage something that smells like melons and soap into her hair. Her eyes open and fall into his cerulean
blue ones.

He smiles at her. “There we are. How you doing?”

“...I could smell you. And hear your heartbeat. Your wolf.”

He wipes shampoo from her forehead with the back of his hand, making sure it doesn’t get into her eyes. “I know. I heard your wolf, too.”

“Can we always hear each other?”

“Yes.”

“Then I’ll never lose you, right?”

“Never.”

Freya, freshly showered and dressed, holds tight to Isaac’s hand as he leads her into the dining area.

“How are you,” Derek asked.

The pack is there, including John, Melissa, Talia, and Theo.

“Okay… I think…”

“Are your senses overloaded?”

“On and off. It fades in and out. Moments I hear everything and smell everything. And there are moments I don’t. When it’s normal.”

“Good. That’ll stop in a day or two. Afterward, me and Boyd are going to teach you ‘control’.”

Isaac looked a little queasy at Derek’s mention of teaching control.

“Can Isaac come, too,” she asks.

“No. I’m afraid not.”

“I don’t think I could withstand that part of you becoming a wolf,” Isaac tells her, making her a bit fearful and hesitant.

“It’s alright, Freya. Learning ‘control’ is a rough process, but you’ll get through it. You’re a strong woman,” Derek reassures her.

Isaac winks at her. She smiles.

Stiles comes into the dining area from the kitchen, carrying two large salad bowls. “Alright, people. First course.”

Freya. Was. Starving. It was taking everything in her to keep from attacking the food like a wild animal and hovering in a dark corner while she devoured it.

Isaac must have sensed her desperate hunger. He squeezed her hand tightly, reigning her in. She was actually happy he was stronger than her, otherwise, he’d have a hard time trying to pull her off the table and the salad bowl from her hands had he not been holding onto her.
Everyone stood before their seat after Stiles placed the salad on the table. Derek took his place at the head of the table, with Stiles at the other end.

“I think now is as good a time as any. Freya Webber, you have asked to join this pack, the Hale Pack, lead by myself, and my Alpha-mate, Stiles Stilinski-Hale. You are mated to our beta, Isaac Lahey, and have proven yourself a worthy mate by accepting ‘the bite’ and being made a wolf. It takes real dedication and love to change one’s life as you have done. You have shown yourself capable of the qualities it takes to be a member of this pack. I believe you have more room to grow, and learn, and become essential to this family. Do you, Stiles?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Do you object to Freya Webber being a beta within our pack?”

Stiles looks to Isaac and Freya, and the loving, hopeful stares the share. “No. I don’t,” he says, shooting them a warm smile.

“Mom? Dad,” Derek asks.

“No,” they respond in unison.

“John,” Derek asks his father-in-law.

“I have no objections,” John answers.

“Boyd?”

“No.”

“Lydia?”

“No. No objections,” she answers with tinge of sadness in her voice and watery eyes. Stiles gives her hand a gentle squeeze.

“Danny?”

“None.”

“Allison?”

“Absolutely not,” she says with a smile and a wink at Freya.

“Isaac?”

“Of course not.”

“Scott?”

“Nope,” Scott says with a dopey grin.

“Erica?”

“No. She’s cool,” the blonde bombshell shrugs.

“…Jackson?”

All eyes fall on him. His head lowered, attention focused on his empty plate. He’s taking deep
breaths. The tips of his claws dig into his seat. He’s let the silence go on too long, he can smell everyone’s nervousness. Especially Isaac.

He’s standing to Stiles’ right. The Alpha-mate leans in close to him, whispering in his ear, taking his hand into his own. Jackson looks up at him with wet eyes. Jackson squeezes his hand. Stiles nods.

“…No,” he says rough, and low. “No objections,” he gets out in a broken, shaky voice.

Jackson lets go of Stiles’ hand. Stiles slides back to his place setting, fixing Jackson with a small smile.

Jackson’s eyes finally lift from Stiles, and find Lydia’s, standing across from him.

“You’ll be okay,” she mouths to him like a mantra.

He nods. He knows he will. He knows one day he’ll wake up and it wouldn’t hurt as much, and he’ll get on with his day. ‘Time heals all wounds’. He just wishes he could control the hours of the day, speeding them up to when his heart will mend, and looking at the boy with the soft, curly hair and eyes like blue crystal won’t feel like a thousand knife wounds to his chest.

Derek and Stiles sit. The rest of the pack waits until they’re comfortably in their seats to take their own.

Freya watches as Derek takes first serving, then Stiles. Everyone waits for Derek to bite into his food first before helping themselves to their own plates.

Freya still has a lot to learn about pack dynamics.

She also has a lot to learn about control, because she’s halfway through her salad when she realizes she’s been eating it with both hands and there’s dressing all over her mouth.

Luckily, no one says anything, but Danny shoots her a shy grin across the table.

“Excuse me?!!”

“I just think it best if you were to see another obstetrician.”

“Jesus Christ,” Derek mumbled under his breath. Jordan sure enough heard it, causing him to shoot a deadly glare at the Alpha.


“Because given the current situation between myself and him,” he glared at Derek, “I don’t think I can properly take care of you.”

Stiles takes a deep breath, trying to calm himself as best he can. He’s so angry and full of stress… He knows if he doesn’t relax he’ll fly off the handle, or worse, Derek will fly off the handle for him.

He takes one more deep breath…


“Then I don’t understand the issue here. I am 19 weeks into this now, Jordan. Second trimester. I need my doctor.”

“It’s hard being in the same room with him. Every time I hear his name, or see him… I just want to climb over this desk and rip his lungs out,” he snarls with a side glance at Derek.

“I’d have my fangs in your throat before you got past that stapler,” Derek says bluntly.

Jordan growls.

Derek growls back.

Stiles bangs his hand atop the desk! “ENOUGH! THIS IS NOT ABOUT YOU! EITHER OF YOU!”

Derek’s eyes fade from red to their normal light green. His fangs retract.

Reluctantly, Jordan’s wolf features return to normal as well.

“I spent an entire afternoon lunch trying to convince part of my pack that you weren’t petty and bitter,” Stiles says.

“I’m sorry I’ve made you a liar, but as it stands I can’t be your physician anymore. I’ve made a list of doctors who are really good, and can care for you how you need to be cared for, Mr. Stilinski-Hale.”

Stiles chuckles wryly. “Mr. Stilinski-Hale? You’re joking.”

“They’re friends of mine. They’re all human, but I trust them. They know how to handle supe and male pregnancies. Dr. Davis is only 10 miles from here, so…” He tries to hand Stiles the list, but Stiles just takes it and rips it into pieces.

“This is unbelievable! You’re unbelievable!”

“What if I didn’t come,” Derek asks.

Stiles head whips to the side, turning wide-eyed at his husband. Even Jordan looks a little taken aback.

“Are you okay with Stiles still being your patient if I didn’t come to his appointments with him?”

“Derek, no. I don’t—”

“You’re comfortable here. With him. And you’re doing amazing with him as your doctor. It’s like being here makes all those ugly stats mean nothing. He understands you, and people like us. I don’t want to switch doctors and then something happens. It would kill us both if it did, and you know it. I’m not taking a chance with that.”

“Derek, you’re the father of my children. This is… Who could even be here with me if it’s not you?”

“Your dad. Cora. I’m sure if I asked Lydia she’d do it.”
Tears swim in Stiles’ eyes. He wanted them to do this together. Everything. Even the routine doctor visits, which weren’t so routine when they were with one another and excited.

“I-I-I… I guess that’s okay… If you’re s-sure. If you want to,” Jordan says meekly.

“He doesn’t want to! You’re forcing him to have to,” Stiles snaps with tears running down his face.

Derek brushes his tears away with his thumb. “Just keep taking care of my boy and our cubs, alright?”

Jordan nods.

“But I want to come to the next ultrasound. After that I won’t come anymore,” Derek says.

Stiles sniffs.

“Okay,” Jordan says, his voice small and tone timid.

“I am telling Lydia. And Freya. I don’t care if that makes me childish. If you get to act like a petulant toddler, so can I,” Stiles retorts, his eyes fading to the color of tangerines before he storms out of the office.

“His eyes. They—”

“Yeah. That happens when he’s really fucking pissed.”

Derek walks out of the office after Stiles.

Jordan walks in through the side door. He heard Lydia’s car about two hours ago, but he had patient files to go over with his nurses and needed to catch up on some new medical research material he was sent by the ABOG.

Truth be told he could have read that article at any other time, but he was simply avoiding having to go into the house and have it out with his mate. Not being a wolf never seemed to deter Lydia when she felt the need to ‘attack’, and the fact that she was still very frightening without fangs and claws said something of her intensity as simply an adept woman.

He waited until Irma, his oldest and most trusted nurse, left, saying ‘goodnight’ as she went, before he made his way into the house.

He heard movement in the kitchen and braced himself for the ensuing fight to be had with future wife.

The teapot on the stove whistled. Lydia removed it and poured the hot water into two mugs. She looked up at him…and smiled. “I made you tea.”

“Um… Uh, okay,” he says cautiously.

She dumps two spoonfuls of sugar into each cup, with a little bit of honey and lemon.

“Thank you,” he says, taking his mug as she blows on the hot liquid in her own cup.

“You’re welcome,” she says brightly.
Jordan feels the hairs on the back of his neck stand up and the skin on his arms are cover in goosebumps.

She sits her mug down and dumps one more spoonful of sugar into her tea. “I’d like to tell you something. It’s not something I’m hiding from you, just something I haven’t gotten around to tell you about yet. I think now is a good enough time.” She smiles sweetly at him again and Jordan swears he can feel the room turn ice cold.

“Stiles used to date this boy named Matt. They started seeing each other when Stiles got back from London and found out Derek had been dating a friend of his named Braeden. I liked her to be honest. She was pretty, sharp, and badass. She was like a black Erica, but less…provocative, and a lot more clever. Despite it though, she didn’t last long as Derek’s girlfriend, but that’s a whole other story—"

“Lydia, I don’t know if—"

She holds up her hand, wanting him to stop talking. “Please, let me finish,” she says politely.

He nods.

“As some sort of jealous-retaliation, Stiles decided to start sleeping with someone, too— Voila, Matt. It only lasted for about two months, maybe a little more. Matt had no idea he was simply being used to piss of Derek. He couldn’t understand why Stiles always seemed so distant, sort of half-in and half-out of their so-called relationship. Until he saw Stiles and Derek arguing one night. All that heat and passion and anger… It meant something. Something intense and raw. Something he knew he could never touch, or come close to with Stiles. He figured out he was just a placeholder. Something to keep Stiles busy until he found a way to be with Derek. Matt clearly didn’t like that.”

She took a sip of her tea. “Mmm. Perfect,” she says, feeling the hot, green tea warm her body. “Matt confronted Stiles about it all, and Stiles being a little asshole—and a tad drunk—not only told Matt the truth, but taunted him with it, making him feel worthless. I think he just wanted to make someone feel just as bad as he felt about Derek, tell you the truth. Not that that’s alright, but,” she shrugs, “boys and their dumb, uncommunicative feelings. What are you going to do?”

“Why are you telling me this, Lyds?”

“Matt beat the hell out of Stiles. Not enough to send him to the emergency room, but enough to make him limp home and bleed all over our couch. I took care of him. Patched him up, fed him soup, changed his bandages, helped him pee and shower. I also helped him keep it from Derek. He made me promise to never tell him. And I haven’t ‘til this day. Stiles knew if Derek found out, he’d go into a blind rage and kill Matt. The last thing Stiles wanted was him in jail. Seething with jealousy— yes. In prison—no.”

She poured a bit more water into her mug, with a little honey.

“He didn’t count on me though. Stiles can be very, very frightening, and he knows I can, too. Especially when it comes to the people we love. But I don’t think he’s ever really seen, or known, just how deep I’m willing to go. Or can go.”

“Did… Lydia. A-Are you trying t-to tell me, that you…you killed Matt?”

“Yes.”

Jordan can’t breathe. He’s clutching his mug so hard a crack splinters in the green ceramic.
“I would never hurt you. That’s not what this conversation is about. It’s about you needing to understand what my pack means to me. When I say they’re family, I mean it. They. Are. Family. And none truer than Stiles and Scott. I don’t know how many times I can tell you that. I think the only reason he didn’t have a panic attack today is because he was afraid the stress of having one would hurt the twins. Not to mention, his mate was there to reel him in from his anxiety.”

She slammed her mug down on the counter!

“You, not talking to Derek, hashing all this out like grown men, is causing serious damage, and I’ll be damned if I let it cause harm to those babies.”

“It wasn’t my idea, Lydia. It was Derek’s compromise. He came up with it.”

“Only after you pushed him between a rock and a hard place by refusing to continue on as Stiles’ obstetrician!”

“I referred them to good, capable doctors—”

“That weren’t you! They trust you! And you know that! That’s why you dropped them from your patient roster! All just to hurt Derek!”

“And he hurt me, Lydia!”

“I’m not doubting that, or ignoring it!”

“Feels like it!”

“Never! I could never ignore the pain you must have gone through and still go through! But what I am saying is that in order to properly deal with it, you have to work things out with Derek. You don’t have to forgive him, but you should at least try to gain some closure from all this. Instead of hurting people I love.”

Jordan listens to her thick heels break across the floor and clump angrily on the stairs. He winces when he hears the bedroom door slam shut.

“I, Isaac Nathaniel Lahey, would like to declare, Freya Monique Webber, as my one and only mate,” he says, standing before Derek and Stiles. “She is bound to my wolf, just as I am bound to hers.”

“Freya is this true? Do you feel bound to Isaac as mates,” Derek asks.

“Yes,” she answers proudly. “I love him. I am his, and he is mine.”

“Stiles. Objections,” Derek asks his husband.

“None,” he smiles.

“You are both my betas. Both my responsibility, and my family. I care and love you both. I want for only your happiness. Freya there has been no objection to you joining this pack. You are welcomed here. Always. If you wish to make the Hale Pack your family, your home, and Isaac your mate, then I ask that you submit now, or refuse.”

“I choose to submit,” she says. She lowers to her knees and bows her head.
Derek’s claws extend, he scratches the back of her neck in one swift, bloody swipe. Her marks knit back together as he touches her bowed head.

“You are now pack, and mated to beta Isaac Nathaniel Lahey.”

“Thank you,” she says with teary eyes.

Derek helps her to her feet.

“Stiles. Anything to add?”


“Yes, Alpha,” Isaac and Freya answer in unison.

“As True Alpha of the Hale pack of Northern California, I, Derek Stephan Hale, give my blessing for this mating.” Derek rubs his cheek against Freya’s face.

“Thank you, Alpha Hale.” She hugs him tightly.

They pull apart so Derek can scent mark Isaac. “I’m so happy you’ve found love. A deserving love.”

“Thanks, Derek.” He hugs his Alpha.

“I’m actually really glad you did this, Freya. It changes things between us all, and for the better. You’ll see,” Stiles says.

"I can already see changes. And I embrace them," she says.

“I love you, Goldilocks.”

“I love you, too, Stiles.”

Stiles and Isaac embrace. It’s warm, and loving, and parental; an unspoken telling of their relationship.

Isaac and Freya kiss. An endearing meeting of mouths and tears and whispered ‘I love yous’. They scent mark one another.

“Well, let’s tell the other betas and celebrate,” Derek says.

“Then you two can go home and complete the entire ritual,” Stiles says with a naughty grin.

“Ignore him. Please,” Derek says with an eye roll.

Derek opens the door to his office and pulls his husband along. Isaac and Freya follow along.

Freya entwines their fingers, holding them above Isaac’s head with a playful grin. Her eyes shine canary yellow at him.

He can’t take his eyes off her. “You’re stunning.”

She gives him a half-smile, slightly bashful while trying to hold onto her confidence. “So are you.”
“Not even close.”

She leans down, giving him a grateful kiss at his compliments.

He smiles. “You ever going to let my hands go so I can touch you?”

“This time,” she says with a coating of regret in her tone. She lets go of his hands. “But next time, I’m tying you to the bed.”

His eyes fade to the color of daffodils and his fangs extend at the thought of rough, wild sex with the she-wolf on his lap.

Freyा’s fangs extend at Isaac’s arousal.

“I can smell you,” she says in a hot breath. “And hear your heartbeat.”

She tilts her head back, baring her neck, listening to his heartbeat through his chest.

He gently runs his claws down her larynx to her collarbone. “I can hear yours, too.”

Her hand runs the length of his swollen cock. She guides it toward her wetness.

Isaac holds her hips and pushes inside her, slow and full.

She moans, her fangs extending longer as the tips of her claws make dents in Isaac’s chest.

A growl escapes him at her clinching tight around him. His wolf keens *mineminemine!*

“I can hear you.”

“What?”

“Your wolf. I can hear him.”

She rolls her hips.

“He wants me.”

She rolls her hips again, harder.

“He’s calling me.”

She rolls her hips in a slow rhythm.

“I feel it, and it pulses in my ears. He wants me. Like I want him.”

Freyа’s rhythm speeds up, rolling harder and faster atop Isaac. Her hands move from Isaac’s body to the headboard, bracing herself as she takes him apart.

Isaac wants to touch. To surge up and kiss her, tasting the cum on her tongue from when he came in her mouth and she swallowed him earlier as he carried her into the room and torn her clothes off, then pushed her to her knees. He wants to grab a fist full of her brown hair and pull, making her whimper. He wants to flip her on her back and ram into her until he howls.

He can’t.

Because she’s riding him. She’s rocking and rolling her hips, squeezing him with her thighs and
wetting his lap with her sap. She’s fucking herself on his hard cock, and he’s watching her take lead and allowing her wolf to answer his call, his panting, and pacing and growling. She feels it, hears it. Needs it.

And so does he.

He needs her to chase it. To hunt, and go after it.

He wants her to. He wants her to bounce atop him and dig claws into the wooden headboard until chunks break off in her hands. He wants her to scream his name into the darkness of the room. He wants her to come on his cock, soaking it in her syrupy cum that taste like butterscotch as he shoots his own excitement into her, painting her insides. Filling her up with his seed and making her his. Matebreedmatebreedmatebreed...

“Mark me.”

He doesn’t think twice about it and pulls up, teeth long and pointed, and bites her bare breast.

Freya moans, loud and long, coming with a tight grip on Isaac’s hair.


He changes their position, tossing her on her back.

“Mine,” he growls.

“Yours,” she answers, breathless.

Isaac’s hand pumps faster and hard above her breasts.

“Isaac… Please… Please…” she begs.

She doesn’t have to. He’s going to give her exactly what she wants. What he wants.

Isaac shifts, full-beat form.

Freya shifts, too.

That’s all he needed. He growls with her name on the tip of his tongue while heavy splashes of cum splatter on her chest.

Isaac doesn’t hesitate, and smears it into her skin, the smell of cum and blood perfume between them and opens their senses, making their wolves happy, rolling around in the smell like a bed of lilacs.

Isaac collapses beside her, out-of-breath.

She turns on her side, and curves into him.

“It’s never been this good. I’ve never been with a man that’s made me feel like that. What was that, Isaac?”

“You belonging to me. And me belonging to you. Isn’t that how it felt?”

“Yes, but…”
She looks pensive. As though she can’t name the feeling she has at the moment.

“It’s incomplete, remember? The mating ritual. You have to submit. That’s why it still feels strange, because I declared you, marked and claimed you, but you haven’t submitted yet. It’s weird how we’ve felt that so quickly…”

“Is that a bad thing?”

“I don’t think so. I think it just means our bond is strong and it needs to finish what we started.”

She smiles, then kisses him sweetly on the lips. “Then now would be a good time to submit, don’t you think?”

She hops off the bed, excitedly.

He smiles brightly, happy she’s eager to be his. He sits up and snatches his pants from the floor. He pulls a slip of paper from the pocket and drops his jeans back onto the floor. He stands.

“What do I do?”

“Kneel.”

Freya gets to her knees.

“Freya Monique Webber, you have been declared as mine, and mine alone. You have been claimed, and marked as mine and mine alone. Now, you must devote your whole and complete self to me, as I have devoted my whole and complete self to you, by making you mine. Do you belong to me and me alone?”

“Yes.”

“Have you forsaken all others?”

“Yes.”

“Do you trust me? As your ally through this world, as your friend, as your lover, and as your mate?”

“Yes.”

“Then bare your neck, and submit to me.”

She tilts her head back, exposing her neck.

“Freya Monique Webber, you are my anchor. My tether for when the world around me gets too heavy and chaotic. I need you, as you need me,” Isaac says, choking back a sob. “If bad luck should befall us, may we meet in another lifetime, stronger than before.”

Isaac puts the slip of paper on the nightstand. He bites his own fingers and quickly runs the bloody digits from her trachea to just under her chin before his wounds knit back together.

“You are mine. Forever, and always.”

“Completely,” she responds.

He bends down, and kisses her.
Stiles was all nerves, shaking, with tiny beads of sweat breaching the skin on his forehead.

“Why are you so nervous,” Derek asks.

“I’m not nervous. I’m excited…and nervous…and scared.”

“It’s alright. I’m here, baby. There’s nothing to be nervous about.” Derek kissed his forehead.

Jordan was trying not to listen, but werewolf hearing made that hard. He could also sense Stiles’ anxiety, and wanted to reassure him, too. To lay a gentle hand on his shoulder and promise that everything would be just find. There was no reason to be scared. But he gave up that privileged, bedside manner when he agreed to Stiles-only visits.

Stiles had given him the cold shoulder since he’d gotten there with the whole pack (the WHOLE pack, minus Braeden, of course), only answering medical-related questions, in short, one word answers, then ignoring him. Derek avoided him altogether, too, but he thought that was more for Jordan’s piece of mind, than his own.

Only Lydia, Freya, Talia and Theo spoke to him. Everyone else shot him death-glares and snarls. When they arrived, Lydia told him that Stiles’ dad and Melissa will be coming to his appointments with him from now on.

He caught Melissa’s eye and gave her a friendly smile. She rolled her eyes and turned back to her conversation with Scott and Allison.

Jordan wasn’t used to this. He wasn’t used to not being liked. To being treated like the ‘black sheep’. He felt wronged, and hurt that they didn’t understand why he agreed to Derek’s own suggestion.

Then he realized why: they weren’t obligated to. Derek was their Alpha, and Stiles their Alpha-mate, they were only privy to one side, and only needed to take that side. He had no doubt that the pack had empathy for him, Talia told him as much, but his actions were seen as trivial and hurtful to the leaders of their pack. So cold, hard stares and bared teeth and beta eyes was what he received instead of claws at his throat.

Jordan turned the volume up on the ultrasound machine, then moved the transducer around on Stiles’ gelled belly. The whooshing sound of the twins’ dual heartbeats sounded in the room.

Jordan turned with a faint smile when he heard the coyote behind him gasp. Lydia had divided the room’s visitors into groups again. The first group was blood-related family, and this time Malia and Peter were included, along with Laura, Valerie, and their husbands.

Peter was trying hard to not look interested, but Jordan has been doing this for quite some time. He knows an amazed bystander when he sees one. Yet, he could be wrong. Everyone in the pack knew Peter had a not-so-subtle crush on both Stiles and Lydia. Maybe that fake ‘mask’ was to really cover up jealousy.

“Yeah, yeah. Babies and heartbeats. Can we hurry this along,” Peter snaps.

Talia smacks her little brother round the head.

“Ow!”
“Shut up, Peter,” she barks at him.

*Jealousy. Definitely jealousy,* Jordan thinks.

“Thank you, Talia,” Stiles says.

Jordan maneuvers the transducer around, looking carefully before he responds. He can feel everyone in the room practically stand on their toenails with anticipation…

“Well, gentlemen, it would seem that you are having two beautiful, baby boys,” Jordan says.

The room erupts into a chorus of cheerful noise and chatter at the news! There’s hi-fiving, and backslapping, and smiles and tears and hugging and kissing.

Stiles’ face is wet with tears as Derek kisses him gratefully and repeatedly. Derek starts immediately declaring them basketball stars, while Stiles demands they play lacrosse.

Thomas says something about an all-boys camping trip when the twins are older, and sets all the males in the room into an excited tizzy.

Cora is already planning to decorate the nursery with Lydia, while Laura, Valerie, and Talia are already mapping out a babysitting schedule for them to rotate.

Malia, however, continues to stare, fascinated at the LCD screen of the two little ones in Stiles’ stomach.

“It’s so fascinating, isn’t it,” she asks Jordan. “Creating life. Watching it unfold day-by-day, week-by-week, until it’s this whole other thing…this being with arms and legs and thoughts and emotions. It’s so weird. But in a good way, you know?”

He nods. That’s exactly how he felt about it when he was young, in high school. Fascinated and curious. “Yeah. It’s…captivating. To say the least.”

His eyes flick over to the Hales, happy, in all their glory, and a little something pricked his chest. Right in the center of his heart. It was minor, but made something in him quake and feel raw. Exposed.

Malia touched his shoulder, then turned back to her aunt and cousins jabbering wildly about the twins.

That feeling, that little prick of something, making him feel without armor grew quickly into a punch. A swift, hard one to the gut.

He knew what it was. He knew that open wound feeling. It was like a disease that would infect and spread if you left it too long. It would take over your whole being if you let it. If you didn’t find a healthy cure fast enough…

That prick. That punch…

Alone. He felt alone.

Chapter End Notes
I know TW has begun filming, and several theories and hints have been circling the internet (some by fans, others by TW's marketing/promotions team, no doubt) as to what will, or won't happen this season, but I just wanted to say that no matter what goes down on TW, I won't be privy to it. I didn't watch the mess that was last season, for numerous reasons (horrible plotlines, two dimensional characters, convoluted/non-progressive female/gay characters in said horrible plotlines, not to mention the UNFORGIVABLE QUEERBAITING and ANTI-MARKETING). In my opinion, that wonderful show with so much potential hasn't been so wonderful since the end of season 2. Yet, though I will not watch TW anymore, I will continue to write fanfiction, along with supporting and embracing all other Sterek shippers in their creative endeavors. Thank you.

I didn't write a flashback for this chapter, but assume Lydia's story with suffice as one until I reach that point in Sterek's past.

Next chapter: Derek's birthday, charity fundraiser, Derek has to return to Beacon Hills for a family emergency while Stiles and the rest catch a young werewolf and his human friend trying to break into the pack house.

p.s.-- next long fic will be about Stiles leaving Beacon Hills...pregnant with Derek's baby.
Chapter Summary

Derek's 35th birthday, the pack attends the annual FTD charity gala, Stiles meets a runaway werewolf, and Derek gets bad news about an old foe.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Derek was going to die. He was sure of it, because Stiles was doing his damndest to kill him.

He buried his face into the mattress, feeling it shift against the fitted sheet. His incisors poked his bottom lip as he bit it, fighting back the growl behind it.

He had already slashed claw marks into the bedsheets, and was trying to keep his hands away from the headboard. That’s how he splintered it last time.

But it was getting too hard to fight against, and truth be told he shouldn’t be. Why would he resist falling vulnerable to something that makes it crumble, makes him open and free to feel whatever he wants? Why does he always fight it at first? Sometimes a loss of control can be good. Like now. Like this.

He takes a deep breath that comes out more like a shudder.

“You okay, Big Bad?”

Talking seems too painfully. Requires too many thoughts and movements. So he simply nods.

“Want me to stop?”

Derek shakes his head.

“Good. I didn’t want to.”

Derek woke up early this morning and slipped into the shower quietly. He washed his hair with the Baxter of California shampoo Stiles practically buys in bulk, then washed every single inch of his body, getting in every crevasse, cavity and crack with the samphire body wash he knew Stiles liked for him to use.

Then he douchéd three times.

Derek was completely used to the process, but when he and Stiles first started having sex regularly, Derek told Stiles he wanted to rim him, and had to explain it to Stiles and show him how to douche properly. They ended up laughing the whole time, then fell on the shower floor. Derek twisted his ankle when Stiles landed on him, which healed in a matter of minutes, but nonetheless terrified the human who thought he’d “broken my Alpha.”

Derek knew Stiles loved everything he did to him in bed, as did he with Stiles, but there was nothing he loved more than when Stiles ate him out.
He liked it so much he rarely let Stiles do it, believing if he let Stiles do it all the time he’d grow tired of it and it wouldn’t feel as good as it always has. The last thing Derek wanted was to grow weary of his favorite sexual act.

And Stiles knew it was Derek’s favorite sexual activity, too. It’s why he teased him and dragged everything out so painstakingly slow when he did eat Derek out. He loved tearing him down and building him back up, only to tear him down again and build him back, then do it all over. The last time Stiles rimmed him was at Hale House the night they had marathon sex in the pool house. Derek came twice and was nearly faint after the second time.

Today, on his birthday, he was hoping for a repeat.

He slid back into bed and waited for Stiles to wake up. He started drifting off himself, when it seemed like Stiles was deep into his slumber and wasn’t waking up any time soon.

That is until he felt a smooth rubbing against his hole.

Stiles eased Derek onto his stomach. Before he turned over, Derek caught sight of a bottle of lube by Stiles’ knees.

Stiles didn’t break stride and kept at rubbing Derek’s entrance in a slow, up-and-down pace. Stiles’ lips found Derek’s shoulder blades, leaving light kisses there that matched the easy rhythm of his finger.

“I love when you smell like this,” Stiles purrs against Derek’s skin, dragging the tip of his nose a quarter of the way down Derek’s spine. “It just smells so good on your skin it drives me insane…and because I know you wash with it when you want me to do this.”

Stiles sinks further down Derek’s body. He slaps a hand on each cheek and spreads them wide, then gives Derek one, long lick from his taint to his coccyx.

Derek lets out a ragged breath as he fists the bedsheets.

“You like that, baby? That feel good, Big Bad?”

Stiles does it again.

“F-Fuck…” Derek rolls his hips, grinding into the bed.

“You taste really good, but we’re going to draw this out a little.”

“Stiles… Please…”

“Shhh…I’m going to give you what you need, but I’m going to take my time first, okay?”

Stiles wets his middle finger, sucking on it, before circling Derek’s hole, in a lazy, methodical pace.

Derek is shaking. “Stiles,” he growls.

Stiles can hear in Derek’s tone that his fangs have dropped. He slowly pushes the very tip of his soppy finger into Derek’s entrance. Derek tries to push back to get as much of Stiles’ digit into him, but Stiles slips out before he can, knowing that’s what he’d do.

“You either let me take my time, or I will make you beg for this so bad it hurts.”
“Already feels that way.”

Stiles smirks. He eases Derek back down on the bed. He settles between his open legs and kisses his cheeks softly.

Soft kisses turn to playful nibbles.

Playful nibbles turn to hard sucking, which morphs into bites soothed by kisses again and thin fingers that run down his thigh.

Derek is so hard it almost hurts as he rubs himself against the soft sheets.

Stiles massages Derek’s taint gently with two fingers, while his thumb presses against Derek’s pulsing anus.

Derek whimpers and shakes, his claws snap out and slice the sheets on accident.

“You like that, huh, Big Bad?”

Derek grabs a pillow and moans into it.

Stiles hand moves to Derek’s balls, and massages them, still pressing his thumb against Derek’s pucker.

Derek’s whole body is on fire. His mind is foggy. He wants to come so bad, but he’s resisting, holding back. As much as he begs Stiles, as much as he wants to, he doesn’t. He never does. Stiles’ hands on his body is enough, more than enough, to make him explode, but he never wants to leave that much vulnerability for the beginning, because knowing Stiles, everything he’s doing right now is only the start.

It’s not about his orgasm so much as it is about Stiles. Even after all this time, he still finds it hard to let go sometimes when they make love. He still holds back sometimes, afraid to be so exposed to his human mate who had hurt him in the past, used and confused him. If he allows himself to be that metaphorically naked again, then Stiles has all the power again, and it leaves him open for hurt once more. His wolf trust Stiles with everything in him; loves him, wants him, needs him, can’t live without him. And neither can the human side of Derek, but the wolf is primitive and all instinct, and his human side it what causes the insecurities in him.

Stiles takes Derek’s balls into his mouth and sucks.

“Shit,” Derek groans.

Stiles pulls off them, swipes his taint with his tongue, pressing the muscle hard against it, then licks, long and slow up to Derek’s aching hole. He circles around it a few times before flicking the tip against it.

Derek finally lets go and falls into a puddle of moans and mumbled swears.

Stiles stays there for a good minute, licking him in circles, then rapid flicks, then kisses and sucking before he starts all over in a different order.

“Stiles, please. Please.”

Stiles can hear the cry in his husband’s voice and knows it’s time to give him what he wants so badly. Especially given how hard he is himself.
Stiles holds Derek down with an arm over his lower back, and slips his tongue into him. Like Stiles expected, Derek tries to buck against his face, but he holds him in place.

He’s of course slow at first, teasing and tasting his mate, as he draws in and out of him.

Stiles can tell Derek’s wolf is begging to take over as his claws scrape against the wooden headboard and Derek’s groans turn into feral growls and incoherent babbles. He has to finish Derek off quickly before he loses control completely.

Stiles speeds up his ministrations, fucking Derek open with his tongue greedily.

He removes his arm and let’s Derek lift his hips from the bed and rock against his sweaty face.

Derek reaches back and grabs the back of Stiles’ head, pushing it hard into his ass. Stiles continues swirling his tongue inside Derek’s pucker, eating him out.

Derek grabs the headboard with one hand and his cock with the other.

Stiles slaps his ass, and Derek drops his dick from his hand, gripping the headboard with both hands instead.

Stiles moans against Derek, loving the taste of him and the sounds he makes. He moves his hand to massage Derek’s balls, feeling the wetness left there by his drooling mouth.

“Stiles!”

Derek growls loud and long.

Stiles is so hard and aching to come…but so is Derek, and he needs to take care of his Alpha first.

Stiles wraps his thin fingers around Derek’s cock, swiping his thumb across the head as he keeps eating Derek out.

Three hard tugs and Derek is screaming, pressing the headboard so hard into the wall a crack crawls from the point of impact to the ceiling as Derek comes all over Stiles’ hand and collapses on the bed in a heap.

Stiles licks Derek’s cum from his hand, waiting for his mate to say something about his vulgarity, but he’s not moving. Breathing, but not moving…

Stiles knee-crawls toward him, bent over looking worried at his unresponsive husband. The crotch of his pajama bottoms are soaked with cum. He came right along with Derek.

“Big Bad? Derek? Babe?”

Derek is…passed out. Literally. He blacked-out completely, coming so hard he lost consciousness.

8 years. For 8 years, Stiles has been having sex with Derek Stephan Hale and not once has this happened. Sure, he’s made Derek come multiple times, lose control, do the filthiest, direst things with him, privately and in public, and he’s enjoyed it all and wants to do everything at least two more times before their old and grey, but never has he made the wolf come so hard he fainted. He’s usually the one that does, but this time…

Holy. Shit.

Stiles doesn’t even hold back as he laughs outright and fist pumps his victory!
This is what Derek wanted. Just the two of them, alone. No family. No pack. No drama. Just them together and no distractions for the next 24 hours.

It was his 35th birthday, and he knew Lydia was planning something over the top and ridiculous to celebrate his growing another year older. He told her not to and that all he wanted was some peace and quiet with Stiles at Red Grove.

The banshee frowned and told him: “But I already booked the venue and bought a cake. I got a permit for fireworks, Derek!”

He apologized, kissed her forehead and told her “too bad.”

After Stiles giving him the orgasm of a lifetime, Derek fell asleep. He woke up an hour later and dressed in his gym shorts and sneakers. He came downstairs to Stiles staring breakfast, despite it being nearly noon. He kissed his boy then headed out the backdoor, promising to be back in an hour or so.

He ran with the hot, high noon sun beating down on his bare back. It may have been November but it felt like May. The advantages of living on the west coast during the colder months...

When he reached the deepest part of the woods, he shifted into his full wolf form and ran as fast as he could through the trees. He chased down a couple of rabbits and a fox. He let the fox be when he managed to corner it, sensing it wasn’t an ordinary fox, but rather a kitsune.

He stayed there in the woods, padding around, drinking from a pond, then rolling in the dirt and mud, happy as can be. He hadn’t done this in awhile. On his runs with his betas he had to keep watch over them as they played, making sure they were safe, or that their animal instincts didn’t lead them astray. He never had the time to give into his own wolf who desperately needed to let loose.

He laid in the cool shade for awhile before he felt hungry and decided to return home.

Derek shift back into his human form when he reached the border of his property. He was filthy, covered in dirt and mud, smelling like the woods and fresh kills; the taste of blood was still in his mouth. He loved it.

Despite it though, when he entered the house through the kitchen, he grabbed Stiles and kissed the fuck out of him.

When he finally let his mate go, he was breathless, and his mouth reddened. Derek smiled, loving the debauched look on Stiles’ surprised face.

“That was for this morning. I’m going to shower. Be down in 5 minutes.”

Stiles nodded, watching Derek hurry upstairs.

When Derek got out of the shower, he found Stiles in bed with a large tray of food: birthday pancakes, bacon, sausage, eggs over easy (how Derek liked them), hash browns (which Stiles hated, but it’s not his birthday), a bowl of fresh strawberries and kiwi, oatmeal with brown sugar, toast, and a cup of coffee for Derek only, that made Stiles sigh. He missed coffee, so much...

They lay in bed, full and lazy afterward. Derek let Stiles have two of his pancakes, but the oatmeal and fruit bowl was only for the pregnant human.
Derek channel-surfed while Stiles feel asleep with his head on his chest.

When Stiles woke up they made love again, patiently and more attentive this time. Derek held Stiles close and kept whispering ‘I love you’ into his ear.

They took a long, hot bath together after. Derek lay there with Stiles’ back against him and his hands splayed on Stiles’ baby bump, feeling their boys move.

“I’m just saying, Bruce is a good name,” Stiles says.

“We are not naming our children from comic book characters, Stiles.”

“Ugh! You are no fun.”

“Wasn’t I fun 20 minutes ago,” Derek smirks.

“Very fun,” Stiles says, pulling Derek’s head down for a kiss.

Stiles got dressed and went downstairs to start dinner. Derek stayed in bed, playing chess against his laptop computer before giving up when he loses. Twice. He decides to check his phone. He has 25 new messages. He listens to every one, smiling as his pack wishes him a happy birthday. Even Peter leaves a voicemail, grunting ‘Happy Birthday, nephew’ into his phone before hanging up. He especially loves the voicemail from Laura’s daughters as they sing him ‘Happy Birthday’ into the phone. He saves that one.

Stiles comes upstairs carrying a tray with a lit *birthday cake* and carton of ice cream.

Derek smiles happily, blushing at Stiles having baked him a *cake*. He does every year, but it never gets old.

“Cake before dinner?”

“Cake *is* dinner.”

Stiles sits the cake down on the bed before Derek. He sits on the other side of the tray.

“Make a wish.”

“You know I never do. Not after what happened to Cora when we were kids.”

“Oh, come on. I doubt nosy, *seelie faeries* are listening in this time.”

“You never know…”

“Please. For me.”

“I don’t need to wish for anything. I have everything.”

“Then wish to keep it.”

“That’s pretty selfish. Is that what you wish for,” Derek chuckles.

“Yes! Who wouldn’t wish to always be happy? I always wish to keep you.”
Derek smiles. He nods. He can wish for that.

He closes his eyes and blows out the candles.

Stiles leans over and kisses him. “I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

“Happy birthday, sourwolf.”

“Thank you,” Derek says against Stiles’ lips.

They lazily eat cake and rum raisin ice cream (because Stiles will do a lot of things, but eat plain, boring vanilla ice cream is not one of them. He doesn’t care if it’s Derek’s favorite) while binge-watching *House of Cards*.

“God, I want to be Frank,” Stiles says.

“You already are,” Derek laughs.

“I am?”

Derek nods.

“I always thought I was Carmela Soprano.”

“You’re her, too,” Derek says, feeding Stiles a spoonful of ice cream.

“Does that make you Claire Underwood and Tony Soprano?”

“I like to think so.”

Stiles smiles. “Me, too.”

Stiles snuggles closer to Derek as they start the next season.

The entire Hale Pack sat in the balcony section with the other large, impressive donors as the gala dinner fired underway. Stiles and Derek sat at a table with John, Scott, Allison, and Melissa. Peter had joined their table for a minute, complaining to Stiles:

“Stiles. Please. I can’t have all you assholes invading my personal space.”

“No, Peter,” Stiles says with a sigh, as though it was the 99th time he’s had to say it.

“Look, I know what this is about. You want to corner Braeden, but can’t you do it some other way, like magic or some bullshit,” Peter asks, nearly as exhausted as Stiles.

“I’m not going to use my magic to make Braeden talk to us.”

“But you’d use my house,” Peter says, exaggerating his frustration by accidentally banging his hand on the table, rattling the dinnerware.
Derek’s eyes give a quick warning flash of red to his uncle, not really caring for his tone toward his mate.

“Relax, nephew. No one’s going to hurt your precious human,” Peter says with an eye roll.

“I would hope not, Uncle Peter. I’d hate to see what would happen if they did,” Derek smirks at Peter wickedly.

Peter draws his eyes away from Derek, back to Stiles. “Why am I being punished?”

“This isn’t a punishment, Peter! You said so yourself: I’m cornering Braeden, and taking care of another matter.”

“Which is?”

“Making sure you’ve got your house in order.”

“I do. You know I do, Stiles. Tell him, Derek,” Peter was becoming desperate…and whiny.

“How would I know? We haven’t been to Fresno in almost a year. For all we know, you might have a serious wendigo problem,” Derek says smugly.

“Wendigos?! Really?!”

Stiles slams down his glass of water. “Peter! Drop it! I said that’s what we’re doing, so that’s what we’re doing! …Unless you want to challenge me, or your Alpha…?”

“But Stiles…” Definitely whiny. “I don’t want to host Thanksgiving this year.”

Stiles rolls his eyes.

“Peter. You have never had a pack event at your house. Ever. Not even your own damn birthday party. You have to pitch in. Even with the ‘fun stuff’,” Derek tells him, as calmly as he can.

“None of this sounds like fun to me.” Peter snatches his glass of wine and breaks from the table, back towards his own assigned seat.

“Went better than I thought,” John says with a smirk around his tumbler of scotch.

Stiles shrugs.

“I, for one, can not wait for it. Thanksgiving at Peter’s place, with the other 3 ‘houses’ there? He’s going to pull his perfectly coiffed hair out,” Allison beams.

“Maybe he’ll get so angry he’ll ‘Hulk’ out of his shirt and turn it into an even deeper V-neck,” Stiles quips.

“Then we can sew it to all his other deep V-necks and he’ll have enough material for a whole shirt,” Scott says.

Stiles and Scott laugh at Scott’s joke, but then Scott’s face turns sour.


“Peter said he can hear us, and threaten to do really unpleasant things to the lower half of my body,” Scott grimaces.
Stiles laughs, then takes notice of a middle-aged man and woman in black tie with name badges around their necks approaching their table. Stiles and the rest stand to greet them.

“Mr. Northpoint. Ms. Salt,” Stiles says greeting them both.

“Oh, my, Mr. Stilinski-Hale. I had no idea you were expecting. How far long are you,” Ms. Salt asks.

Stiles affectionately rubs his belly. “Five months. Twins.” he says with a smile.

“Oh, my! Handful,” Mr. Northpoint says with a smile. “And I thought just my Jenny was enough to keep me going when she was a young one.”

“Even just the one can knock you sideways sometimes,” John says with a teasing grin at Stiles.

“Well, we are certainly happy for you. You, too, Alpha Hale,” Ms. Salt says.

“Thank you,” Derek responds with a polite nod.

There’s an awkward silence for a few beats… Mr. Northpoint and Ms. Salt seem anxious. Derek and Scott can smell fear roll off of them. They exchange curious looks in regards to the nervous pair.

“Is everything alright, Ms. Salt? Mr. Northpoint,” Derek says.

The man and woman share worried looks before Ms. Salt takes a deep breath to speak: “We have a delicate issue we need to discuss with you unfortunately.”

“What is it? Did the check not clear with the bank or something,” Stiles jokes.

“Um, well, you see t-that’s just it. We, uh… We c-can’t accept…your donation, Alpha Stilinski-Hale.”

“Oh, well, do we need to write you another check or something? Our accountant, Lydia, is here. She can write you another check,” Stiles says.

“Um, well, no. It’s-It’s not that,” Mr. Northpoint says.

“Don’t tell me it’s because of the amount. Look, that’s all you. I’m more than okay with giving that much. FTD research and treatment means so very much to me. We don’t mind donating that much. Honestly.”

“I’m a-afraid t-that’s not it either.” Mr. Northpoint turns to Ms Salt for help. Wanting her to finish; tell the bad part.

“We can’t accept your donation because…because of the means in which the money was obtained,” she says finally.

“Excuse me,” John says in a harsh tone, eyes boring into the two gala hosts.

“I don’t understand,” Stiles says, both confused and disbelieving of it all.

“They won’t take our money, Stiles,” Derek practically growls.

“It’s not our decision. Our board of directions doesn’t think it ‘appropriate’ for us to accept money from… ‘entrepreneurs’ such as yourselves,” Mr. Northpoint says.
“Why not? You have every other year,” John says tersely.

“Entrepreneurs are businessmen. That’s what we are, and have been since you’ve been taking our money year after year, with smiles so big they should feature in toothpaste commercials,” Stiles snaps.

“We’re sorry, but we can no longer accept donations from you, or anyone else within your pack,” Ms. Salt glances at Melissa, “Or in association with your pack. We’re sorry. We didn’t mean to upset you.”

“Then what did you mean?! What did you think was going to happen when you came to my table and told me my money’s not good enough! I’ve been giving you money since I was a teenager. Back when we had nothing, and the measly, little nickels dad and I would scrape together every year to give was all we could, but we knew it meant something! It meant everything to us then and now!”

Stiles’ raised voice was not only drawing the attention of his pack, but of the wait staff weaving through tables and a few upturned heads from below.


“No! My mother died from FTD! I sat there and watched her mind disappear and her waking up everyday trying to remember where she was and who I was and why was this man in a sheriff’s uniform coming out of the bathroom! I watched her slip away and her life seep from her body! She was beautiful! She meant the world to me, and now you’re telling me—”

Stiles stumbled a little, feeling dizzy. It’s hot. He’s trying to undo his collar, but his hands are shaking so bad…

Derek’s holding him up and his father is shoving a glass of water in his face. He can’t. He can’t breathe.

There are no voices. No noise.

Tears are running down his face.

He can’t breath.

He sees Lydia shouting in a muted voice at Mr. Northpoint and Ms. Salt. She’s up close and in their space. Pointing toward Stiles and glaring at them like leeches.

Jordan is there now. In front of him. He’s got two fingers on Stiles’ wrist while he counts the seconds ticking by on his watch.

He can’t breath.

He can’t stop crying.

He sees the look of horror on Erica’s face, just standing still and staring at him; hopeless.

His wolves are restless and terrified.

Jordan’s talking now, but Stiles can’t hear him.

Breathe… Come on. Breathe… In…and out… In…and out… In… out… In… out…
Stiles nods.
Derek’s lips are at his ear, moving but with no sound.
He breathes in. Or at least he thinks he does.
There’s a strong hand gripping his shoulder. His father.
He breathes in again.
Jordan is still kneeled before him, ticking off his breaths and blood pressure with his watch.
In…and out…
In…and out…
In…
Out…
In…
Out…
Stiles sees everyone staring at him, frozen and worried.
Pity.
His heartbeat speeds up again.
He feels warm. Sweaty again.
Tears run down his cheek.
Jordan shakes his head, and turns Stiles’ face to look at him again, mouthing silently still:

*No. Look at me. Look only at me.*

Stiles nods.
Lips press in a kiss at his temple.

*Breathe. Okay? Breathe.*

Stiles inhales, trying to hold his breath.
In…and out…
In…and out…
In…
Out…
In…
April 2018

“Have either of you given consideration to Isaac, or Kira about all this,” Stiles yells through the speakerphone in Derek’s living room.

Scott opens his mouth to speak—

“No! You haven’t, Scott, so don’t even! If you had, then Kira wouldn’t be switching houses and Isaac wouldn’t be the morose, puddle piss he’s been since you broke up with him,” Stiles yelled.

Scott’s head returns to being bowed down in shame. Allison sits beside him, picking at a thread on her dress, avoiding Derek’s eye, as Stiles berates them through the phone from London.

“Isaac and Kira are not your mates and Allison is, I understand that, but that doesn’t mean you get to obliviously trample all over their feelings! And doing this, coming at them like you did, is yes, an ill regard for them as friends, ex-lovers, and ‘pack family’!”

“We’re sorry. We didn’t mean to hurt anyone,” Scott said in his best whine.

“That’s the worst part, Scott! You had such a careless disfavor for how they’d feel that it’s apathetic almost! How could you not take a step back and think about what Allison being readmitted into the pack would mean to them?!! You screw around with Isaac to get over Allison, then move on to Kira from Isaac when he gets too attached for your liking, then cheat on Kira with Allison and want her back in the same pack that you left two broken hearts in?! Think, Scottie!”

“You’re right, Stiles. I’m sorry,” Scott said.

“I’m not the one that deserves an apology.”

Scott nods even though Stiles can’t see him agreeing.

“Please tell me he’s not nodding even though I can’t see him,” Stiles sighed.

Derek readies to confirm, but Scott silently pleads with him not to. He’s already been plenty embarrassed by Stiles throughout this conversation.

“Uh, no. No, he’s not,” Derek said.

“You’re such a terrible liar, Derek,” Stiles said with a faint laugh in his tone.

It made Derek smile, missing him…

“Allison,” Stiles said. Her head snaps up at hearing the angry tone in which her name is called on the other end of the phone. “You have betrayed this pack like no other. You lied to us, spied on us, manipulated us, kept secrets, hid your true identity, and tried to kill our Alpha.”

Tears well in her eyes as she grips Scott’s hand, bowing her head in dishonor.

“Pack rule states that we should kill you…but my best friend would die without you. Literally. You’re his mate, and if you two are separated, by any means, it’ll kill him. It’ll kill you, too. I don’t know what to feel about that to be honest. I don’t know if I trust you. Derek?”

Derek looks at the pathetic pair, pleading with him with their sorrowful eyes and tear-stained faces.
“I don’t know if I trust her either…but yes, Scott would become deranged, turn Omega and die from his insanity, and being alone. I don’t want that for him.”

He truly didn’t. Despite he and Stiles not being together at the moment, in any sense of the word, he was still Derek’s mate, and the thought of never having him, never seeing him again, and being driven mad because of it, was enough to sway him toward the pair’s favor. He had to put himself in Scott’s shoes, otherwise his hatred for the Argents would cloud his judgment and pull the lovers apart, doing more harm than good.

“I don’t either,” Stiles said. “If it’s okay with you, than it’s okay with me. You are after all the one she tried to kill.”

“I’ll just make sure to watch my drink around her from now on,” Derek said, half serious.

“Allison stand up and approach Derek,” Stiles said.

She stood and walked toward the Alpha. He continued to lean nonchalantly against the fireplace as she crossed the room to him, but before she could blink, his hand snapped out at her neck and gripped around her throat!

She gasped; eyes wide as claws pricked her skin, while she fell to her knees choking!

Scott stood abruptly, eyes golden yellow at Derek! His mate in danger!

Derek’s red eyes beamed at the beta and he snarled.

Reluctantly, Scott sat back down, looking worried and helpless.

Derek’s attention falls back on Allison. “You tried to kill me. You used my sister, and my beta, in order to trick me and cause harm to my pack. That. Will. Never. Happen. Again,” he growls close to her terrified face.

She did her best to nod.

“In order to gain my complete trust, you will end all contact with your demented family. They no longer exist for you, and all blame for your mother’s death is squarely placed on your family for initiating the attack on mine.”

She nodded, still a little out of breath.

“You are not permitted to Hale House unless invited by Talia and Theo Hale, who you will apologize and thank, if ever you should be given the chance.”

She nodded again.

“And if you should ever hurt this pack again, in any way, especially Scott, I will burn you alive. Am I clear?”

She nodded once more.

Derek let go of her throat. She collapsed to the carpet, coughing.

“Stiles, would you like to add something,” Derek asked.

“Yes. Hurt Scott, or any other pack member, and consider yourself already dead. Try to hurt Derek again, and there will be no amount of running or hiding you can do before I find you, and end you.
“Understood?”

“Y-Yes,” she said, swallowing hard. “I understand.”

Derek nods to Scott. He runs over to Allison, cradling her in his arms. She pushes him away a bit, not wanting to be coddled by him, wanting to show strength and that she doesn’t need Scott to rescue her. The Alpha and his Emissary had just threatened her life, now was not the time to act as a damsel-in-distress.

“You still need the rest of the pack’s approval to allow Allison to come back,” Stiles reminded them. “Kira is already gone, so you better hope to whatever deity you believe in that Isaac is in a good mood.”

Scott and Allison exchange looks.

“Now, can you two get out of Derek’s apartment? I want to talk to him alone.”

They stand.

“I’m…sorry. I wish I knew what else to say,” Allison said meekly, her neck still thumping and red.

Scott tries to take her hand, but she rushes out of the apartment in tears. Scott follows her out, closing the door behind them.

Derek picks his cellphone up off the coffee table and takes Stiles off speaker.

“Hi.”

“…Hi.”

Jordan put Stiles on bedrest for the next few days. His panic attack caused high elevations to his blood pressure and the occasional shortness of breath.

The first day he was on bedrest, Derek held him close as he cried all day, worried that somehow what happened at the Alzheimer’s and FTD Awareness Gala, was a letdown to his late mother. That he hadn’t preserved her memory, her spirit, appropriately and brought indignity to her death.

Derek and John tried their best to continually remind him that Claudia Stilinski would no doubt love the man her little one turned into, and be proud of all that he has achieved. She’d love the family that he’s built with the pack, and she’d love the biological family he’s currently building with Derek even more.

Yet, Stiles was hard to convince and sobbed periodically throughout the day when Derek wasn’t encouraging him to eat, or bathe, or read and play chess with their betas.

Stiles, all these years, had been trying to keep the memory of his mother alive by being so connected to the attempts and the progresses made in understanding her disease and trying to combat it. He not only gave tons of money, but he helped build research centers, and hospitals for those suffering from it. He read medical journals and articles and spoke to scientists and physicians about what breakthroughs they were making and what was needed to continue those breakthroughs. He talked at length with influential people about stem-cell research, and how their political position on such could possibly sway where his ‘dark money’ interest lied.
He cared.

Then was told it meant nothing. That everything he’d been doing to honor his mother and her fight with FTD and her losing battle with it meant nothing. His money, his influence, his interest, his hard work—all of it meant nothing. It was taken away from him and he was told it wasn’t good enough. What he fought for and shed so much blood, sweat and tears for wasn’t good enough, because one day some guy in a suit thought that Stiles’ dedication was too criminal. Too dishonest. Too shady and corrupt.

There was nothing corrupt about mourning your mother’s death. As Derek and John had tried to tell him.

The second day of his bedrest, Jordan made a house call. Stiles thanked him for helping to calm him down from his panic attack, then kept quiet mostly, despite Jordan’s attempts at pleasant conversation.

He was still angry at the were-doctor for forcing Derek to ban himself from their appointments. Friday, the day before the gala, was Stiles’ first visit without Derek. His hormones got the best of him, and he cried during the whole examination, earning Jordan a murderous glare from both John and Melissa.

So, needless to say, he was a bit shocked when he appeared at the gala the next day with Lydia. Stiles noticed no one else (aside from Freya) speaking to him, and the lonely look on Lydia’s face. He didn’t like the hurt there, on her soft, porcelain face, and instructed his betas not to punish her for Jordan’s misdeeds.

The betas changed their tune and eventually made their way through the night to Lydia’s table. All except Scott, who outright refused, despite him wanting to say ‘Hi’ to Lydia. He claimed not wanting “to be 15 feet near the guy.”

Jordan’s head turned slightly in Scott’s direction, hearing his not-so-subtle whisper.

“When bedrest is over, I want you to return to your workout with Miss Reyes. Leg cramps are common during this stage and with you being in bed, lying on your back all day, it could cause a problem. So in the meantime please drink plenty of water. The good news though is that resting will help with your feet swelling.”

Stiles nods. Jordan takes notice of the distant look on Stiles’ face.

“I know for someone as active as you, bedrest sounds like torture—”

“Because it is.”

“—and with everything going on, stressing you, it’s even worse, because you can’t get out of bed and do something about it, so you’re left with just sitting here, thinking about it.”

“Torture. Like you said.”

“You’re not a shut in, or a hermit. You’re not Howard Hughes. Your pack is here. You have them.”

“I know. I just don’t like being…immobile.”

“It’s only for a couple more days, then you can return to your normal routine.”

Stiles nods again.
Jordan gives him a warm, reassuring smile.

“...You would have loved being in this pack.”

“Mr. Stilinski-Hale--”

“You know that, too. I can see it in your face, when you think no one’s looking. That’s what I do, Dr. Parrish: I look when no one else does. I see the things most people miss. It’s why Derek and I are so good together. Well, it’s one of the reasons why we are. I notice the things he’s misses, can’t see, and he’s brave enough to take them head on. He pulls it out of the dark and exposes it. You want to be our beta, but you’re letting anger cloud your judgment.”

“I’m not going to lie to you, being apart of this pack had meant something so great to me it was indescribable… I don’t know about that now.”

“From me to you, just between us, I will keep the invitation open…because I really think you’ll change your mind one day, and when you do, I don’t want you to believe that turning to us is not an option. And not just because of Lydia.”

“…Thank you.”

Jordan grabs his medical bag and stands.

“Do me a favor though? Stop with the formalities. I think a man that’s given me a rectal exam can continue calling me ‘Stiles’. Even if he is pretending to hate me and my husband.”

“I don’t hate you—”

“I know. I said ‘pretending’,” Stiles smirks.

Jordan can’t help the light chuckle that huffs from him.

“I’ll see you next Friday, Jordan.”

“Next Friday…Stiles.”

Jordan exits the bedroom.

Stiles is woken the next morning by a gentle rocking, and a nice voice coaxing him easily out of his sleep. Derek. His big hand on Stiles’ shoulder, nudging him.

“Huh,” Stiles says sleepily.

“Baby, you awake? Can you wake up for me please,” Derek asks in a smooth voice.

Stiles groans, willing himself to wake up. To open his eyes and yawn. To move, sitting up and looking at his husband.

Gradually, he finds the strength as Derek waits patiently.

Eyes open. Yawn, smelling his own tart breath. He moves slowly, but he moves, as he sits up, yawning once more. He looks at Derek. Derek is dressed, and there’s a suitcase atop the bench at the foot of the bed.
“Where are you going?”

“…I have to go to Beacon Hills.”

“What? Why? Can’t Laura take care of whatever it is?”

“It is Laura. She called me and asked me to come back home with mom and dad. John and Melissa are going to stay here with you. I’m sorry.”

Stiles sighs. He knows he can’t be selfish and demand Derek stay with him just because he’s feeling crappy and has to stay in bed. He’s an Alpha. This is his pack and he has to take care of it. If one of his betas calls and says he needs him, it’s an emergency, Derek has to go. Especially given said beta is his sister, who happens to run their home territory.

“Are you angry?”

“Sad. Not angry.”

Derek kisses Stiles’ neck.

“So not a good idea while I’m on bedrest,” Stiles says in a hot, breathy tone.

“I’ll make it up to you.”

“God, you better.”

Derek scent marks him. He stands and grabs his suitcase off the bench. “I’m taking Scott and Jackson with me. Boyd, Lydia, and Danny are running operations until I get back and while you’re on bedrest. Allison and Freya are in the house. I told them not to hesitate in getting you whatever you need. Erica, Isaac, and Cora went to work. Your dad and Melissa will be over later, after their lunch date. Or at least that’s what people pushing sixty call midday sex.”

“Ugh! Goddamnit, Derek! Why would you put that in my head?!”

“Because I put it in Scott’s, too. He had the same reaction,” Derek laughs.

“And I’m the one that’s evil?”

Derek bends down and kisses Stiles. Stiles deepens the kiss, slipping his tongue into Derek’s mouth.

Derek moans. He lets go of his suitcase and pulls Stiles close, their greedy lips never parting.

Stiles tries to unbuckle Derek’s pants.

“Jesus, Stiles…”

“Let me jerk you off then you come in my mouth. I won’t swallow. I promise.”

“Fuck. We can’t. My parents are downstairs with Scott and Jackson waiting. And you’re on bedrest.”

Stiles groans. “Please, Big Bad.”

Derek’s eyes fade crimson at the nickname and begging.
Stiles’ hand manages to slide into Derek’s pants, gripping his dick.

“Shit. You make it hard to say ‘no’ to,” Derek says, pulling his pants down mid-thigh.

---

Stiles woke up to the sound of yelling and a large crash coming from downstairs!

Suddenly, Freya was upstairs in his bedroom, partially shifted. “Sorry. I know I’m not allowed in here without the Alpha’s permission--”

“What the hell is going on down there,” Stiles says, climbing out of bed.

“They told me to go upstairs and make sure you’re safe. Not to let you leave the room.”

“Who?”

“Isaac and Allison.”


“Someone tried to break in.”

“WHAT?! Into my house?! My den?!”

Stiles stalks over to the painting on the wall. He grabs the edge and the whole thing shifts along the wall to reveal a glass case behind it. Inside the case are 6 baseball bats: 3 aluminum bats and 3 wooden bats. One of the wooden bats has razor wire wrapped around the barrel. It’s spotted with dried blood. As are two other bats.

“Holy shit,” Freya says looking at the hidden case.

“Human or supe,” he asks her, all business.

“Uh, one’s a human and the other is a supe. Werewolf.”

Stiles grabs one of the aluminum bats. “This bat is infused with wolfsbane. It would be a good idea if you kept clear if I start swinging.”

“Stiles, I don’t think this is a god idea at all. You’re pregnant and not even supposed to be out of bed. You can’t go downstairs beating the fuck out of intruders with a bat.”

“I’m not. The bat is a backup and for me to protect myself if shit gets real. You, Isaac, and Allison are going to tie up the burglars and wait for the cops.”

There’s another crash and yelling from downstairs!

He grabs a coral of nylon rope from the case. “Don’t touch this rope either.”

Stiles stalks out of the room. Freya dutifully follows.

They make their way to the kitchen. There’s broken glass on the floor, along with a few pots and pans. Blood spatters on the cabinets, and there’s a huge indent in the fridge.

Allison has her crossbow trained on a short, blonde-haired wolf that’s pressed against a short, black kid whose back is against the backdoor.
Isaac is in beta form snarling and growling at them both. His shirt is ripped with claw marks and gashes of blood.

The intruding werewolf growls back, protecting his friend, who’s holding his arm that’s bleeding. One of Allison’s arrows lies on the floor beside his feet.

Freya shifts and stands beside Isaac.

Stiles is a little disappointed. He expected something…grander. Not two junkie teens trying to rob him, looking to score. Goes to show how bored he really was on bedrest…

He casually walks by Allison toward a cabinet.

“Stiles! What are you doing down here?! Freya, we said keep him up there!”

“He was very persistent…and a little frightening.”


The two wolves take a few steps back as Stiles throws mountain ash at the two boys hovered by the backdoor! Stiles manipulates the ash telekinetically around the young wolf, leaving his human friend vulnerable.

“Snatch the human.”

Isaac grabs the wounded boy, being mindful of staying out of his friend’s reaching claws.

Allison puts down her crossbow.

“Call Marin please. Tell her to come over. Then call Derek.”

Allison nods and runs out of the kitchen to her room for her phone.

Stiles drops the rope, but holds on to his bat. He approaches Isaac and Freya holding the human.

The blonde wolf growls and snarls the closer Stiles gets to his friend.

Stiles uses the bat to tip the human boy’s chin upward to meet his eyes. “Name.”

The boy scowls, full of insolence.

Stiles nods to Freya. She squeezes his arm, right at his punctured wound. The boy cries in pain. His friend is practically feral as he snarls and spits at them, not being able to do anything, trapped by Stiles’ ability to hold him there with the mountain ash.

“We can do this all night, or you can open your mouth and answer me. Name.”

“…Mason.”

“Mason, do you know who I am?”

Mason shakes his head.

“My name is Stiles Stilinski-Hale. I’m Alpha-mate to Derek Hale, and you just broke into my house.”

“Oh, shit.”
“A very appropriate response.”

Allison comes back into the kitchen. “Marin is on her way, but I couldn’t get a hold of Derek. I just told him to call me back immediately.”

“Thanks,” he turns to Mason, “Legally, I have the absolute right to destroy the both of you. I also have that right as an Alpha-mate.”

Mason swallows hard.

“Please don’t.”

Stiles looks over at the werewolf binded by mountain ash at the door. “And you are…?”

 “…Liam.”

“What are you and your friend doing here, Liam?”

“We… We broke in.”

“That’s apparent.”

“We were looking for cash, or something to steal.”

“And you couldn’t smell how infested with wolves this house is?”

“I… My scenting is off. It’s not that strong.”

“Your eyes flashed yellow, but your powers are weak, like an Omega—”

“I’m not an Omega!”

Isaac and Freya snarl at Liam’s tone toward Stiles.

“No. Not at first glance.” Stiles wobbles on his feet and bit. Allison reaches for him, but he waves her off.

“You’re pregnant,” Liam says.

“You really enjoy stating the obvious, don’t you? Yes. I’m having a baby. Two actually.”

“Cool,” Mason says. He looks a little guilty, as though he couldn’t help it slipping out of his mouth.

Stiles smiles at him. “Thanks. It is pretty cool.” He grabs the rope and tosses it to Allison.

“Princess Jasmine, can you tie up Liam?”

She moves toward the Omega wolf. “Think about it, and it’ll be the last thought you have,” she threatens. She makes him cross his arms on his chest, bounds his wrists, the wraps the slack around his upper body.

“That burns,” he winces.

“Mountain ash,” she says coldly.

Stiles manipulates the mountain ash surrounding Liam back into the cookie tin. Liam and Mason watch fascinated.
“This is what’s going to happen: we’re going into the living room. When Marin gets here--”

“Who’s Marin,” Mason asks.

“Marin is a doctor and friend and a druid. When she gets here, she’s going to patch you up. While she’s doing that we’re going to call the police and have them take you two away so you’re no longer my problem.”

Immediately, Mason and Liam beg for Stiles to not call the cops.

“They’ll take me back to that fucking nuthouse,” Liam shouts.

“I can’t go back to my foster parents,” Mason yells, tears stinging his eyes.

“Calm down!”

They quiet.

“I take it you both are minors.”

They nod.

“You were at B.A.H.D.W?”

“No. ‘Rex House’.”

“In Idaho?! Jesus! That place is a nightmare!”

“Tell me about it.”

“And you were in foster care? In Rexburg, too?”

Mason nods.

“So you’re runaways?”

They nod.

“I need you two to verbally answer me.”

They do.

Stiles turns to Isaac. Isaac nods. They’re telling the truth.

“Okay, so I’ve got runaways from Idaho in my kitchen that were trying to break into my house. If I call the cops, like I should do, they’ll snatch you two up and ship you back to the ‘Gem State’, where you’ll go to a mental facility that’s straight out of the 1950s, and you’ll go back into the system. I can’t have you two here because my husband will kill you, then me for being dumb enough to let you stay here, let alone sneak out of here, knowing our address and who lives here.”

“We won’t tell anyone. We swear. Please don’t call the police,” Mason pleads.

Stiles looks at their lost, scared faces, trembling with desperation…

“Ugh. Call the rest of the pack and ask them to come over please. It’s going to be a long night and I need to lie down,” Stiles says to Allison.
“Baby-snatching goblins?! Are you kidding, Laura,” Derek barks.

Scott looks horrified at the idea.

“Nope. Wish I was, but there’s been four infants kidnapped from their homes in the last two weeks. Tara snuck me and Deaton into the last victim’s home when they were out.”

“I performed a reveal spell and saw there was magical residue let behind. A sample of it leads me to believe its goblin,” Deaton says.

“Alicia and Camden tried tracking it. They got as far into the woods as they could until they lost the scent,” Laura tells her brother.

“It was like he vanished into thin air,” says Alicia, Boyd’s sister.

“Which leads me to believe he’s traveling between dimensions,” Deaton says.

“I fucking hate goblins. Almost as much as I hate trolls,” Derek growls. “So, what does that mean? We can’t travel that way. We’ll just have to sit and wait for him to come back, track his movements, then capture him.”

“We can’t do that, Derek,” Tara says. “The town is in a panic. There are infants being kidnapped out of their beds like some sort of nighttime horror story. We need to settle this fast, before people start taking matters into their own vigilante hands.”

“Tara’s right, sweetheart,” Talia tells her son.

“Okay. Alright. How do we find that little, green asshole,” Derek says.

“It’s not only about catching him, D. We need to get those kids back he took,” Laura says.

“You’re right. I just don’t know how…”

Derek takes note of the glances exchanged around the room… “What?”

“We, uh, sort of know how to fix all this,” Laura says cautiously.

“Okay. Then why did you call me? Why haven’t you fix the problem?”

“Well, it’s sort of a delicate manner…”

“Laura. Out with it,” Derek snaps at his eldest sister.

“Um, we can’t travel to another dimension and nab the goblin and rescue the babies. Hell, we don’t do even know what dimension he’s in…but, uh, we know people who can slide through dimensions, and locate humans in them. People…like…faeries.”

Derek’s eyebrows meet, confused, then it dawns on him—

“Fuck. That.”

“Derek—”
“You didn’t need me to come down here to help! You needed my permission!”

“Well, not just that,” Laura says nervously. “We might need something else, too…”

“I don’t care! I am not asking that asshole for help!”

“Actually, given the physical brutality you exhibited on Prince Dimitri last time, it’d be pertinent if your parents were the ones to ask him for his assistance,” Deaton says.

Derek turns to his parents. They look just as guilty.

“I take it you two knew about all this. That’s why you were fine with coming home when I asked you to,” Derek says accusingly.

“Yes, and because you said we can stay in San Francisco with you and Stiles unless something takes shape in Beacon Hills. Well, something has unfolded and it’s why we’re here,” Theo says.

“I don’t want to give my permission for this.”

“Derek, babies are being snatched from their home and carted off to another dimension for God knows what to happen to them. You have to be reasonable and put aside your personal feelings for Dimitri,” Thomas, Laura’s husband, says.

“I said I didn’t want to. Didn’t say I won’t… Fine. Ask that borderline rapist for his help.”

Laura rolls her eyes.

“Just make sure he’s nowhere near me when you do,” Derek says, flopping on the sofa beside Jackson and Camden, Isaac’s older brother.

“Well, see, that’s, uh, the other thing… You might need to…apologize to Dimitri and his family for beating him near-death.”

Blood drips onto the carpet as it slips between the cracks of Derek’s fingers at the tight fist he’s making, digging his nails into his own palm.

He doesn’t like this. Not one damn bit.

Chapter End Notes

Why yes I did link an anal douching video in the fic. Hope you watched. Lol ;)

The whole Prince Dimitri think is not pulled out of thin air. It harks back to something Stiles said in PART ONE, Chapter 8, during a fight with Derek.

Next chapter: we find out why Derek hates Prince Dimitri, what Stiles ends up doing with Liam and Mason, and THANKSGIVING SHOWDOWN WITH BRAEDEN!!!
November (d)

Chapter Summary

Stiles figures out what to do with Liam and Mason, Derek and Prince Dimitri meet again, and the pack spends Thanksgiving at Peter's house.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Stiles hung up the phone. “Well, Derek is pissed beyond belief. Seems not only is he not fond of juvenile delinquents breaking into our house and me feeding them and bandaging their wounds, he’s also not fond of having to parlay with Dimitri.”

“Dimitri,” every female in the room recalls with a kittenish smile.

“Who’s Dimitri,” Mason asks as Marin bandages his arm.

“A faerie prince,” Stiles answers.

“The faerie prince,” Erica smirks, earning an eye roll from Boyd.

“That dude’s real,” Liam questions.

“Very,” Allison smiles.

“Has everyone here forgotten why Derek hates Dimitri? Try and focus on that please. Especially around him. Or at the very least, what were supposed to do with these two,” Stiles points at Liam and Mason.

“What did Derek say,” Lydia asks.

“To kill them,” Boyd answers.

“Really,” Allison asks.

“That’s what he said in his text.” Boyd shows them the text message: **Kill the two idiots that broke into my house please. And don’t let Stiles talk you out of it.**

“When did he send that,” Stiles asks.

“When he was screaming at you on the phone.”

“We’re not killing these two morons,” Stiles starts.

Liam and Mason breathe a collective sigh of relief.

“I’m all for the not killing, too,” Freya says.

“Not when they’ll go back to living hells, and could better serve a purpose here under my
“And what guidance are you going to give these two, Alpha Stilinski-Hale,” Marin says with a smile.

He points to Liam. “This one is a pretty shitty werewolf.”

“Hey,” Liam protests.

“Rule number one: do not interrupt your Alpha when he is speaking,” Stiles glares at Liam.

Liam visibly cowers a bit.

“You are a shitty werewolf. You couldn’t even sniff out a house with a bunch weres inside. You didn’t even know whose house it was, which means this whole burglary attempt was not appropriately planned. Always do recon. You’re practically an Omega. The only reason your eyes aren’t blue and you’re not insane, just stupid, is because of him,” Stiles nods to Mason.

“Two don’t make a pack, but it’s a companionship and enough to keep you alive and with your powers.”

Liam wants to lash out and tell Stiles he’s wrong, but he knows he’s not. And the last thing he wants to do is draw the ire of the human and his pack at the moment.

“You want to not die and stay, you’re going to earn your keep and do as told, and I’ll teach you a thing or two about pack dynamics, politics, and supe power.”


Cora smiles smugly. In just 2 minutes her brother-in-law’s managed to cow a runaway and make him obedient. Derek’s lucky he has Stiles as a mate.


“How long have you two been on the run?”

“A little over a year.”

“Where were you?”

“We hitched to Vegas. We were there for a while before we came to San Francisco.”

“You turn tricks in Vegas?”

Mason looks embarrassed.

“I’m not judging you. I’m just asking,” Stiles assures him.

“Yes. Sometimes.”

“And other times?”

“Other times we stole, or ran a con.”

“What was the con?”

“…I’d get picked up at a bar, in a hotel or something, and let the guy take me back to my room.
We’d start fooling around and then Liam would come out of the bathroom, or the closet, and snap pictures of him with me. Then Liam would take their cellphone and tell him to give us all his cash and jewelry or well call his wife, or boss, or whoever and tell them he picks up underage boys and takes them to hotel rooms,” Mason says, looking sheepish.

“Wow. Ballsy. Incredibly stupid, but ballsy. You could’ve been killed, and I assume that’s what almost happened and why you’re in San Francisco now.”

Liam and Mason nod.

Boyd can read Stiles’ face. “Derek isn’t going to like this.”

“I’ll handle Derek.”

“You say that, but then I still get bitched at for letting you do something you weren’t supposed to be doing.”

The room nods collectively.

“Are you serious?”

“Sweetie, I don’t think you ‘handle’ Derek as well as you might think,” Lydia says.

“Well, maybe I should step it up a notch.”

“Please don’t,” Isaac says. “The last time you ‘stepped it up a notch’ you cut off sex with him until he gave in to what you wanted, and those six days before he gave in were fucking hell, Stiles.”

“He was a nightmare,” Danny adds.

“I didn’t leave my house,” Allison recalls.

“Well, what am I supposed to do with them? I’m not going to kill them.”

“You don’t have to. Derek asked me to do it,” Boyd says.

Liam and Mason look terrified.

“No. And you know that’s my Alpha tone Vernon Michael Boyd.”

Boyd gives a resigned sigh. “Fine, but I’m throwing you under the bus when Derek gets back.”

“Isn’t that what I always tell you to do?”

“Doesn’t mean I have the willpower to do so.”

Stiles smiled and pecked Boyd’s cheek. Boyd tried not to blush.

Stiles turned to Mason. “You like turning tricks?”

“Oh, no, Stiles,” Cora already objected.

“Are there people who do,” Mason asks.

“Some,” Stiles answers.

Mason shrugs. “I guess…”
“I’ll take that as a ‘no’. Cora runs our bordello and two sex clubs. She’s a busy girl with a lot on her plate. She might need an assistant, especially if she wants me to try and convince her brother to invest in another bordello.”

“Dammit, Stiles,” Cora whines.

“I know how to type, and I know shorthand,” Mason says.

“You don’t need to know how to type. We don’t leave paper trails. All meetings are face to face and business is never directly discussed over the phone. Got it?”

“Yes, ma’am,” Mason nods.

“And don’t call me ma’am. It’s Cora.”

“Or sassy-wolf,” Stiles beams.

“Only Stiles calls me that.”

“What about me? What do I do,” Liam asks.

“You’ll be spending a lot of time with me. Possibly Derek and Boyd if Derek doesn’t kill you on-sight.”

Liam gulps.

“In the meantime, you’ve got nowhere to go, but I don’t trust you enough to let you sleep in the main house, so you’ll stay in the guest house. And if anything, anything at all, turns up missing—and trust me when I say I’d know if it does—Boyd won’t kill you. I will. I don’t tolerate my home being violated. Ask Kate Argent.”

They nod, frightened by Stiles’ threat.

“Breakfast is at eight. I want you two wash, dressed and at the backdoor by seven. Understand?”

“Yes,” they answer.

“Good. Princess Jasmine, H2 make sure security is up to par in case my warning wasn’t enough for these two and they decide to do something stupid. Red Queen and Caramel Candy get them situated and burn their filthy clothes please.”

Stiles nods at Allison. Allison unties Liam from the rope.

“Walk,” Lydia says to the two runaways, nodding toward the kitchen. They march out of the living room.

Lydia takes Freya’s hand and pulls her toward the kitchen, too.

“‘Caramel Candy’?”

Lydia smiles. “You’re not officially pack until Stiles gives you a nickname.”

Talia poured tea into Prince Dimitri’s cup. “Sugar,” she asked.
“Two please,” the prince answered.

Talia dropped two sugar cubes into his cup.

“Thank you,” he said politely.

“You’re welcome,” she said before joining Theo on the loveseat in the sunroom.

Derek sat adjacent to his parents and the prince in a wicker armchair, fuming at the civility of the scene before him when all he wanted was to rip the fae’s throat out with his claws.

Theo sensed his son’s hostility and shot him a glare. Derek ignored him and kept on scowling at Dimitri.

Scott and Jackson sat behind him at the table, while Deaton was directly across Derek from the coffee table, closer to the door.

“Your house is lovely. I’m sorry this is the first time I’ve been,” Dimitri says.

“That’s because you’ve never been invited before now,” Derek say with a biting tone and wide, fake smile.

“But my parents have. They found the Hale Pack to be very strong allies years ago.”

“I’m sorry that that is no longer the case,” Theo says.

“I’m sorry to say that it is my fault, and I do sincerely apologize for it.”

“We’d like for the past to remain the past and call it water under the bridge,” Theo tells Dimitri.

“I’d like that. I think we’d both benefit from looking out for one another,” Dimitri agrees, sipping his tea. “I guess I should start by apologizing to Alpha Hale for my mistake.”

“Mistake’? You’re chalking up what you did to just a simple ‘mistake’?”

“Yes. I’m afraid I read the situation between myself and your mate wrong,” Dimitri says with a tight lip, losing a bit of his decorum.

“There was no situation between you and Stiles. You kidnapped him on our honeymoon, and I didn’t see him for a week,” Derek snarls.

“Time moves faster in your world than it does mine. What seems like 2 days to me, is a week to you,” Dimitri says flippantly.

“I thought you were apologizing,” Derek reminds him through gritted teeth.

“Oh, yes, right. I am sorry for happening upon your mate while he was vulnerable, listening to him, and understanding him…when others have not.”

Derek is on Dimitri in a flash, back against the window and claws at his jugular! Dimitri’s eyes turn the color of limes, burning into Derek’s own blood, red eyes.

“Derek, let him go,” his mother shouts, trying to pull him off the prince.

“No one understands Stiles like me. No one gets him the way I do. You have made a grave ‘mistake’ in thinking you know my husband better than I do.”
“I know that a man that claims to love his mate would never hurt him just four days after marrying him.”

“We had a fight, Stiles walked off. That’s all.”

“He was crying when I happened upon him,” Dimitri smiles smugly. “I sat and listened to him talk about how his husband didn’t appreciate him. So I thought I should.”

The tips of Derek’s claws dig into Dimitri’s throat.

“Gentlemen, please,” Deaton begs.

“Listen to your druid friend, Alpha Hale,” Dimitri says.

“You kidnapped my husband, took him to another dimension, where I didn’t see him for a week, and tried to rape him.”

“Fae are an amorous bunch, but we’re not incubi. I don’t sexually abuse anyone. Ever.”

“Then what do you call trying to seduce a man you’ve taken against his will?”

“A favor.”

Wrong answer. Derek grabs Dimitri’s face and smashes the back of his head against the window, cracking the glass!

Dimitri’s hand glows bright and he presses it against Derek’s chest!

Derek falls to his knees, out-of-breath. Choking!

Dimitri watches Derek struggle to breathe, his whole body alight.

ROOOOOAAARRR!!!

Theo stands, eyes bright purple at both men, as the room freezes at the powerful roar!

Dimitri stops glowing, eyes turned wide and frightened at Theo. He releases the telekinetic hold he has on Derek.

Derek coughs and spits, regaining his breath.

Dimitri kneels in submission before Theo. “My apologies.”

Scott and Jackson help Derek to sit up. Derek kneels before his father as well. Both men have their heads bowed.

“Prince Dimitri, you kidnapped my son-in-law with the intention of making him yours. You caused worry and heartache in doing so, which angered Alpha Hale at the loss of his mate. That is why he lashed out at you, and why my alliance with your family and court was diminished, but I asked you here today to make amends for your wrongdoing. Yet, you come into my house and insult my son, then cause him harm.”

“I beg your forgiveness. I find myself still bothered by Alpha Hale’s brutality last we met.”

“Alpha Hale had every intention of apologizing for that situation. Did you not, son?”
“I did, father,” Derek answers.

“Then do so.”

“My apologies to you, Prince Dimitri of Yarrowbloom.”

“And my apologies to you,” Dimitri responds.

“Stand. Both of you,” Theo tells them.

They obey.

“Would you like my forgiveness and our alliance restored, Prince Dimitri,” Theo asks.

“I would, your majesty.”

Scott and Jackson exchange curious looks.

“Then we need you to help us find a goblin.”

August 2018

Stiles banged on the door insistently…

Finally, Derek opened the door, half-awake and wrapped in a bedsheets.

“Is it true,” Stiles asked with a shaky breath.

“Stiles, what are you doing here? I thought you weren’t back until next month.”

“Is it true? Are you with someone?”

“It’s three in morning—”

“I don’t give a shit about what time it is?! Are you with someone?! Is she here right now?!”

Derek could see the broken, desperate look on Stiles’ face, demanding answers. Pleading for the truth, but hoping he’s wrong.

“We can talk about this in the morning.”

“No! I want to talk about it now! Right now!”

“Shhh! You’re going to wake my neighbors.”

“I don’t fucking care!”

“Well, I do! I live here, you don’t!”

Stiles looked distraught. Hurt that Derek seemed to care more about his neighbors than Stiles’ heart breaking right in front of him.
“You are seeing someone…”

“…Yes.”

“Scott says you bring her to pack meetings,” Stiles asked, bewildered at the thought. “You can’t do that. Why would you do that?”

“Stiles. I’m the Alpha. If I want to bring my girlfriend to pack meetings then I can.”

“So she knows? About everything? You just bring an outsider into the fold like that and don’t bother consulting with your emissary?”

“You’ve been in London.”

“You could have called me.”

“I wasn’t about to discuss my girlfriend with you over the phone.”

“No, Scott had to do that,” Stiles snapped.

Derek could see Stiles was fighting with himself, trying hard not to let his emotions get the best of him and cry in the middle of Derek’s doorway. Derek hated seeing him hurt, especially since he’s the one that was hurting him, but it serves him right. He’s hurt Derek plenty, and the moment he’s decided to move on, to let Stiles go, he came running back, sad and weepy. Derek had enough.

“Who is she?”

“What? Scott didn’t tell you,” Derek said sardonically. “…Braeden.”

“That mercenary you’re friends with?”

“Yes.”

“You said you were just friends.”

“Well, it grew into more than that.”

“When?”

“Do you really want to do this here, Stiles? Now?”

“YES!”

Derek was actually taken aback by Stiles’ tone. He almost expected his eyes to fade orange again. Instead, tears ran down his face.

“June. I started seeing her in June.”

“Is it serious? Do… Do you love her?”

“…Yes,” Derek lied, grateful Stiles wasn’t a wolf and could detect the uptick in his heart. If he wanted Stiles to fight for him, for them, he was going to have to be cruel. Lying was inevitable.

Stiles let out a broken sob that crushed Derek’s insides.

“B-But… W-W-What about us? You and me? We’re mates. I thought we were…going to make something happen between us. London was… It was just a break, Derek.”
“I begged you not to go. I told you I needed you here with me. You left me anyway. That’s the second time you’ve abandoned me, Stiles. You don’t want me.”

“Yes, I do, Derek! I want you!”

“No, you don’t. You want me because someone else has me.”

“I’m your mate. No one else has you but me. You told me mates die without each other.”

“And some learn to live without the other.” It felt like the meanest thing he’s ever said to Stiles, including all the things he said when Jennifer had him under a spell, but he has to push Stiles toward a breaking point, otherwise they will die without each other.

“Derek... Please. Don’t. Let me... Let’s try this again. Let me try again with this.”

“You shouldn’t have to try to love someone, Stiles. Least of all your mate. It shouldn’t be that hard.”

Stiles sobbed.

“I’m sorry.”

“Fuck you.”

“Stiles—”

“Fuck you.”

Derek watched Stiles run toward the staircase, avoiding the elevator. He listened to his frantic heartbeat as he made his way all the way down to the parking garage and into his jeep.

Derek didn’t hear the engine start, or the tires squeal on the pavement. Instead, he listened to the love of his life cry his eyes out as he fought for breath, fighting against a panic attack.

Water splashes onto the floor as Stiles grips the edge of the tub and comes with his husband, shooting ropes of cum onto Derek’s chest.

Stiles leans down to kiss him. “I love you.”

“I love you, too... Now, tell me what you did?”

“Who says I did anything?”

Derek rolls his eyes. “None of the pack are here, and the first thing you did when I walked through the door is drag me upstairs and fuck me in a bathtub surrounded by candles and rose petals.”

“Can’t I just be romantic for my husband?”

“Where the hell are those two kids that broke in?”

“How’d you know they were here?”

“There’s two smells I don’t recognize. And they’ve got the TV in the guest house turned up so loud I know which video game they’re playing.”
“Why ask me if you already know?”

“To see if you’d lie.”

“I don’t lie to my husband.”

“But you certainly omit things. They can’t stay, Stiles. They’re not stray cats.”

“I know. They’re scared, teenage boys with no place to go.”

“I don’t care.”

“Derek, please. I’ll wash them and feed them and take them for walks…”

Derek can’t help the smirk on his face at Stiles’ ridiculousness. “They broke into our house. We’ve punished people for less.”

“I know, and trust me, they’re going to pay heavily for that, but I can’t send them back to the hell they tried to escape.”

“Did it ever occur to you that they might be lying about their situation?”

“Which is why Isaac, Boyd, and your sister listened to their heartbeats when they were talking. Sourwolf—”

“Pet names. This must be something you really want.”

“The baby wolf is practically an Omega and knows nothing about being a wolf. His powers are weak and he has no clue how to be in a pack. What better pack to learn from than ours? And the human, he was turning tricks in Vegas just so they could eat.”

“I’m sure they did more than turn tricks.”

“They ran a con or two, but the point is, they want to be better. We can make them better. Cora’s already working with one of them as her assistant.”

“…Why do you always have to make people your projects? Why can’t you ask for a dog like a normal boy?”

“I’m allergic.”

“What are their names, troublemaker?”

“Liam and Mason. Liam is the werewolf.”

“I need to talk to them. Alone.”

“Okay.”

“And until I feel comfortable enough around them, you are not to be left by yourself with them.”

“They’re harmless, little boys—”

“Stiles,” Derek says sternly.

“Yes. Okay. Bodyguard at all times. Anything else?”
“You, Danny and Lydia research the hell out of them and get some background information. If they’re minors, someone is looking for them, and I don’t want trouble with cops while the Feds are crawling all over us.”

“Okay. Thank you.” Stiles kisses him.

Derek leans back, pinching the bridge of his nose.

“You okay? What happened with Dimitri?”

“We got into it again, but Dad broke us up. In doing so, he revealed himself to Scott and Jackson. They know.”

“Theo talk to them?”

“No. My mother.”

“Talk about the fear of God…”

“I think she made Scott cry.”

“I don’t doubt it. Your mother is indescribable when it comes to protecting your dad.”

Derek runs his finger down Stiles’ nose. “I don’t blame her.”

“I’m sorry about Dimitri. That must have been shitty to deal with.”

“He helped us find the goblin and get the babies back. I don’t care about anything else with him.”

“What the hell was the goblin doing with them? Where was he taking them?”

“Another faerie world. Dimitri knew it. He was offering them to a hive of woodland faeries as gifts. He was in love with one of them apparently and she’s known to be fascinated with human children.”

Stiles stared hard at Derek for a moment, letting it all sink in…before he burst out laughing, loud and hard.

For whatever reason, Derek tried hard not to, but watching Stiles turn beet red, throwing his head back with tears in his eyes laughing, made it bubble to the surface, and then he, to, was laughing.

They sat in the lukewarm water cracking up until their stomachs hurt with the thought of lovestruck goblins.

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Talia and Theo were the first to arrive at Peter’s house. Talia wanted to get there especially early given that she knew her ‘little’ brother better than anyone and figured that his bad attitude about having to host Thanksgiving this year would get the best of him. It did. It was 10am when she and Theo had gotten there and Peter was on his third glass of wolfsbane red wine and refusing to help Kira, Malia, and Ethan in the kitchen. Talia shoved an apron at his chest, took his wine from him, and told him to knead the dough for bread.
Just when he seemed ready to protest, Talia flashed her Alpha eyes at him.

He threw the apron on the floor and dug his claws into the blob of dough on the counter as Malia and Kira tried their hardest not to laugh.

Meanwhile, Theo pulled extra tables and chairs from Peter’s garage and set them up outside, seeing as how the dining table only sat eight people at the most, and 25 were expected to be there for dinner.

Peter was a known neat-freak; it bordered on obsessive-compulsive disorder, so luckily there was little to organize and clean. Though Theo could hear the small hitch in Peter’s breath whenever he had to move something, or sit a properly placed item down where it didn’t belong, even if it were for just a moment.

Laura and her “betas” (Deaton, Alicia, Cameron, and a werepanther named, Sasha, that Laura’s known since UCLA), along with Thomas and their girls were the next to arrive.

Laura’s daughters created a constant stream of noise Peter wasn’t used to, making him roll his eyes a lot more than usual. The girls kidnapped Malia, wanting to make holiday decorations to hang around the house, which Malia was all too grateful for, given she was becoming exhausted with peeling turnips and chopping what felt like an endless amount of onions.

Peter looked even more morose with the idea of his house being “decorated” with construction paper link chains, fall colored banners, cinnamon scented candles (which oddly smells like jealousy to a were), handprint turkeys, pilgrim hats and Native American headdress, and cornucopias filled with fruit, tiny pumpkins, and other gourds.

When Valerie showed up with Jason, their daughters, and Aiden, Peter attempted to sneak a glass of scotch, but his clever sister locked all the liquor away in an undisclosed location, then forced Peter back into the kitchen to help her skin the rabbit for dinner.

His house was turning into a choir of noise: children laughing and playing, the helping hands in the kitchen gossiping and giggling, he could hear the football game on in the living room, Thomas and Jason playfully arguing about which football team had the best chance of making it to the Superbowl, and Laura’s new beta, Sasha, asking nosy relationship questions about Peter in a hushed tone outside. Laura pleaded with her old, college friend not to “fuck my uncle during Thanksgiving.”

Sasha made no guarantees.

_Hmm. Well, at least I'll have something to keep me occupied during this nightmare…_

By the time, Talia and Peter were about to braise the rabbit and get working on the venison, the third Hale house arrived in all it’s glory. Stiles came inside, made a b-line straight for Peter and pulled him aside.

“You say one shitty word to Lydia about Jordan not being here and I will bite your dick off,” Stiles told him.

Peter scoffed. “Well, as long as your mouth is on it…”

“I mean it, Peter. Do not be an ass to her about it.”

“And what are you going to do for me if I’m a good, little boy?”
“Your reward is me letting you keep 4 inch slab of skin between your thighs.”

“It’s actually 5 inches, Alpha-mate.”

“I doubt it.”

Allison, Isaac, and Danny came into the kitchen carrying bags of groceries. Stiles broke from their huddled corner, grabbed an apron, and immediately began pulling food from the bags to help cook.

All three betas washed their hands at the sink to help Stiles, Talia, Kira, and Ethan with the rest of dinner.

“Allison, can you start with the **creamed spinach**? Isaac, the **sweet potato casserole**, and Danny, I need you to shuck that corn, then peel all those potatoes please,” Stiles said.

They each nodded and got to work on what they were assigned.

Peter watched them obey their Alpha without the slightest hesitation and shook his head.

*There’s no way in hell my nephew deserves that beautiful, dangerous boy…*

Peter knew he understood Stiles better than anyone. How could he not? They were just alike. They both sought power, and acceptance, but just went about it differently. Peter enjoyed being an underboss, but he still missed the small, shining moment he was an Alpha. He had rule and will coursing through his veins, the strength of it making him feel important and invincible. He was in charge, and no longer needed to take orders from his inexperienced, young nephew and holier-than-thou brother-in-law.

They knew he’d been turned Alpha after Theo asked him privately to “take care of someone in Arizona” who was an Alpha the last he was heard from. Peter actually hesitated at first, going up against someone with more power than him, but the temptation of being able to absorb his targets ability and status was enough to give him the courage to say ‘yes’ to his assignment.

Peter didn’t find out until the Halloween party who exactly the mysterious Alpha he killed was: the man responsible for the death of Jordan’s biological father. He was tempted then to tell the doctor about killing the man that killed his father, but knew Theo would hurt him badly if he did. Peter got the distinct impression he wasn’t asked, or put up to murdering the Arizona Alpha, but rather took his own initiative in doing so, and by initiative, Theo had Peter do it.

But Peter lost his power not even 5 weeks later when he found himself in a “scuffle” with a drunk bus driver at a dive bar just outside Reno. He didn’t even form a pack yet before his eyes shaded blue as he carried the man’s limp body into the desert at midnight, and buried him there.

He hasn’t sought that kind of power since, but it doesn’t mean he isn’t susceptible to it.

Watching Stiles though, always made him wish for another opportunity to be an Alpha again. Stiles wisely turned down the bite when Peter offered it to him. He knew Stiles’ rejection of his offer had more to do with Derek, and not wanting to tie himself to a werewolf that wasn’t his mate, more than it was about wanting to remain human, and told Peter so.

It turned Peter on with how smart and cunning the human and the banshee were a times; not only being hip to Peter’s games, but everyone else’s as well. What he wouldn’t give to have either of them, or both of them by his side, as his “companions,” because what else do you call a lover that’s not your mate?
Lydia having found her mate stung a little, but Stiles with Derek felt like an ice pick in his eye.

He didn’t hate Derek, far from it, and if pressed, he’d admit to how much he actually loved his nephew…at times. He was just simply bothered by him. By his ridiculous good looks, his quiet, thoughtful resolve, his ‘sacrificial lamb’ end game, by the ‘werewolf gods’ choosing to bestow True Alpha power on someone so young and untested by violence, by Theo and his sister handing off their “business” to him after obtaining said powers, by being mated to the smartest, most strikingly perilous human he’s ever met…

He’s been jealous of his own nephew for years now. Since the boy became a man and surpassed him in quality, in every single way. All while having to never lift a finger. In Peter’s opinion.

Peter’s gone through so much in his life; so much pain, and love, and loss, and brutality. He was made a man without ever knowing what it was really like being a boy first.

He wishes he could say it began when his parents died, and he and his sisters were left in Talia and Theo’s care. Talia was 15 years old when she and Theo mated and married. She was still very much a child herself, helping to raise her younger siblings with her mysteriously wealthy husband.

Yet, that wasn’t when Peter began to feel the ground shake beneath him and his world shift and change. No. That happened when he was sixteen and a young boy with pale blue eyes smiled at him in second period chemistry class. After Chris and Malia’s mother, Peter hoped to God he’d never meet his mate; he’s only ever loved two people with his whole self who weren’t, and they’ve both managed to destroy any minute believe he’s held onto about love and the existence of it.

So he no longer wants love. He wants a kinship. A sexual understanding between two mature people that think a like, see the same thing and want the same result. He wants someone like Stiles. Or the real thing. But that will never happen. Stiles isn’t his, and never will be, not the way he’s fantasized. And that’s all it is—a fantasy, because Stiles believes in real love; real deep-seated, heartbreaking, euphoric love and Peter doesn’t. Not anymore. Not for a long time.

And his nephew. His Alpha, is given the gift of this human boy with already so much power and command, and who’s done nothing but grow into himself, and use that power and command in ways that make Peter’s skin hum when he’s bared witness to it. Stiles knows how to hold the attention of a room full of weres, talk a vampire into a peace treaty, and diminish a 400 year old feud with a clan of hunters with bloodshed not simply matched, but topped. He’s a walking and talking weapon.

And Derek has no idea how to use him. It’s not a pity. It’s a shame.

“Well, too many cooks spoil the broth. I’m going to—”

“Oh, no, you don’t. You need to help me with the lamb and the deviled scotch eggs,” Talia said to Peter.

“There are seven people cooking in this kitchen as of right now. I don’t need to be here, dear Talia, to assist you in boiling eggs.”

“Then what are you going to do?”

“Go to my bedroom and sulk, then wait for you people to clean up your mess and go home.”

Stiles rolled his eyes at the pouting Peter. “Why don’t you and Derek go into your office and discuss business here in Fresno.”
“He gets his cut every month, on schedule. He knows how business is going,” Peter quipped.

“Ugh. Peter just go,” Stiles groaned, having enough of the beta and his argumentative ways.

Peter huffed. “I want my scotch back.”

Talia stepped out of the kitchen, then returned a minute later with a bottle of 30 year old Macallan. She handed it to Peter. “Let’s try to not have a repeat of one particular Christmas.”

“I was fourteen. I’m no longer a child.”

Stiles and Talia snorted at his statement. They beg to differ.

“Glad the two of you found that funny.” Peter opened the dishwasher and took out his favorite tumbler. “Now, if you’ll excuse me, I think I’ll go and see what Miss Martin us up to.”

Stiles stabs the wooden cutting board with the chef’s knife in his hand as Peter exits the kitchen cackling.

Peter said not a word to Lydia, actually passing her on the stairs without the slightest of glances as he made his way up to his room. He closed the door and locked it, then sat on his bed and pour himself ‘two fingers’ of the expensive, wolfsbane scotch.

He took two big gulps of the brown liquid that looked a little too red to be the color of Stiles’ eyes. Whiskey. Whiskey is the color of those, sweet, amber doe-eyes.

“How the hell does he look like Bambi but act like Lucky Luciano?”

Fuck. I’m buzzed. Starting to talk to myself about Stiles.

Peter sits the tumbler and the scotch on his nightstand, then lies back on the bed, watching the ceiling fan lazily whirl around and around…

“Peter. Peter!”

He grumbles incoherently at the voice.

“Peter. Get up! Now!”

The voice is a little more hostile now, and urgent.

Smooth skin raps lightly on his cheek. It doesn’t hurt, but it’s annoying, like a gnat.

“Come on. You can’t be that drunk.”

“I’m not. I’m just tired…and a bit tipsy.”

“Well, I’m pissed, so you need to get up. Now,” the voice shrieked in his ear, jolting up upright. Braeden. Braeden stood beside his bed with her arms folded across her chest and a scowl on her otherwise stunning face.

“So…did you see the family downstairs,” he grinned.
“What the hell, Peter?! I get here and there’s a thousand cars parked out front and I come in and the whole damn pack is here?!”

“It’s Thanksgiving, Braeden. What did you expect?”

“For it to be at Stiles and Derek’s place. Not here. Like you said it wouldn’t be.”

“Well, our dear Alpha-mate changed his mind and switched houses this year.” Peter slid off the bed and stood before the angry druid. “Come on, Braeden. You’ve hid long enough. This was bound to happen. It’s their pack, and a druid has been camped out in one of their ‘houses’ for 6 months now,”

“I’m not pack. I haven’t submitted to them. I don’t have to see or speak with either of them. With anyone.”

“You do if you want a place to stay. This may be my house, but it’s their ‘house’. We both know you have no place to go, Braeden, that’s why you’re here. And admit it, you like being here with me. You like being here with Malia, and Kira and Ethan. You want to stay? Come downstairs, eat some turkey, grumble a ‘hello’ to the Alpha and let that be it.”

“…I don’t know if I can do that, Peter,” she said with tears floating in her eyes.

He genuinely felt sorry for the girl. He’s seen that look before. Or his own daughter, and Kira, his sometime-lover. A lot of broken hearts have been left in the wake of mates finding each other, but when it was nasty, and ugly, it left a trail of pain as well.

“Yes, you can. You’re a strong girl. Prove that to them…because I’d hate to see you go.”

Peter saw the legitimate shock on her face at him admitting to wanting her to stay. He had never implied to her that she wasn’t welcomed, but he never told her just how much he liked having her there either.

“…I’m not submitting to them. Ever.”

“I don’t think they expect that from you.”

“Good, because it will never happen. I just don’t want to be forced to leave.”

“Stiles would never do that.”

“I’ve learned to not put much past Stiles.” She turned on her heel and walked out.

“Peter you take the head,” Derek said.

“Oh, how nice of you for letting me sit at the head of the table in my own house,” Peter retorted.

Braeden gave a small smirk at Peter's sarcasm when Derek rolled his eyes.

Derek sat at the other end, with Stiles to his right. Talia and Theo sat across from one another beside Peter; Talia to his right, and Theo on his left. Everyone else filled in the gaps. Liam and Mason were delegated to the “kids table” with Laura and Valerie’s girls. And Braeden found herself three seats from Derek with John and Melissa between them.

She ignored him completely though she could feel his eyes glance on her.
“I know we’re not a secular bunch, but is there anything you’d like to say before we start, Peter,” Derek asked.

“Yes.” Peter stood. “I don’t know why we continue to celebrate this disturbing holiday that is just a reminder of the systematic genocide of an entire indigenous race. We had one ‘nice’ moment with the Native Americans and pat ourselves on the back every year for it by consuming large quantities of food when we should really be ashamed of our past and take this day to apologize for the actions of bombarding our selves, culture, and beliefs on an already inhabited land which we took by force through violence and biological warfare. The continued national celebration of this is further proof that we as a country have reached past moral obnoxiousness and graduated to blatant disregard and apathy for those we have wronged. Though I would like to excuse Boyd, Braeden, Melissa, Deaton, Danny—” He points to Mason. “Who are you again?”

“Mason.”

“—Mason and Kira from this speech, for obvious reasons.”

Scott clears his throat.

“You’re dad’s Italian, McCall. You and Freya are just going to have to take half the blame.”

Scott actually frowns at Peter’s refusal to “excuse” his ancestors from his political/historical rant.

“Okay, so Peter’s officially drunk,” Laura whispers to Thomas.

“So, I just ask that as we engorge ourselves on this American/Scottish hybrid feast laid before us that you all remember the pain, suffering, blood, and tears that has created this bullshit festivity so white people can feel better about all the horrible shit they’ve done over centuries to dark-skin people. In conclusion, as supes having spent those hundreds of years hiding what we really are, we should know better, but it’s clear we don’t. Thank you.” Peter sat back down and poured himself a glass of wine.

Silence befalls the table.

“I hate to admit it, but I agree with every word he just said,” Stiles whispered to Lydia. She nodded in agreement.

“Well…thank you for that, Uncle Peter. It was, uh… Let’s just fucking eat,” Derek said as he grabbed the carving knife and stood over the turkey.

A warm, comfortable chatter hovered over the table as glasses of red wine were sipped and delicious bites of colorful food were eaten.

Stiles and Derek gave each other side glances and nods toward Braeden whenever there was a pause in conversation between them and someone else. Neither of them wanted to be the first to speak to her, too scared and too nervous. It’s one thing to take down a hunting clan or rescue kidnapped babies from a goblin, but it’s another to confront the emotional damage you’ve left behind in your personal life.

Stiles nudged Lydia then shifted his eyes toward Braeden.

Lydia cleared her throat. “So, Braeden, how are you liking Fresno so far? I know other Californians make fun of this city a lot, like it’s Cleveland or something, but it’s always nice when
I come here.”

“It’s fine,” Braeden answered in a monotone voice as she picked at the Haggis on her plate.

“Oh. Okay… How’s the Haggis?”

Braeden angrily tossed her fork onto her plate and turned toward Stiles and Derek. “Really?! You need Lydia asking me about fucking Haggis?!”

“Okay, so we’re really doing this,” Stiles said to himself.

“We apologize. How would you like for this conversation to begin, Braeden,” Derek said calmly.

“I don’t want a conversation at all!”

“I’m afraid that’s not possible. The three of us need to talk, and have needed to for a very long time,” Stiles said.

“Why don’t we go inside—”

“No. Why don’t we talk right here, right now?”

Stiles and Derek shoot each other nervous glances.

“Oh, this is going to be fantastic,” Peter says aloud. Kira swats his arm.

“…Okay… If that’s what you want,” Stiles said.

“It is.” Braeden sits back in her chair with a smug look on her face, waiting for them to start.

“What’s going on,” Freya whispered to Isaac.

“Drama,” he answered.

“…Um… I just want to first apologize to you for what happened—”

“What exactly happened,” Braeden asked, wanting him to spell it out in front of everyone.

“I broke you and Derek up. I used my Alpha-mate authority to force him into dumping you, and I embarrassed you by revealing that Derek had actually been using you the whole time.”

“That’s so shitty, dude,” Liam blurts out, a little shocked at Stiles’ past behavior.

Seems Stiles has to go back over ‘Alpha authority’ with Liam one more time...

“You think that’s all you did? You came into Derek’s apartment and demanded a conversation after we just had sex.”

“Children are present,” John reminded them.

“Oh, this is going to be amazingly awkward,” Laura said. Her beta, Sasha, nodded in agreement.

“Then told me that my relationship with Derek was over. When I refused to just let you dictate the future of my relationship with him, you forced Derek to tell the truth about you being mates. Then you threw every love letter he’s ever written to you in my face before telling me the ones you wrote him were hidden somewhere inside the apartment.”
“Super shitty, Stiles, man,” Mason interrupted.

Okay. So Mason needs another talking to, too.

“Then you gave me some sort of crash course in mating when I couldn’t understand why Derek just sat there like a sack of fucking potatoes while you told me how much in love with him you are! Afterward, you explicitly told me what sex between the two of you was like the first time.”

“Minors still here,” John said.

“You showed me the bite marks he left on your neck,” Braeden shouted.

“Now that is fucking bold,” Ethan said. Danny nodded in agreement.

“I also recall telling you that I hadn’t submitted to Derek yet.”

“But you intended to. That’s what that entire mean, cruel display of power was about. You were letting me know no matter how hard I would have fought for Derek, I wasn’t going to win. You don’t think you could have been a little more decent than that about?! You don’t think it might have been a good idea to not make me feel small, and used?!”

Stiles has no argument. He knows she’s right. He was simply cruel, just because he could be, and he had something to prove.

“You’re right, Braeden. I was pissed at Derek for… I don’t know. Not wanting to put up with my floundering bullshit anymore? For not wanting to wait for me anymore… For being with someone that might be worthy of him, and could give him what I refused him at the time. I was angry, mostly at myself, and I took it out on you. You were an easy target, and I wanted to be selfish. I’m sorry that it took you falling in love with Derek for me to really act on my feelings for him.”

The only sound heard are crickets and katydids as silence befalls the table again.

Braeden fights back the tears pooling in her eyes.

“…Braeden--”

With lightening speed, Braeden grabbed the carving knife from the turkey and lunged toward Derek, striking the blade into the table near his plate!

Every were stands, partially shifted and tense with the need to protect their Alpha who’s just been threatened. Even Stiles is on his feet, eyes the color of saffron. Lydia holds a protective hand on his arm.

“You are worst than he is,” Braeden told the Alpha. “You used me, like no one else ever has, and that says a lot, given where I’ve been and who I’ve met. I don’t understand how it is that you deserve love,” she said, no longer straining against her emotions. Tears pooled under her chin and dropped like rain, sounding like thunder, on his plate.

Braeden let go of the knife and ran into the house.

Derek broke from the table and followed her inside.

Stiles tried to head after them, but—

“Stiles, stay,” John said.
“She pulled a knife on him—”

“Stiles. Stay,” John bellowed in his stern, dad voice.

Stiles stopped fighting against Lydia and Jackson’s hold. He pushed their hands away, angry and embarrassed he’s been cowed by his well-meaning father in front of his whole pack.

“He’s in a house full of weres and you’re pregnant. Stay,” John said with a leveled glare at his son.

Stiles slammed into his chair at the table and banged his fists on the table. “Fine,” he responded through gritted teeth.

Reluctantly, the rest of the pack sat back down quietly as Stiles fumed.

Derek knocked on the door. “Braeden… Braeden open the door.”

“Go fuck yourself, Derek!”

“We both know I’m only asking to be polite, so please open the door.”

Nothing.

Fine.

Derek shoulders into the door, breaking the lock from the latch. He ducks (!) at lamp being thrown at his head!

His eyes fade red and fangs drop. “Enough!”

“You don’t get to decide when it’s enough! I do! You’re the one that’s wrong!”

“I don’t deny that.”

“How could you?! How could you just use someone like that? I thought we were friends.”

“…We were. Which makes hurting you an even shittier thing for me to do.”

“So it would have been better if I were a stranger?”

Derek sighed. “How do we talk, Braeden? How do we talk if no matter what I say it’s wrong and you won’t listen?”

“I don’t want to listen. I don’t want to hear your apology. I don’t want to try and understand and forgive you. I want to be angry. I want to be angry for the rest of my life.”

“No, you don’t. You can’t live like that Braeden. You know that.”

“Did you know how I felt about you? Did you target me to make Stiles jealous?”

“No. Not like that. I knew you were attracted to me, and I was attracted to you, too, but I didn’t seek out to use you.”

“Oh, so it just sort of happened,” she quipped sarcastically.

She sat on the edge of her bed. She was tired. Exhausted with the overwhelming emotions that
coursed through her tonight. She hasn’t cried about this since finding out Stiles was pregnant, and Derek being here now… She’s never been so vulnerable.

“I wanted to be with you, Braeden. Even though I knew I’d never get over Stiles, I wanted to try. I wanted to try with you. Then he showed up one night, pissed that we were dating and that it was getting serious--”

“And you saw an opportunity to get him to come around. To make him yours the way you needed him to be.”

“…Yes.”

“I’m still in love with you. That’s why it hurts so bad.”

“I’m not worth you feeling so miserable.”

She laughs dryly. “Yes, you are. We both know it. I’ll spend the rest of my life in mediocre relationships with disappointing men that'll never work out because I keep comparing them to you. Because the only man I want to marry and have children with is already taken, and could never love me like he loves his mate.”

Braeden stood and crossed the room toward Derek. She picked up the pieces of her broken lamp.

“The least you can do is let me stay here with Peter. I like it here, with Kira, Malia, and Ethan. It’s starting to feel like a home.”

“Do you want to be pack?”

“No. I can’t ever submit to you. I just want to stay.”

Derek nodded. “Okay. You can stay. As long as you want.”

She dumps the broken shards into the wastebasket.

“I… I just… You… Do you need something? Can I do something else for you?”

“Can you tell Kira and Malia I need them?”

“We’re here.” Malia and Kira come into the room, breeze past Derek and hug the hell out of Braeden.

Braeden falls into their arms sobbing as the shush her crying with soothing words.

He did this. He hurt sweet girl, a good friend like this. And she was right: she'll never be happy, fulfilled with anyone that isn't him. Her only chance at happiness is finding her mate because Derek broke her. He made her love him, then she found out the love he said he had for her wasn’t real. He’d live with that for a long time. And the more time went on, the less likely it'd be that she'd forgive him and find her own peace. That’s the part that hurts most. For the both of them.

Derek quietly slips out of the room, and closes the door.

Chapter End Notes
Tenses run amok. So sorry. Will thoroughly edit chapter tomorrow night.

p.s.-- Hope you had a good Valentine's Day :)
December (a)

Chapter Summary

Jackson's birthday, Liam and Mason adjust to being pack, and Danny digs into Liam and Mason's past.

Chapter Notes

I AM SOOOOO SORRY I DISAPPEARED FOR A WEEK!!! I had horrible writer's block and work has been draining my soul, because... well...it sucks. I truly need a new job. Ugh! LOL

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Stiles is at the stove cooking. “Why is a pack important?”

“It strengthens a werewolf and creates a bond between the wolves in it,” Mason answers.

“Not just wolves, but other wereas, too,” Liam says.

“And humans,” Stiles adds.

“Humans can feel the bond, too,” Liam asks.

“Not as directly as wereas can, but over time a connection is built, and it’s clear that the pull toward pack, toward family, is strong in us.”

“How long did it take for you to feel it,” Mason asks.

“You can’t really go by me. I’m mated to an Alpha. The pull and the bond was strong from the beginning. No matter how hard to tried to fight it.”

“Why were you trying to fight it,” Mason asks.


“Does it involve that hot chick, Braeden? The one that almost stabbed Derek at Thanksgiving,” Liam asks.

“She’s part of it, yes.”

“Did you really do all those things she said you did?”

“Yes. I was a giant asshole to her. Me and Derek.”

“How?”
“How what?”

“How’d you make Derek dump her,” Mason asks.

“By knowing she never stood a chance with him.” Stiles sees they look confused. “You two don’t anything about mates either, do you?”

They shake their heads.

Stiles turns down the heat on the pasta and takes a seat at the counter with the two teens.

“My soul is connected to his wolf, which is his soul. And it has been for eons. That’s what the bond is: two separated souls finally finding one another. I need him, like he needs me. Literally. After mates find one another, they can’t be separated. Their bond can’t be broken. If it is, they’ll both go insane, then die from it.”

“That’s…fucking intense,” Liam says.

“Very. And knowing Derek and I were mates, I knew what he had with her could never compare to how he felt about me, and I used it against her. That, and a little Alpha authority, too.”

“You know, Stiles, you’re kind of scary,” Mason says.

“And don’t forget it.” Stiles stands and returns to the stove.

Derek enters the kitchen.

“Alpha Hale,” Liam and Mason greet Derek obediently.

Derek ignores them and heads straight toward Stiles. His arms circle around his waist, hands on his belly, kissing his pregnant mate on the neck. Stiles smiles.

“You get that thing situated,” Stiles asks his husband.

Derek nods, face still nuzzled in Stiles’ neck. “Erica and Freya are handling it now.”

“You should talk to Freya about being ‘protection’.”

Derek kisses the back of Stiles’ head. “I will.”

“Without Isaac.”

“Okay,” Derek agrees. Finally he turns to the werewolf and the human at the counter. “Liam. How would you describe the smell of shame?”

“It smells like thyme, the herb.”

Derek nods. “Fear?”

Liam swallows hard. “Bitter almonds, cyanide.”

“You sure about that,” Derek asks the baby wolf with an intimidating glare.

Stiles shakes his head, knowing Derek is purposely scaring the hell out of Liam.

“I-I-I think so… Y-Yes. Yes.”
“…Good. Mason.”

Mason’s head snaps up, hoping he was to remain invisible to the scowling Alpha.

“Name every pack member in the San Francisco ‘house’ in ranking order.”

“You, Stiles, Boyd, Lydia, Cora, Isaac, Allison, Scott, Jackson, Erica, Danny, Freya, Marin…then hopefully, Liam, and me.”

“Hopefully.”

“Be nice, Alpha,” Stiles says, pecking Derek’s cheek.

Derek winks at Stiles, then draws his attention back toward the two nervous-looking teenagers. “Keep studying with Stiles for a couple more weeks, then I’ll take you out with me and Boyd to teach you control, Liam. And Mason, I think you assisting Cora is where you’ll stay. Especially since I’m thinking of letting her expand her business.”

They nod.

“I’m going to shower before lunch,” Derek says to Stiles, then exits the kitchen.

“Okay, Stiles, you’re scary, but not as scary as the Alpha,” Mason says.

“You don’t want to be afraid of your Alpha, but respect him. Don’t get me wrong, Alphas should be intimidating, but to their pack, their betas, they also need to be approachable. Derek is. Completely. You can come to him about anything. He might not know how to help you, but he will try. That’s all any of us are doing.”

Liam and Mason nod, understanding Stiles’ meaning.

“Tomorrow you two are going to Skype with Kira and Malia. They’ll teach you about kitsunes and werecoyotes. For now, I need you two to help set the table for lunch, then wash up. Mason, when lunch is over you’re going to go with Cora to start helping her out.”

“Does she really run a sex club and a whorehouse,” Liam asks.

“No. She runs two sex clubs, a brothel, and a nightclub/casino with Boyd and Isaac; don’t ever call it a ‘whorehouse’. She’ll kill you.”

“There is an awful lot of people in this pack that use murder by a means of getting their point across,” Mason says.

“Then maybe you should let that be a lesson to you,” Stiles says with a cocky grin and one eyebrow crawling toward his forehead.

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October 2018

“…Hello?”

“Where are you? Are you at home? Are you with her?”
“Stiles?”

“Is that not the name that popped up on you phone, or did you delete my number already?”

“No one deleted your number. It’s...3AM. Are you drunk?”

“I may have been at a bar with Scott. He tried to take my phone and wouldn’t let me leave. When he wasn’t looking I slipped out. Full-on ‘Irish Goodbye’.” Stiles laughed at the memory of leaving an ignorant Scott alone at a dive bar in Castro District.

Derek sat up, concerned. “Where are you now?”

“In my jeep. In my driveway. Lydia’s home. If I go in drunk she’ll yell at me.”

“You can’t sleep in your car, Stiles.”

“I have. Before. No big deal. Besides, what do you care?”

“Stop that. Please. I can’t help but to care about you.”

“Obligation is very sexy.”

“It’s not obligation and you know it. You’re my emissary, and my mate. Of course I care about you and what you’re doing.”

“You care enough to come down here and rescue me?”

“You don’t need rescuing, Stiles. You need to pass out and then take some aspirin in the morning.”

“What I need is to get off. That’s really why I called you.”

“...Stiles...don’t. Please.”

“Why? Is she there? Is she lying right next to you? Can she hear me? Does she know the difference in the sound of your voice when you’re trying hard to fight against something you want, and when you’re really pushing away from it? Like now.”

“Stiles—”

“I’m seeing this guy, and... God, I hate the way he fucks me.”

Derek’s eyes faded red at the thought of someone else touching Stiles like that. Whether they were horrible at it or not.

“It’s not even really when he fucks me. It’s all the time, and what makes it worse is that he’s really touchy-feely. He likes to kiss. A lot. And I can’t stand his mouth on me.”

“So you’re fucking someone you’re not attracted to? Why,” Derek nearly growled.

“You know why, Derek, come on... He looks nothing like you though. I should be fucking someone that looks exactly like you...but there’s not anyone like you. Guess it’s really too late for me to have realized that, huh?”

Derek could hear the sound of bottles clinking on the other end. “Are you still drinking, Stiles?”

“Takes a lot of ‘Dutch courage’ to call someone for phone sex at three in the morning.”
“Please go inside.”

“You my father now?”

“So we’re no longer in the amorous stage of your drinking and have moved on to anger. Nice,” the werewolf quipped sarcastically.

“Do you want to go back to the amorous stage of my drunkenness? You want me to tell you how badly I want you to fuck me right now?”

“Because clearly you’re not getting fucked right by your boyfriend,” Derek snapped.

“Are you jealous?”

“…Yes, Stiles. Of course I am.”

“He doesn’t mean anything to me. I told you: he’s barely tolerable. I don’t even like him very much.”

“Doesn’t matter. You still let him touch you. He still…kisses you and sleeps in your bed.”

“Braeden sleeps in yours.”

“…She isn’t right now.”

“…I miss you.”

“You see me almost every day.”

“And it takes everything in me not to drag you into some dark corner and kiss the hell out of you.”

“…I know. I can smell it on you sometimes.”

“Where are you?”

“It’s three in the morning. I’m at home. In bed.”

“I wish I could come over. But I stupidly got drunk first… Why isn’t she there?”

“She’s just not. Sometimes she stays over, sometimes she doesn’t.”

“You know what I hate about her the most? The fact that I can’t find anything to hate about her. Every time I pick something it’s petty, or ridiculous. I’ve never been so jealous. Do you like sleeping with her?”

“Yes.”

“More than me?”

“No. I could never like sleeping with someone else more than you.”

“Do you want to sleep with me now,” Stiles asked.

Derek could hear the shaky breath escape him when he asked. He swallowed hard. “I always want to sleep with you, Stiles.”

Derek didn’t miss the small moan he heard on the other end.
“Do you know when I like fucking you the most? The night before a full moon. When the pull of it is calling you, and you’ve got this hard desire to turn and run wild into the darkness,” Stiles said with a hitch in his breath. “You’re on edge. Pins and needles. Begging to be let free, but you can’t just yet. You have all this…energy built up, and you have to get it out, so you take it out on me.”

Derek slouched down into bed. His hand wandered beneath the sheets. Fingertips on his thigh, while his thumb lightly grazed the smooth skin on his semi-erect cock. “You like when I do that?”

“I love when you do that. Feels so good, Derek.”

Derek licked his lips; mouth turning dry. “Are you touching yourself?”

“I thought that was obvious,” Stiles said. “Are you touching yourself?”

“Give me a reason to.”

“I wish I was riding you bareback. We always used condoms, but I can’t help but think about how you’d feel without one. About how wet we’d feel between each other. About how—”

Stiles groaned.

“—how I could feel you come inside me.”

Derek ignored the lube on the nightstand beside him, and spit twice into his palm, finally gripping his dick and tugging. “Is that what you want right now? You want me to come inside you?”

“God, yes, Derek… Please…”

“That’s what you always want. You always want me to come on you, in your mouth, inside you… You’re a cumslut, aren’t you?”

“Only for you. Shit. Only for you.”

“What if I don’t want to? What if I just want to fuck you raw and rough? What if I just want to keep pounding into you until you’re sore,” Derek’s fangs dropped. His claws were itching to come out, but he held back, and squeezed his cock harder. “I want to fuck you, Stiles. So deep and so goddamn hard.”

“I want you to. I want you to fuck me into the bed. I want you to make me scream.”

“I love when you scream. After you scream you always cry, and I love making you cry.”

“I cry because it feels so good, Derek. You fuck me so good…”

“Stiles, baby…”

“I love when you call me that. I swear to God it gets me wet.”

“Christ, Stiles…”

“Remember the first time you fucked me? I was screaming and crying, but you kept at it until I was hard again and came a second time. You left bruises all over my body. Your handprints on my neck, my thighs, my wrist… You held me down and let the wolf take over.”

“You like the wolf?”
“I love the wolf… W-When your fangs c-come out, a-and y-your claws, and— F-Fuck! I’m so close!”

“What else, baby? Tell me what else you like.”

“When— Oh, my God!—w-when your eyes turn… You look at me and you’re saying the filthiest fucking things, Derek, and your eyes are red and you won’t s-stop tearing me apart, and…I…just…can’t…take—”

Derek listened to Stiles shout his name and moan into his ear on the phone.

Derek pumps his shaft faster, picturing Stiles’ orgasmic face beneath him; doing all the things he wanted him to do to him.

He howled as cum coated his hand gripped tightly on his engorged erection. A sheen of sweat misted his forehead and chest. His mouth was dry again. His body heaved, trying to regain his breath.

His ears picked up Stiles’ voice, small and distant. He dropped the phone.

He leaned over the side of the bed, boneless, looking for it lazily.

He found it wedged between the bed and the nightstand. “…I’m here…”

“Me, too. Come over.”

“…I can’t, Stiles.”

“What? Why?”

“You know why.”

“No, I don’t, considering you just had phone sex with me!”

“I know that, but this was just… It was just—”

“Go to hell.”

Derek stared at his phone. Call ended. Stiles hung up.

Dammit.

Stiles drops a round-trip ticket to Paris on the coffee table.

Jackson picks it up and looks at it. “You’re sending me to Paris?”

“Yes. For a week. In a really nice hotel Derek and I stayed at once.”

Jackson looks at the dates on the ticket. “Stiles, this is the week of my birthday.”

“I know. Happy birthday,” he says with a bright smile.

“You’re sending me away?”
“What? No, Jackie-boy. It’s your birthday present.”

Jackson considers the ticket a moment before sitting it back down on the table. He slides it toward Stiles. “I don’t want to be a dick, but…no thank you. I don’t feel comfortable with going. Not now.”

“Jackson,” Stiles says carefully. “Derek and I really think you should go, and have a great time.”

“I’ve been to Paris already.”

“I know, and didn’t you say it was ‘the most beautiful city’ you’ve ever been to?”

“Well, yeah. It is, but—”

“Then go. Go and celebrate your birthday with a nice vacation.”

“But Stiles, I don’t want to go celebrate my birthday in France. I want to be here. With my pack. And leaving you while you’re pregnant seems…wrong. Like abandonment or something. It makes me feel like puking just talking about it.”

“You’re not going to puke. You’ll be fine, and I’ll be fine here. I promise you. You think the big guy here is going to let something bad happen to me,” Stiles says patting Derek on his shoulder.

Jackson sits quietly a moment, thinking about it; considering… “No. No, I’d rather be here. Thanks though. I’m really grateful--”

“You’re going,” Stiles says firmly.

“What,” Jackson replies, taken aback by the finality in Stiles’ tone.

“Jackie-boy, look,” the Alpha-mate starts with an easier tone. “This plane ticket isn’t just a gift. I… I really think you need some space from the pack. Even if it is just for a week.”

Jackson jumps up from the sofa abruptly! “You're sending me away?!”

“No! Not like that, Jackson! That’s not--”

“Yes, you are. You’re making me leave when I don’t want to!”

“Jackson. It’s for 7 days in Paris. Not a monastery.”

“I don’t care about the location! You’re still making me leave! What did I do?!”

“Nothing!”

“You did nothing wrong, Jackson. This isn’t a punishment. I promise you,” Derek chimes in.

“Feels like it! Do you want me to go, too?! You want me to leave?!”

Derek looks to Stiles. Should he tell the truth, or be a good husband…? “No.” Stiles gapes at him in disbelief. “I want you here. Alpha wolves find it very difficult to have their pack separated. It makes them weak and the pack vulnerable. Not to mention I’d miss you…but Stiles seems to think you spending some time alone, to think and collect your thoughts, will be good for you…and he might be right.”

“Collect my thoughts about what? Isaac and Freya? I’m fine with them.”
“Yeah, see, Jackie-boy, I don’t believe that,” Stiles says honestly. “I think you have a lot of things to work through as far as Isaac is concerned because I think he’s brought forward a lot of other things you’ve been holding in, for a long time.”

“Then wouldn’t I need therapy and not a vacation,” Jackson says snidely.

“…We’d support you if you wanted to go, Jackson,” Stiles tells him sincerely.


“We’re not going to force you into therapy, Jackson. I got pushed into it by my dad, and yes, it turned out to be for the best, and a I learned a few things about myself and how to fix what was wrong, but it still doesn’t change the fact that to this day I really wish I was given a choice.”

“I went by choice in college, after Kate tried to kill Laura, and Victoria became retribution for that. It would have helped me more in life had I not held back, and my family was close, but we’re here for you.”

“I’m not seeing a shrink. Never.”

“Like I said: we’re not going to force you, but it’s either the vacation, or go see a shrink,” Stiles reminds him.

Jackson can’t believe this. He’s angry and upset and hurt and confused, all at once. He knows Derek is picking up on it all, but he doesn’t care. He feels blindsided and hurt that his Alphas would want to send him away, and on his birthday no less. No matter what they say, it feels like banishment.

“There are people in this pack that are far more… I’m not the only in this house that’s…that’s has problems,” Jackson says delicately.

“We know. And we’ll get to them, but right now we’re dealing with helping you. Even if it’s just a band-aid on a bullet wound,” Stiles tells him.

“Isn’t this just, you know, making me run away from my problems?”

“No, because I’m not suggesting they won’t be here when you get back, or even that they won’t follow you to Paris. This is us offering you a break from the noise in your head that won’t let you sleep, or eat.”

Jackson is a bit stunned. He didn’t think Stiles noticed he wasn’t eating often, or knew that he couldn’t sleep since meeting Freya. He’d wake up and wander downstairs to the second family room and watch TV until the sun rose. Lately, he’d been taking to heading to the guest house to play video games and eat junk food with Liam and Mason.

They were smart, goofy kids. They reminded him a lot of Scott and Stiles when they were all in high school. They made him wish he’d been kinder and nicer to Stiles and Scott then. There duo could have turned into a trio.

“It might be a good idea if you put some distance between you and the things making it hard for you to be yourself,” Stiles says.

“Still sounds like running away.”

Derek scoffs under his breath, earning a lethal glare from his husband. Derek had already
expressed to Stiles the many reasons his plan to send Jackson to France was of concern to him. One of which was that it reminded Derek too much of Stiles leaving him for London when their “relationship” at the time wasn’t as solid as it is now. He had accused Stiles of running way to avoid coming to terms with his feelings for him, and Derek felt that that is exactly what Stiles encouraging Jackson to do. No matter how he dressed it up.

Then Stiles asked Derek to come up with a better idea to “heal” their devastated beta… He had nothing. So he was left with supporting Stiles’ actions with echoes of their past vibrating off the walls around them in Jackson’s voice.

“If that’s what you want to call it…” Stiles says.

“…You’re really giving me no other choice?”

“None. You need some peace. You’re not going to get it here.”

“But why Paris? Can’t I just go to Red Grove?”

Stiles shakes his head. “I don’t want you looking for easy excuses to come home in a flash. I said ‘distance’, remember?” Stiles takes note of the somber look in Jackson’s face. “It’s only a week, Jackson. Not a lifetime. I love you too much to ever let you go.”

“Can you explain to him how this feels, please,” Jackson asks Derek.

“I tried. He’s very insistent. But I can attest more than anyone what just a little bit of silence and some miles can do for your well-being.”

“You did this to Derek, you know? You left when it got too hard to handle and it turned to shit.”

“…I know, but I don’t think it’d be the same for you,” Stiles responds.

Jackson shook his head in disbelief. He couldn't belief both his Alphas were sending him away, and at such a crucial time in their pack no less… “…Fine. If that’s what you two fucking want— fine. I will follow orders.”

Jackson snatches his plane ticket off the table, and storms out of the room!

Stiles rounds on Derek. “Really?”

“I wasn’t going to lie to him. He’d have known, not to mention he’s owed the truth.”

“But to call me out like that…?!”

“This hurts him, Stiles! I told you it would! It hurts me, too! It hurts a pack when there’s distance between an Alpha and his beta! Do you know how that feels?!”

“No. Is it anything like watching him unable to eat, or sleep? Is it him crying on your shoulder one time too many because he thinks he’s unworthy of anything good? Is it like listening to him doubt himself as a wolf, a pack-brother? Is it like knowing he's thinking that he’s fucking Peter?”

Derek huffs out an exhausted sigh.

“I know being called ‘mom’ by them started out as a joke, but it’s grown into something bigger and significant. It’s not just a title, Derek. That’s who I am. So you’re not the only one upset about all this.”
Stiles walks out of the room with the last word.

“They haven’t moved in days,” Stiles says, worry in his tone.

“Stiles, it’s okay. You’re 22 weeks, and during this time they’ll be sleeping 12-14 hours a day. It doesn’t mean anything is wrong,” Jordan assures him.

“12-14 hours?! Am I pregnant with cats?”

“No. It’s perfectly normal. I swear to you,” Jordan laughs.

Jordan’s nurse cleans the ultrasound gel off Stiles’ belly. Jordan helps him sit up while Melissa grabs his hoodie and shoes.

“Is there anything you’d like to share with me? With how you’re feeling,” Jordan asks.

He always asks. Since his first visit it’s always the thing Jordan says before they say their ‘goodbyes’ and schedule next week’s appointment. Stiles likes it. It’s personal and comforting. He has no doubt Jordan does it for all his patients, but it’s still nice.

“Nothing I want to say in front of my father and Melissa.”

“I’m a grown man, Stiles. I can handle you talking about your pregnancy,” John scowls.

Stiles decides to test that resolve, because…why not? “Fine. I really, really want to fuck my husband—”

“I change my mind. I’m not a grown enough man,” John says.

“—constantly, but my back hurts all the time, my feet and hands look like I stung by some prehistoric insect, I’m fat with stretch marks now, and the two werebabies gestating inside me are making it hard to breath sometimes because they decided to cultivate into full-grown wolves and press on my lungs.”

“Be grateful males don’t have to experience issues with discharge at this stage,” Melissa says with a half-reassuring smirk.

“I’ll be in the car,” John announces before he exits the room.

Stiles and Melissa laugh.

Danny was immediately on Stiles when he walked in the door with Melissa and John. “I need to talk to you.”

Stiles nodded and Danny followed Stiles to Derek’s office with his laptop and notepad. Stiles shut the door.

“What’s the matter?”

“I did some digging on Liam and Mason like Derek asked. They might be trouble.”
“Well, I suspected that. They’re fucking runaways. What kind of trouble?”

“First off, Liam is a born wolf.”

“He’s a born wolf that doesn’t know anything about being a wolf? Where the hell is his pack?”

“He doesn’t have one. He’s an orphan. He was dropped off at supe orphanage when he was a baby. No one saw or said who the person was that dropped him off, so they couldn’t locate the father either.”

“Why was he in a mental hospital if he was raised in an orphanage?”

“I think it was Mason,” Danny says, flipping through his notes. “Mason got adopted when he was 7 years old, which was right around the time there were reports of Liam getting violent with the staff at the orphanage.”

“Shit. He missed his friend. He was a wolf without a pack and the only thing keeping him sane was his friend. He was turning into an Omega.”

“Hospital records show that his eyes started to fade blue during this time. They couldn’t control him and didn’t know what to do.”

“He couldn’t have been the only werewolf there! Why didn’t the other wereas include him in pack,” Stiles asks rhetorically in his anger about Liam being ostracized. He remembers that feeling well, and was none-too-fond of it.

Danny shrugs, not having an answer for his friend’s rage.

Stiles takes a breath to still his hostility… “They sent him to Rex House.”

Danny nods.

“What happened there?”

“You know what that place is like. You’ve heard the rumors. There’s nothing in his file except mentions of violent episodes with staff and other patients, and a list of the meds he was on.”

“He see a shrink there?”

“Yeah. From his brief notes all I can tell is that he was just pumping Liam full of sedatives. His personal, one-on-one session notes aren’t in Liam's file. If you want to know what happened to him there, you’re--”

“Going to have to ask Liam. Right. No. If he wants me to know, he’ll tell me. What about Mason?”

“His adoptive father disappeared. I think he ran off with a lover or something. Mason stayed with his adoptive mother, but she’s a known drunk, or became a known drunk. Mason was yanked from the house after she attacked him and another boy.”

“Why?”

“Police report states she caught them kissing. Mason snuck him in the house late one night. The boy was a werecoyote. She thought he was attacking Mason, when Mason explained that the other boy was his boyfriend and he snuck him in the house to make-out, she went off the handle and came at them both. The boy ran off, leaving Mason, but he called the cops when he got home. They showed up, arrested Mason’s mother and threw Mason in foster care.”
“Why did she lose it like that? Aside from being drunk,” Stiles asks.

“She’s a member of C.A.I.M.”

Stiles rolls his eyes and swears under his breath. “You think that’s why the father left them for a lover,” Stiles figures out. “The lover was a supe.”

“She wasn’t a C.A.I.M. member until about the time the father supposedly left.”

“I guess details of that are going to have to come from Mason. He said his foster parents were religious nuts. Probably C.A.I.M. members, too… Anything else? They kill someone in Vegas? Please say ‘no’.”

“No. No murders. No arrest records actually.”

“Have to be careful to not get caught when you’re a minor on the lam, I guess. Besides, none of their con targets would dare go to the cops. Who’s looking for them?”

“Rexburg police and security officials for the hospital.”

“What about C.A.I.M? I know they tell everyone they don’t have goons, but we know better. I bet his Jesus-freak foster parents are losing their shit, and somebody had to have told Mason’s adoptive mom that he ran away.”

“Maybe. You think she gives a shit?”

“She could. She could think he was kidnapped or something, and being ‘brainwashed’. Might make her turn into a deadly ‘mama-bear’ on the hunt.”

Danny chuckles. “That’s what Kira used to call you when you were pissed.”

Stiles rolls his eyes, but there’s a definite smile on his lips.

“I’ll look into it, but you know, C.A.I.M. hooks a lot with rouge hunters—”

“We’re not bothering Chris Argent with this, Danny. You are a more than capable hacker.”

“I know, but hunters operate on this off-the-grid type communication.”

“Because they’re hunters, Danny,” Stiles says with sarcasm.

“And to a hacker it’s death. It’s like sending honing pigeons. I can’t fathom it.”

Stiles chuckles. “Just make sure I’m not woken up in the middle of the night by people in black ski mask trying to steal the baby wolf and his platonic life mate.”

“I don’t think Mason is ‘platonic’ anything when it comes to Liam, Stiles.”

“Your gay-dar is wonky because you must have missed him practically blubbing when Jackson left for Paris. Full-on crush. He even asked me if he could go with Jackson ‘so he’s not so lonely’.”

Danny’s eyebrows jump to his forehead. “Wow. Guess my gay-dar is off…but it’s about to be on. Very on.”

“Meaning?”
“I have a date. A third date actually.”

Stiles raises a suspicious eyebrow. “With that architect you met on [OkCupid]?”

“Stiles, don’t sound so…judgmental, and motherly about it. He’s a nice guy and I like him.”

“Did you vet him?”

“Stiles, I’m a hacker. Of course I did. And I promised you I would.”

“And…?”

“And he’s divorced. Human--”

“I know all this already, Danny!”

“You have nothing to fret about.”

“I don’t ‘fret’. I worry until I’m boiling with rage and someone gets murdered. When are you bringing him over?”

“It’s too soon for all that, Stiles, but if it turns serious, or looks like it might, I will. Promise.”

“Where are you going tonight?”

“…His place. He’s cooking me dinner.”

Stiles groans disapprovingly.

“Don’t wait up. Please.”

“Fat chance.”

“I’ll start on the C.A.I.M. intel tomorrow morning.” Danny says before turning on his heel and skipping from the room, happy about his date.

Stiles rubs his belly. “You two are not allowed to date until you’re forty, and your other father will so back me up on that.”

Chapter End Notes

This was basically a "filler chapter", to be honest, but next chapter will be looooon and meaty, because it'll all take place during Christmas and SHIT GOES DOWN!

Secondly, I need help naming the twins! I have one name in mind, and it's really just Derek's name: Derek Stephan Hale, Jr. but they call him DJ for short... I don't know... I was thinking Stiles would want to name them Wayne (Bruce Wayne aka Batman) and Grayson (Dick Grayson aka Robin), but I hate the name Wayne. It reminds me of Wayne from THE WONDER YEARS, and it's a dated name. I want something cool, but it has significance for them, like Derek being named after his father... I don't know... I'm fucking rambling now. You guys tell what names are cool because I'm pulling my hair out. UHHHHH!
And thirdly, MY SECOND FAVORITE OTP JUST BECAME CANNONNNNNNNNNNNNN! Suck on that Teen Wolf queerbaiters! Jonner is REAL!

p.s.-- C.A.I.M. stands for Citizens Against Interspecies Mating. They're basically akin to a white supremacist group, but with a hatred for all supes.
December (b)

Chapter Summary

Jackson returns from Paris, baby fluff, and shit. gets. real.

Chapter Notes

SORRY!!! I know I said Saturday night...then Sunday night... I need to stop tossing out dates for added chapters when I think I have all the time in the world. And then it turns out I don’t. I need there to be 28 hours in a day instead.

Hey, remember when I said I’d be done this fic by mid-February? HAHAHAHAHA... Silly asshole I am. This thing has somehow morphed into The Iliad.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Absolutely not, Stiles.”

“You’re being highly unreasonable, Derek!”

“I don’t think so.”

“You are! Just hear me out—”

“Is it going to sound different a fourth time?”

“Oh, you are hilarious.”

“I’m not joking.”

“But you are being stubborn.”

“I’d call it ‘practical’.”

“Or pig-headed.”

“Says the most obstinate man I’ve ever met.”

“Second only to you.”

“I’m a lot more flexible than you are.”

“Oh, so, now you’re joking,” Stiles quips sarcastically.

“Stiles, I waited three years for you to tell me you love me. I’d call that pretty damn flexible.”

“‘Patient’, yes. ‘Flexible’, no. I’d also tact on ‘repetitious’, considering you never miss an
opportunity to remind me about the sad state of affairs our dating years were.”

“That wouldn’t be repetitious. It’d be consistent.”

“Derek,” Stiles snapped, stomping his foot at his husband’s pushback.

“No, Stiles. I’ve said it once already.”

“But Scott and I promised when we were kids that we’d make each other godfather of our kids!”

“Scott can hardly take care of himself.”

“That’s not fair, not to mention, untrue. He’s engaged. He’s about to be a family man himself.”

“And God help Allison.”

“Stop that! Right now! You’re his Alpha. You should have more confidence in him than this!”

“I do! As a beta, and a pack-brother, but I… I don’t know if I trust the care of our boys to him, Stiles. What’s wrong with our parents, or Laura?”

“Nothing. Just like there’s nothing ‘wrong’ with Scott.”

“There’s nothing ‘wrong’ with Scott, per se. I just don’t think he’s responsible enough, or…bright enough to take care of our kids if something were to happen,” Derek says as carefully as he can.

“Okay, look. I know Scott isn’t the sharpest tool in the box sometimes, but he’s got the biggest heart out of anyone I know. He loves with his whole and complete self, and I’m lucky enough to be one of the people he cares that much about, and because I am, I know that he’d doing nothing short of making sure our children are loved and nurtured for like they were his own kids.”

Derek had to admit to himself that Stiles was definitely right about that.

“He’d do his best, his damndest to make them happy, just because they were our kids. And I get wanting our parents, or Laura, to be the boys’ godparents, but my dad is pushing 60, and so is your mom. Theo’s over a hundred years old, and Laura’s already got three girls.”

“It doesn’t mean they’d be any less attentive to our boys.”

“That’s exactly what it means!”

Derek sighed. This conversation is going on longer than expected and flowing in an ebb of argument and gentle coaxing from both sides, exhausting the Alpha.

“Fine. If not Scott— just for argument’s sake— who else in pack would you not mind raising our boys?”

“Lydia and Jordan, Kira, or Isaac and Freya,” Derek answers quickly.

“Isaac and Freya? Really,” Stiles says taken off-guard by Derek’s answer.

“Isaac’s affectionate and considerate, while Freya’s stern and direct; they have a good balance for parenting. And they’re both werewolves.”

“Okay… So, you’ve thought about this a lot more than I have apparently… I’m an asshole.”
“You’re not an asshole, Stiles,” Derek assures him, pulling him as close as he can with Stiles’ swollen belly between them. Stiles’ arms wrap around Derek’s neck. “Our lives have a significant amount of danger in them, so yes, I’ve thought about what would become of our kids if something were to happen to us.”

“…Are we being selfish?”

“How?”

“Bringing kids into lives like ours?”

“Stiles, generations of people before us, with far less dangerous lives, have questioned that very same thing. Everybody wants the world their kids are born into to be perfect, but sadly, it never will be. The best thing we can do is try and make the small world they live in with us as close to perfect as possible.”

“Wow. How long have you had that one in your back pocket?”

“Since I asked you to marry me. I knew you’d ask one day…because I asked myself that same question when we met. We lead very ‘exciting’ lives, yes, but it doesn’t mean we’re not entitled to the same happiness as everyone else.”

“But are we putting Bruce and Dick in danger just by being their parents? That’s my real question,” Stiles says.

“First, I told you we’re not calling them that. Second, every person spat out onto this planet is in danger the moment they take their first breath. The hardcore truth is that we’re shielded from nothing.”

“How very existential.”

“Will our kids have a little extra on top? Yes, but what’s the first thing we teach new pack members about pack?”

“It doesn’t harm. It protects!,” Stiles answers.

“You, and our children, are first priority. Always. Everything begins and ends with your safety.”

Stiles nods, feeling a bit more comforted by Derek’s avowal.

Derek leans down and kisses Stiles—

Knock, knock, knock…

Reluctantly, they pull their lips from one another.

“Stiles? Derek,” Liam calls from the other side of the door.

“God, there’s no fucking privacy in the house right now,” Derek complains.

“Oh, no, asshole. You don’t get to whine about that. You wanted all of them here while I was pregnant, you got it. Suck it up, Alpha wolf.”

Stiles opens the door.

“Jackson is back,” Liam says. “He went to his room to unpack.”
“Okay. Thanks, Liam,” Derek says.

Liam nods and closes the door.

“Well, he came here and not that tacky mansion he calls a ‘house’,” Stiles says hopefully. “Small sign he may not hate me for sending him to Paris.”

“He doesn’t hate you, Stiles. He could never hate you,” Derek tells his husband. He takes Stiles’ hand. “Come on. Let’s go welcome him home.”

“No. We should let him unpack then relax for a bit before we bombard him with questions.”

“You mean you bombard him with questions.”

“You are just all about the semantics today, aren’t you?”

“What are you making for lunch,” Derek says with a teasing smile, changing the subject to annoy his husband.

But Stiles won’t bite. To further annoy Derek. “Balsamic blueberry grilled cheese sandwiches, and butternut squash soup, but you, sir, dear husband, get chicken nuggets and store-bought tater tots instead.”

“Stiles, I’m a grown man. You’re not going to feed me chicken nuggets and tater tots like I’m a five year old.”

“We’ll see about that,” Stiles smirks before exiting Derek’s office.

Derek follows him out, calling after him, and playfully being ignored.

Jackson spent his first night in Paris being pissed off at Stiles, and Derek by extension. He felt cornered and banished to the “city of lights.” He was so angry that part of him toyed with the idea of leaving the pack all together and taking up residence in France. But he knew better. He could never leave his pack. No matter how distant everyone thought he was, he truly loved them all, and saw them as family. Leaving would break him. And secondly, he knew the wrath he’d incur from Stiles would be epic beyond belief if he even flirted with such a thought.

He had to smile a little to himself at the mental picture of an irate, pregnant Stiles jumping off a plane in Paris and physically dragging him back to San Francisco by his ear.

Yet, he had to admit Stiles was right; he does love the city and finds it utopic every time he’s there, however, it didn’t change his feelings about a “vacation” he never wanted being forced upon him. And thus, Jackson walked into his (gorgeous) hotel suite, dumped his bags on the floor, put the ‘Do Not Disturb’ sign on the door, turned out all the lights, and lay in bed, seething, until he fell asleep.

He woke up the next morning, forgetting where he was for a moment, then made the decision to climb out of bed. He opened the heavy curtains and stared openly at the majestic sight of The Effiel Tower from outside his windows. The bright morning sun touched everything upon the earth, giving it a romantic, afternoon glow.

Jackson couldn’t help but fall under its spell, and stepped out onto the patio to watch Paris all a-buzz with a casual energy. His suite was on the hotel’s 14th floor, but he could still make out the
people scurrying on the pavement, and the traffic click along to the sweet rhythm of the metropolis.

He stretched and reluctantly walked back into his suite to shower and change into more suitable clothing.

He went downstairs to one of the luxury hotels restaurants and asked for a table by the window. He sat and people-watched in between bites of his fruit bowl and cheese platter, while sipping the most amazing coffee he’s ever had.

He got up and decided a walk around the city might be enjoyable. He did all the tourist-y stuff years ago when he first came to France with Lydia, Allison, and Scott, and didn’t really get to take the city in completely how he wanted, at his own pace, until the second time he came, alone.

He wasn’t interested in hitting up old haunts just yet, and was simply happy to just wander around, watching street performers and catching the sweet pastry smells wafting from bakeries and cafés.

It was nearly four in the afternoon when he found himself hungry, and near Le Pub Saint Germain. He sat at the bar and ordered a beer. The attractive, female bartender winked at him then sat a glass of lager in front of him. He politely smiled back, but noticed her eyes wandering to him every so often as he helped other bar patrons.

When the place cleared of its barflies, she walked over to Jackson and struck up a pleasant conversation. She flirted shamelessly, which drew Jackson’s attention (who had no initial intention of turning his trip into anything other than pouting fits in between scarfing down pain au chocolat until he vomited).

She brought him out a delicious-looking plate of duck breast and risotto without him asking, then smoothly breezed around the bar, taking orders and pouring beers.

When Jackson looked up it was nearly 6pm. The bartender, Anna, was removing her apron and motioning for Jackson to follow her out. She grabbed her jacket and pulled him outside. It was dark out and bit chilly. He didn’t bring his coat, assuming he wouldn’t be out this late.

Anna hailed a taxi and Jackson wordlessly followed her into the cab. She said not a word as she took hold of his face and kissed him while their cabbie continued driving them to wherever it was Anna had instructed him to drive.

They reached an apartment building on the outskirts of the city. Anna flew out of the car and extended her hand to Jackson with a smile.

Jackson looked at her small, tender hand, reminding him of Allison’s delicate features, and felt himself frozen. She crooked her index finger and gave him a naughty smile, but Jackson remained in the car, thinking about the first time he kissed Lydia, of all things.

He thought back to her soft pink lips on his, the glowing light on her porch, the cool, autumn night that cracked of a freshness, newness, he can still smell after a hard gust of wind. He thought of her hand on his shoulder and the sound of her neighbor’s dog barking in the distance. His hand slid up her back, fingertips at the nape of her neck, touching the soft hair there. Lydia had to push herself up onto her toes to reach Jackson at full height, and she slowly opened her mouth, letting him glide his wet tongue inside and taste the strawberry tart she had eaten for dessert.

“Je suis désolé. Je ne peux pas,” Jackson apologized.

The poor girl stood confused as Jackson told the cabbie to return him back to his hotel, and he bothered not to look back at her as she grew smaller in the distance.
He stayed in his room the entire next day, watching sad French films and eating colorful room service.

He woke at dawn in a cold sweat with a sick feeling in his stomach brought on by a nightmare:

The pack house, Derek and Stiles’ house, was set ablaze by a roaring fire. Jackson could only stand there helplessly as he heard screams inside, begging to be helped; to be let out as smoke suffocated them and fire licked their skin.

Jackson woke just as his feet began to move and he headed toward the flames.

He slipped on his sneakers, pulled on his shorts and a T-shirt, grabbed his iPod and headed to the hotel’s gym.

He spent an hour and a half on the treadmill, and another hour lifting weights, listening to Drake’s latest album as he tried to wipe the lingering smell of smoke and ash from his memory.

He headed back upstairs to his room and showered, while trying hard not to think about a curly-haired boy with crystal, blue eyes as he wrapped his hand around his cock and moaned into the hot water than beat against his back.

He stays in his room again that night, finally getting to the book Boyd bought his for Christmas last year, *Into The Wild*. Boyd always gives books as gifts. Three years before he got *The Outsiders*. Jackson still proclaims it to be his favorite book.

It’s nearly noon the next day when he finishes all of *Into The Wild*. He sends Boyd a text saying ‘thank you’, appreciating the book, and knowing he needed to read it. Boyd never says much, but he always seems to be in tuned with exactly what people need.

It’s a skill Jackson’s never really grasped.

He needs to go outside. He’s been in the hotel for two whole days with no sunlight on his skin.

He grabbed two sandwiches and a soda from a nearby café, and walked to *Parc des Buttes Chaumont*. He found a bright, sunny spot and laid a throw blanket he bought on the way onto the grass. He put on his headphones and spread out on the blanket, letting the warm sun beat down on him. The relaxing mix of Aqualung, Ben Lee, Parachute, and Daughter Danny put on his iPod was easy to drift off to as he slung his Giants cap over his eyes.

Jackson had no idea how long he’d been out before a soccer ball jolted him awake as it landed hard against his ribs!

“Oh, mon Dieu! Je suis tellement désolé! Êtes-vous blessé? Veuillez ne pas être blessé. Je suis un idiot!”

Jackson looked up to catch a young man running toward him, looking very apologetic. Jackson’s eyes faded beta yellow, and the boy froze, terrified.

Jackson’s claws dug into the ball, deflating it. “Payer une meilleure attention à votre
environment."

"J'ai été! J'ai simplement perdu le contrôle du ballon! Il n'y a pas besoin de vous pour être un abrutis bien de le dire," the young man snapped back at Jackson. He snatched his flattened ball off Jackson's claws. "Loup-garou pussy."

Jackson’s mouth literally dropped at the young man’s boldness. He easily detected that he was human, and showed the boy he was clearly a were, but the boy stood his ground and even gave Jackson back the same attitude he gave the boy.

“Wait! Stop,” Jackson told him.

“Je ne veux pas parler de loups-garous irrespectueux!”

“Et bien, je ne veux pas parler de polluer la fièvre aphteuse, garçons, alors pourquoi ne pas nous arrêter et s'excuser. Et pouvons-nous prendre leur retraite les Français? Je sais que vous parlez anglais."

“Les Américains! Toujours désireux d'autres à jouer par leurs règles.”

“Stop. Please. And let me apologize.”

The teen wavered a bit, glancing over at his group of friends (two girls and a boy) waiting for him a few feet away, then nodded.

“I’m sorry I did that to your ball. I know it was an accident. I apologize for overreacting.”

“I’m sorry I called you a ‘werewolf pussy’,” the teen said in a heavy French accent.

Jackson snorted. He knew that was as good an apology he was ever going to get from the insolent, young boy. Had he not overreacted, he might have gotten a very sincere one instead.

Jackson reached into his wallet and pulled out a couple of Euros. “Buy a new ball. I’m sorry,” he said as he handed it to the boy.

Jackson turned back toward his blanket—

“Do you play football? Soccer to you?”


“I could teach you.”

“You don’t have a ball.”

“I now have money for one,” the boy said with a smile.

Jackson smiled. “No. Sorry. I’m actually kind of hungry.”

“Where are you eating?”

“You’re suddenly full of questions.”

The young boy shrugged.

“I brought some sandwiches from a café near my hotel,” Jackson told him. “But thank you
though.”

“Sure,” the teen said with a slightly disappointed look as Jackson walked back to his blanket, and the boy sauntered over to his friends.

Jackson found himself at The Louvre after he ate. While most drooled over The Eiffel Tower as France’s international symbol, Jackson had always though the renowned art museum was actually the crown jewel of the country.

He’d always given people the impression that he was some uncultured douche who did nothing but eat power bars and fuck every hot blonde that crossed his path, and he knew it was his fault for giving that impression to people. Just like it was his fault that he’d find himself upset and angry when people were surprised there was more to him than that. Even Lydia and Isaac on occasion wore a stunned face when he made an intelligent remark, or said something profound. Stiles and Danny were the only ones to look beneath the surface, the hard exterior, and find the “real” Jackson. But again, he couldn’t really blame others for not seeing past the brick wall he put up, blocking out all the good, wonderful things about him…even though he often did.

As he strolled up to the Mona Lisa, he caught the distinct smell of apple spice, grass, coffee grinds, soap, and cloves. He caught wind of it earlier in the day, the combination made him falter, and apologize to a boy in the park… He’s being followed.

Jackson smiled to himself, deciding to have some fun when he couldn’t pick up the scent of anything other than anxiety, nervousness. It smelt bitter, but sweet, like grapefruit, or lemons.

Jackson meandered around the museum a little longer, never catching sight of his “stalker,” but always sniffing out their scent, trailing along behind him.

When he left the museum he hurried out and disappeared.

The boy turned about everywhere looking for him, confused and saddened that his “target” had seemed to vanish.

Jackson watched as he pulled his cellphone from his pocket and squealed into it, reminding him of Stiles and his panicked freak outs over the mundane. Jackson tuned into his conversation:

“No… Le Musée du Louvre ... Il est venu ici ... J'essayais de lui parler, mais ... Je n'ai pas pu . J'ai eu peur ... Il est un loup-garou, Saffie! Si je me suis approché de lui si rapidement, il aurait peut-être m'a attaqué ... ! No, no no. Je rentre à la maison ... Se masturber et rêve de ma belle loup-garou je ne vais jamais voir de nouveau ... Merci ... Oui ... Ok ... Bonne nuit, Saffie.”

The teen hung up, putting his phone back into his pocket, then approached the curb and whistled for a taxi.

A cab pulled up beside him and the young boy climbed in the backseat. Before he could get the door closed, Jackson quickly slid inside beside him. He grabbed the stunted boy’s face and brought his lips to his own in a searing kiss.

The boy pulled away and slapped Jackson across his face!

…Before grabbing the lapels on Jackson’s coat and pushing their lips together again.
Sebastien.

Jackson had gotten both their clothes off and Sebastien on the bed when the young boy confessed to being only 16 years old, never having had sex with a were before, and being “de-flowered” when he was 13 years old.

It was a lot to take in, and Sebastien blurted it all out in one long, nervous sentence.

“I’m not going to hurt you, but if you want me to stop, just say so. Okay?”

Sebastien nodded.

Jackson grabbed the small bottle of *Astroglide* off the nightstand…

Sebastien never wanted him to stop. And told him as much.

Jackson never wanted to stop either. He felt starved and greedy for the boy mewling beneath him, wrecked on his hard cock as he pounded into him ferociously.

The balcony doors were wide open, letting the sound of Sebastien screaming and moaning drift into the winter air and above the heads on the crowded streets.

Jackson’s claws snapped out and fangs pointed at Sebastien’s swearing in French. It was the sexiest thing he’s ever heard and stirred the beast in him. Hearing him beg, and moan, and whimper in that gorgeous French accent made Jackson’s wolf pant.

Jackson, without breaking stride, changed their positions, putting Sebastien in a kneeling position. He wrapped a hand around Sebastien’s neck, claws pricking his delicate skin, as they stare right into each other’s eyes and Jackson pumped hard and faster into his tight hole.

Sebastien’s eyes stayed on the golden ones boring into him as he fisted his dick and stripped it just as hard and fast as Jackson hammered into him.

His eyes fell closed though when that blissful feeling, that aching, started in his toes and traveled up his body in sparks. “*Jackson! Je vais à venir! Je vais à venir!*”

Jackson felt the boy shudder against his body in a quake as cum splashed on the comforter.

Jackson pushed the shaken boy onto his elbows, gripped his hair, and then slammed into him repeatedly.

Sebastien balled the comforter into his tight hands and wailed as Jackson shoved against his prostate.

Jackson let out a growl as he pulled out of Sebastien and came all over the boy’s back.

Sebastien came again; his body shuddering then going limp as his knees gave out and he fell over with tears in his eyes. His cock spent nothing that time, too drained of what Jackson took from him with his first orgasm.

Jackson collapsed, too. His arm finding the wet spot of Sebastien’s earlier excitement.

“*Mon Dieu... Mon Dieu...*” was all Sebastien could say. He swallowed hard, trying to regain his breath. “*Vous ... Vous avez dit que vous ne voudriez pas me blesser, mais ... Je pense que vous avez*
essayé de me tuer.”

Jackson laughed…but then a pensive looked appeared on his face, remembering the silly things and bad jokes Isaac used to make after they made love.

“Jackson? Jackson…?”

“Sorry. I zoned out.”

“Do you want me to go,” Sebastien said, and the smell of freshly cracked walnuts drifts off Sebastien’s skin.

Worry.

“No. No, I don’t want you to go,” Jackson answered honestly. He didn’t. He truly wanted Sebastien there with him.

“Êtes-vous fatigué?”

“A little.”

“Then sleep.”

“After we shower.”

Jackson jumped off the bed and scooped Sebastien into his arms. He walked them both into the bathroom and closed the door.

Jackson spent the next two days eating delicious, fattening French food, watching depressing French films, and fucking Sebastien near-death. He bothered not asking Sebastien about his family and friends, and if they’d worry about him being gone for two days straight with no word. But if Sebastien wasn’t going to fret about it, neither is Jackson. So they ate, watched movies, swam in the hotel pool, and fucked on every flat surface in the suite.

I can see why Stiles and Derek like doing this so much, he thinks to himself as he fucked the young boy atop the café table on the balcony at midday for all the world to see. And Sebastien incapable of being the least bit quiet.

There was even a few hotel guests that stepped out onto their own balconies to “see what all the commotion is about.”

At one point Jackson swears he spots Keanu Reeves peering out from his room, three balconies over.

Seemed Jackson put on such a good show, even “Neo” wanted to watch.

On his last day in Paris Jackson bought Sebastien a suit and they went to dinner at the Eiffel Tower.

Jackson hadn’t visited to the monument since his first trip to France 6 years ago, and was so awestruck by it at moments, it left him speechless. Each time he caught Sebastien staring at him with a bashful smile.
“I have never eaten here before,” Sebastien said.

“I don’t believe most people have, but you’re here with me, so it’s okay.”

Sebastien smiled and sat up a little straighter at Jackson’s encouragement.

Jackson tried to ignore the soft pleas of “Don’t go. Please don’t go” from Sebastien as he rocked into him gentle and easy that night as he made love to him.

If there was anything he’d stay for, it’d definitely be the sweet boy beneath him, and the quiet appeals for him to settle there with him.

Sebastien held tighter to Jackson than usual, and hid his face in Jackson’s shoulder when he came.

“What are you doing here? In Paris?”

“My Alphas made me come,” Jackson answered. They were lying on their sides, facing one another, and holding hands.

“Alphas?”

“Um…Parents?” Because how else would Jackson describe them?

“Why?”

“They thought it would help me… I don’t know. Feel better?”

“What did you feel so terrible about?”

“Everything.”

Sebastien gave him a disappointed look. Jackson knew he was being evasive; that’s what he does when he doesn’t really want to talk. He says everything, and nothing.

“I was adopted when I was a toddler. By a wealthy family. My real parents died in a car accident. My adoptive family was— is-- very nice, and loving…but…they have unrealistic expectations for me. They added a lot of pressure onto me and my older sister, their biological daughter. She cracked and caved to it, spending some time in an asylum, then running off to Shanghai when she got out. She sends me a card every Christmas, and calls me on my birthday, but other than that… My parents don’t even talk to her anymore… I miss her, but she abandoned me. We were sticking together, and then she couldn’t deal, so she just up and left me. Alone.”

Sebastien squeezed his hand.

“She wasn’t there, which might be why I lean so hard on Danny. He was the only thing that seemed stable back then. I trust him. Rely on him.”

“Did you love Danny,” Sebastien says with a spike of cinnamon seeping off his body, indicating jealousy.

“No.”
“Good.”

Jackson chuckled at Sebastien’s open jealousy. He never had anyone act possessive of him before. It was him that was always clingy and territorial with his lovers.

“But you did love someone, no?”

“…Yes. I loved a boy, who was sweet like you.”

“Do I look like him?”

“No.”

“Are you upset that I don’t?”

“No.” Jackson runs his thumb along Sebastien’s knuckles.

“Why are you not with him?”

“…Because I’m not what he wanted, and he found the right person he’s supposed to be with.”

“You are sad. About the boy, and your sister, and your family. Someone is always leaving you. You don’t like it.”

“No. I don’t like it. Even when I think they should leave,” he said thinking of his break up with Lydia and how they had outgrown one another.

“But now you are leaving me. Maintenant, vous avez un coeur à briser.”

“It’s not like that. Je n’essaie pas de vous nuire. Je ne veux pas vous quitter. Mais je suis obligé de le faire.”

“I know. I’m just very sad that you are.”

Jackson kissed him sweetly on the lips.

Sebastien rolled into Jackson, his head in the crook of the werewolf’s arm. “Tell me about werewolves.”

“You really don’t know much about werewolves, do you?”

“I know they are very fast and very strong. They have long teeth, fangs, and claws. Grrrrr…”

Jackson laughed. “What else do you know?”

“I know they are sexy, American boys who sleep in parks and don’t like football.”

Jackson laughed again.

“That is what I know.”

“Okay, well, uh… Werewolves can smell everything, and hear everything. Very sensitive senses. That’s how I knew you were following me.”

“I was not following you.”

“Liar. You were to. I heard you tell your friend, Saffie, on the phone.”
“I don’t know if I like werewolves now. *Qu’il n’y aura jamais de surprises.*”

“But then there will never be secrets either. Secrets aren’t good.”

“*Qui.* I do not like secrets either. Do you have secrets?”

“No. Not from you.”

“Good. I don’t care about other people. Just you, and me.” Sebastien rolled atop Jackson, straddling him. “*Baise-moi.*”

Jackson twisted him onto his stomach, kissing his neck. His shoulder blades. And down his spine…

Sebastien cried the entire time Jackson packed. He sat under the sheets as tears ran down his flushed cheeks and Jackson stuffed his bags, and then checked the entire suite to make sure he didn’t forget anything.

He had to ignore the alluring, naked boy in his hotel bed. If he didn’t, he’d cave and become a permanent resident of Paris, all for an innocent teenager he’d known for only 3 days, that tasted like blueberry pastries and *café au lait.*

Finally, he dropped his bags by the door. He knelt beside the bed and pulled Sebastien to the edge, facing him. “…I paid for an extra night so you can stay here until tomorrow morning.”

The boy nodded weakly.

Jackson scribbled something on the notepad by the nightstand, then placed it in the hand of the sobbing boy. “I can’t give you my number, or email address; they change a lot. This is my address. To my house. When you come to the States, visit me. Please.”

Jackson wiped away the tears from Sebastien’s face with the back of his hand. “*Vous êtes belle. Vous savez que?*”

“*Je t’aime,*” Sebastien whispered.

Jackson kissed him fiercely, leaving him breathless.

Sebastien tried to hang on to Jackson, gripping him tightly, but Jackson broke free as he stood. He had to leave quickly, before heavy emotions got the best of him. He grabbed his bags and hurried out of the room toward the elevators, pretending he couldn’t hear the wailing sobs of the boy whose heart he just broke.

“So, how was it,” Stiles asks.

“…Good. Fine. It’s Paris. You can’t have a bad time there really,” Jackson answers.

“Jackson, look, I’m sorry for—”

Stiles is cut off by an abrupt hug from his beta.

“I don’t like how you did it, but I get it. Thanks.”
Stiles brings his arms up to hold the werewolf tighter. “You’re welcome.”

Jackson gives him one last squeeze before breaking away. “What are you making for lunch?”

“Your favorite.”

“Blueberry grilled cheese sandwiches,” Jackson asks, trying—and failing—to not sound like an excited 5 year old.

“Leave all this. I’ll unpack your stuff and wash your clothes after lunch. Go shower. Scott, of all people, is complaining that you ‘smell like other people’.”

“Okay.”

Stiles squeezes his shoulder and exits Jackson’s room.

Jackson tosses his suitcases to the far corner of the room for Stiles to deal with later.

“So, Paris was just ‘fine’?”

Lydia stands in the doorway.

“Yeah.”

She rolls her eyes. “What was her name?”

“There was no ‘her’, Miss Nosy.”

“What was his name?”

Jackson twitches.

Lydia chuckles. “Knew it. Stiles probably does, too.” She gives him a playful smirk as he turns and heads down the hallway from his room.

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“Derek and I have complete and utter veto power. Is that understood,” Stiles says firmly, eating a bowl of cheddar mashed potatoes, smothered in chocolate sauce with shaved almonds on top.

Yeah, he’s hit that stage, Derek grimaces as he watches his mate eat it like ice cream.

“Stiles, I swear, you are going to love this nursery,” Lydia insists with Cora nodding along. Mason is there with them, being a good assistant, taking notes and holding a book of color swatches.

They stand in Lydia’s old room, the largest room closest to the master bedroom. All the furniture has been emptied out and paint stripped off the walls. The carpet’s even been taken up. The room is bare, and ready to be decorated.

“Now, let’s talk theme,” Lydia begins.

Stiles readies to interject when—

“No Star Wars,” Lydia and Cora snap.

“Or Star Trek, or Lord of the Rings, or Avengers, or Batman,” Derek adds.
“I’m sorry, but which one of you is carrying two werecubs right now? Oh, none of you? Just me? Yeah, we’ll do Star Wars, if I want Star Wars. We’ll do a goddamn circus theme if I want.”

“I will bulldoze this entire house to rubble before I let you have a circus themed nursery, Stiles Stilinski-Hale,” Lydia says with an intense glare…that she means.

“I’m with Lydia. Clowns are fucking creepy,” Derek says.

“There is nothing wrong with a Star…” Stiles drops his bowl of (gross) mashed potatoes!

“Stiles? Baby?”
Stiles takes Derek’s hand and places it on his belly. “You feel that?”

“…Oh, my God…” Derek says in awe.

“What? What’s happening? What’s the matter,” Lydia panics.

“…They’re kicking,” Derek says with tears in his eyes.

Lydia gasps, covering her mouth. Cora shrieks happily at the top of her lungs, which morphs into a howl.

Suddenly, seven werewolves, a hunter and a computer hacker are in the room.


“The babies. They’re kicking,” Cora says.

It takes all their strength to stay put, seeing as how their Alpha still has his hand on Stiles’ belly, smiling.

“Derek, I think the betas are going to explode,” Stiles says with a laugh.

“Please. Before they stop,” Erica begs.

Derek kisses Stiles’ forehead. “Have at it,” Derek says to them.

Stiles is rushed by 12 hands vying for space of his belly. Erica is the fastest and smiles wide when the little kicks vibrate on her hand. But it’s Scott who has the best reaction, in Stiles’ opinion:


“I know,” Stiles smiles.

November 2018

Matt watched as Stiles waved his arms around in exaggeration, flailing about and shouting beyond the soundproof glass doors.

Derek didn’t move and Fritz about like Stiles, in fact, he was pretty still, with his arms crossed over his chest, but the scowl on his lips, the anger in his tone, and the glare he gave Stiles who stood
before him yelling, was enough to understand he was royally pissed.

Stiles attempted to walk away, but Derek grabbed his arm and pulled him back.

Matt took a step toward the doors, but stopped when he saw their faces close, and intense. Derek let go of Stiles’ arm, but blocked him from entering the house by holding strong to the handle on the door.

Stiles broke away, screaming and waving his arms again.

Derek approached him, gesturing with his hands toward the door, pointing, while growling at Stiles.

Stiles said something that brought tears to his eyes and made him flush with humiliation.

Derek walked away, turning his back to Stiles who was wiping away the tears on his face with his hand.

Derek turned his head to glance at Stiles and said something that looked profound, or heartfelt. It made Stiles turn to him with pleading hands and a sorrowful look.

Stiles strode toward Derek, facing him, with determination and conviction in his voice as he looked at Derek who couldn’t meet his eye.

Matt watched Stiles point to his chest, right where his heart should be, with wet eyes, as he pleaded with Derek once more. Derek finally looked at him... Derek’s hand came up to cup Stiles’ face; his thumb rubbing at his chin.

He couldn’t make out what Derek was saying, but it looked…loving. Like a promise.

Derek attempted to walk away, but Stiles gripped his hand, stilling him...

Eventually, Stiles let Derek’s hand go, and Derek approached the doors.

Matt slid from view as Derek came in with a big, fake smile beaming at the pretty black woman in the kitchen talking to Allison.

Matt watched from the corner as Derek walked into the kitchen. His girlfriend handed him a beer as he pulled her close to him and joined the conversation with Allison.

Matt looked outside:

Stiles was sitting on the lounge furniture, looking pitiful, as he guzzled his beer; tears staining his face. He wiped them away with the back of his arm, then flicked the cap off another beer.

A pooling heat bubbled in Matt’s stomach, boiling, festering and tasting like sewage. His hands shook. He grit his teeth, biting his bottom lip to keep from bellowing his rage at the scene that played out before him and alarming the weres in the room. Yet, the only thought he had kept turning over and over and over in his head on a loop.

My boyfriend is in love with another man.

Allison groans loudly, exhausted and annoyed. She slaps her hands down on the metal table in
front of her. “The least you can do is get me something to eat since I’ve been sitting her for 4 hours now. I’m fucking starving.”

“Sure,” Agent Haigh says. “What do you want?”

“**Foie Gras with Fig Mostarda** on a bed of baby spinach with a glass of cabernet.”

“Tuna sandwich with a Pepsi. Got it.” Agent Haigh breaks from his chair and exits the small, dark interrogation room.

Allison groans again and slumps her head to the cold table.

“Where’s your mom, Allison,” asks Agent Haigh’s partner, Agent Peterson.

“You’ve asked me that already.”

“You didn’t answer.”

“Yes, I did. I said she was gone.”

“As in left, or dead?”

“Doesn’t matter.”

“To a young girl without a mother it should.”

“Well, if you haven’t noticed, I’m not a young girl; I’m a grown-ass woman,” she says with a sharp smile.

“Still must have been rough growing up without her.”

“Oh, is-is this what we’re doing? This is you tactic now? Guilt? Grief? Attack the scared, hurt little girl inside in order to get to the tough, closed-off girl on the outside? Pathetic. You forget Stiles Stilinski and Derek Hale are my Alphas.”

“Meaning?”

“Meaning I’m well-versed in being elusive and stubborn. Not only have I seen the inside of an interrogation room before, but I’ve always walked out, unscathed.”

“Fine. Let’s try this--”

“Oh, they’re letting you ask me question without Haigh? You must be a big girl now. Maybe soon date will let you date boys and wear make up,” she says with a mock cheer in her voice.

Peterson doesn’t find it amusing.

“God, you’ve spent all that time and energy to be…this, whatever this is, and all I did was fall in love with a boy and I’m far more impressive than you’ll ever be. It sounds like a witty joke, but neither of us are laughing.”

Peterson scowls.

“After four damn hours they thought they’d let you take a crack at it. ‘Woman to woman’. ‘Girl to girl’. Hoping to get us gossiping about boys and braiding each other hair. You can’t tell me you’re not fucking insulted. I would be.”
Allison stares right into her eyes, determined to break some resolve in her. Some small shred of something... Then she sees it. It was only for the glimmer of a nanosecond, but she sees it: a slight softening in Agent Peterson’s eyes, as though no one understood her, except Allison.

*Bingo. Gotcha.*

Then the opening, the gateway, closed. Agent Peterson cleared her throat and dropped a manila file on the table.

*Big guns. Crime scene photos. I must have really pushed back at them.* Allison takes a breath. She has the upper hand. She knows that. She just has to keep remembering that.

Agent Peterson flips open the file. This first picture is of her aunt Kate’s mangle corpse at the bottom of the gorge.

Allison keeps her eyes on it, with an apathetic, bored look on her face. Even though she wants to turn away and vomit.

“Two hikers found her like this, a couple of days after it’s assumed she was dead. The sun, the heat, bloated her body and blistered her wounds. Maggots were found inside her open cuts. Her face was busted up from hitting the jagged rocks on the way down. All her limbs were broken. And crows pecked at the meat exposed from a skull fracture at the top of her head. CSU believes where her body was found, she couldn’t have tripped and fell, or was even pushed off. More likely she was dangled over the edge of the cliff, then dropped.”

“What’s that got to do with me? You think I killed her?”

“Why won’t you help us put away the people that’s been tearing your family apart for years now?”

“Because I don’t know what you’re talking about. My grandmother was murdered by an Omega. My mother is gone— I don’t know where. My grandfather has disappeared, and my aunt committed suicide by jumping off a cliff after burning down my grandfather’s hunting cabin.”

“You can’t possibly be satisfied with any of that as an answer.”

“Why? Because you’re not? Do you really think I’d side myself with a group of people responsible for the death of 3 members of my own family?”

Agent Peterson closes the file, ridding Allison of the image of a dead Kate. “I think you and Chris were the only sane members of your clan, which made it easier for you to break away from them and side with a pack that embraced you, and your mate was a part of—”

“Speaking of which, I could have sworn I asked for a lawyer and my fiancé— oh, I don’t know— four fucking hours ago!”

“—but regardless, they’re still your family, and it still hurts you that they’re gone. Especially how they’ve ‘left’.”

“Whatever the hell it is you want, just ask for it. I can’t sit here with you for another four hours as you droll on about things I don’t have the answer to,” Allison sighs, aggravated.

Agent Peterson opens the file again. She takes a red Sharpie and circles bruises around Kate’s neck. “That looks like a handprint.”

“But judging by your choice of words you can’t be certain, can you,” Allison says in a vaguely
cocky tone.

“We don’t believe your grandfather is missing. We think he’s dead, and we think he was killed at the cabin.”

“Then where’s his body?” Her hands drop to her lap, turning clammy and tight. She tries not shake, thinking of that night. The night Peter Hale killed her grandfather, and Isaac, Cora, and Malia buried him in a shallow grave, then tossed light fluid on his lifeless body.

“Your father is now the proprietor of all of your grandfather’s assets, including his property.”

Allison laughs. “You want me to try and convince my dad to let you guys root around the burnt out shell of my grandfather’s cabin for his remains? First, I’m assuming you’ve already done that, and he’s told you to ‘fuck off’. Second, you wouldn’t have dragged my ass all the way down here if you had enough evidence to search my grandfather’s property to begin with, which leads me to believe you don’t have shit. Pathetic, Like I said.”

“Chris decided to no longer remain a part of the bureau after your aunt was buried.”

“Good for him. His talents can be used elsewhere now.”

“He was a damn good agent. A valuable asset to the agency.”

“Did you have that inscribed for him on his gold watch?”

“Gold watches are for when you retire. Not when you quit and sell out,” Agent Peterson spits out. “What do you get when you retire from hunting? The biggest piece of cake down at the Elk Lodge?”

Allison scoffs. Truth be told, she’s fighting back a laugh. That was funny.

She leans in close, intimate, personal. “Allison—”

“All you have is circumstantial signs and a bunch of wild theories. And a very annoyed woman sitting across from you. Let. Me. Go. Home.”

Agent Peterson leans back in his chair, eyeing Allison like she has all the time in the world.

Agent Haigh re-enters the room. He takes his seat beside his partner.

He shrugs at Allison’s incredulous look in his direction. “What?”

“My sandwich?”

“Oh, yeah, right. Forgot.” He then leans back in his chair with a smug smile on his face as well.

“Ugh! Lawyer! Now!”

“Allison does not just run off, Stiles,” Scott says with nothing but panic in his voice.

“I know. We’re going to keep trying her cell,” Stiles tells him.

The whole pack is there, fidgeting with worried looks on their face for the missing beta.
“She’s not answering. It just goes straight to voicemail. I’m freaking out, Stiles!”

“I know, buddy, but you have to please try and be calm.”

“How the hell am I supposed to do that?! What if you were me?! What if Derek was the one missing?! I mean, fuck, that happened! And you freaked out! You freaked out so bad you went to jail!”

Scott won’t stop pacing up and down the living room, clutching his cellphone in his hand. Stiles thinks any minute it’ll shatter in the unnerved werewolf’s hand.

And Scott was right. Stiles did freak out when Derek went missing 2 years ago. Stiles had such a conniption he slipped into a panic attack and had to be taken to the ER. When he gained consciousness he was strapped down to the bed.

All he could picture at the moment was Scott losing it and going into a full-on, werewolf massacre if they didn’t find Allison, and find her fast.

“Freya, tell me one more time,” Stiles says.

“We went to the gym for yoga class. After class was over we went to the women’s locker room to sauna, then shower. Allison changed first and said she’d meet me out front when one of the girls from our class stopped me to ask me a question. When I came out front, Allison wasn’t there. I went to the parking structure, where we parked her car. The car was still there, but Allison wasn’t. I waited 20 minutes for her, then went down the street to the Yogurtland at the corner. We’ve gone there after class a few times. She wasn’t there. I waited another 15 minutes, and kept trying her phone, but it kept going to voicemail.”

“She always keeps her phone in her gym bag in her locker. It’s always on,” Scott says.

“That’s what she said. In case you called and needed her,” Freya tells Scott.

Scott closes his eyes and takes a deep breath, trying to calm down.

It’s not working.

His eyes have shifted and mouth cracked open at the fangs pointing to his bottom lip. “I’m going back to that gym,” Scott announces, snapping his claws out.

“Scott--”

“What would you do if it were Stiles,” Scott snarls at the warning tone from his Alpha.

Derek gives Stiles a longing look. “…I’d tear this city apart,” he answers Scott, eyes never leaving Stiles.

“Then that’s what I’ll do.”

“I’ll go with you,” Freya says.

“Me, too,” Erica says.

“And me,” Jackson says.

“Freya, go back to the gym as ‘ask questions’. Scott will go with you to try and pick up her scent. Erica, go to her office and ask hassle her minions. Jackson, go to her and Scott’s apartment. Maybe
she went there. I’m going to call Chris—”

Derek stops at the sound of Van Morrison’s “Brown-Eyed Girl” sounding through the room.

Scott looks at the cellphone in his hand. Allison’s name and picture are on the screen. “Allison…! Oh, thank, God! Where are you…? WHAT…?! Okay… It’s okay… Ally, don’t cry, please… I know… Okay… It’s okay… No… No… You did fine. It’s okay. I promise… I will… Okay… I’ll be there. Stay put… I love you, too.” Scott hangs up.

“Where is she,” Melissa asks.

“The feds picked her up outside the gym. They took her to the office and interrogated her.”

Derek can feel the rage seeping off of Stiles. He clasps a hand around the back of his neck to calm him down.

“They let her go about a half hour ago. She took a cab back to the gym, but the parking structure is closed so she can’t get in to get her car. I have to go and pick her up.”

“I’m going with you,” Melissa tells him, grabbing her purse.

“Thanks, mom.”

Scott and Melissa head out of the room.

Stiles listens to the front door open, then close. “Mason. Hand me that vase off the mantle please,” Stiles says in a nice and easy tone.

Hesitantly, Mason grabs the vase and hands it to Stiles.

Stiles takes a deep breath, then throws it against the fireplace, shattering it!

“Better,” John asks.

“Nope, but I’ll get there. I’m going to start dinner.”

Stiles walks off into the kitchen.

“I take it back. Stiles is scarier than the Alpha,” Mason whispers to Liam.

“You want me to quit my job,” Freya asks.

“If you want to, but…yes. We want you to quit your job,” Stiles says.

“And do what…?”


“Isn’t that what Jackson, Scott, and Erica do? Can’t Liam do that,” Freya asks.

“We think Liam will be better served as messaggero. You’re stronger. Tougher than he’ll ever be. We want you to turn the fierceome threesome into a quartet.”

“That sounds a lot less intimidating,” Derek smirks.
Stiles rolls his eyes at his teasing husband.

“So that’s it? That’s what they do? Intimidate people?”

Stiles and Derek exchange weary looks. Thank God they decided to have this conversation in Derek’s office.

“To an extent,” Derek says finally. “Along with…other duties that need performing.”

“…Look, I know that I was…hard to accept being in this pack at first, and being made a wolf has cleared up a lot of my anxieties, but not all of them are gone. I still feel…cautious about certain things.”

“And we knew you would be, and that being made a wolf, and mated to Isaac wouldn’t dissipate all your misgivings, but we are your Alphas, and we’re asking you to do something,” Stiles says delicately.

“I know. I feel compelled to obey you, it’s just… I asked Jordan about this very predicament when I first met Lydia.”

“And I told Jordan that we would never ask him to do anything that he couldn’t do.”

“You don’t have to do the ‘hard stuff’, but we’d like you to have Scott, Erica, and Jackson’s back when they do. That’s all we’re asking for right now,” Derek tells her.

Slowly, she nods, agreeing. “Okay… I’ll put in my two weeks.”

“Well, hello, Mr. Stilinski-Hale.”

“Oh, Jesus Christ. At the mall? Really Haigh?”

“I’m just doing some Christmas shopping. Just like you.”

“With your gun, badge and your partner? I’m sure.”

“Stiles…” Mason says with a worried tone.

Stiles fishes his car keys from his pocket and hands them to Mason. “Take the bags to the car. I’ll be there soon.”

“Derek said—”

“It’s okay. Cora is around. She can find me.”

Reluctantly, Mason grabs all the shopping bags and heads for the entrance to the parking structure.

“Who’s that,” Haigh’s partner asks.

“What sloppy intel you must have,” Stiles teases. “He’s a friend’s younger brother. He’s interning with us over the winter break.”

Haigh’s partner scoffs, but Stiles gets the feeling she’s really fighting back a laugh.

“Oh, really? Interns, huh? My niece is looking for an internship this summer,” Haigh plays along.
“Well, send her on by. I’m sure we can find something for her to do. Cora always needs an extra hand.”

Agent Haigh bristles at Stiles’ comment.

“Is there something you wanted, or do you just like to hassle pregnant people at malls during Christmas,” Stiles asks, annoyed.

“Allison--”

“Who you spoke to the other day without my permission and her lawyer present,” Stiles grits out through his teeth.

“Just a routine questioning. No charges we’re being filed,” Haigh gloats.

“I’m her Alpha, thereby making me her legal guardian—”

“An archaic loophole that hasn’t been used since the 30s.”

“But yet you decided to pounce on her in the middle of her yoga class when she was alone and vulnerable.”

“We both know Allison is anything but vulnerable.”

“Don’t talk about my beta like you know her. You don’t. And you never will. Which is why she didn’t give you dick when you dragged her down to FBI headquarters and tried to intimidate her for 8 fucking hours! She has a mate and a pack that were worried sick about her, you piece of garbage!”

“Whoa! Those hormones are loose there, Mr. Stilinski-Hale,” Haigh grins.

Stiles hasn’t wanted to hit someone as badly as he wants to hit Haigh in this moment for a long time...

“Stiles!” Cora comes rushing up. “You okay? I felt…” She takes notice of Haigh and his partner. Her fangs drop and she growls.

Stiles immediately puts himself between her and the agents, facing Cora. “Ease up, or they’ll arrest you,” he whispers to her.

Her eyes fade back to chestnut brown orbs and fangs return to blunt, human teeth.

“Are you okay,” she asks.

“I’m fine. These dickbags were just trying to intimidate me…for a third time.”

“Cora Hale, I presume,” Agent Haigh says, all wicked smiles.

“I don’t have shit to say to you. Quit harassing my pregnant brother-in-law before I file a suit against your department.”

Stiles smirks.

“Come on, Stiles.” Cora takes his hand. They walk away in the direction of the parking structure entrance.
“I’ll be seeing you,” Haigh calls after them.

Both Stiles and Cora bother not looking back as they flip him off.

Derek insisted they spend Christmas at his parents’ luxury cabin in Colorado. Especially after Stiles had spent all afternoon crying when Lydia broke the news to him that she’ll be spending Christmas with Jordan’s family instead.

Jordan was still adamant about keeping his distance from the pack, and Lydia was forced to choose. She hadn’t spent much time with Jordan’s family and knew if she was to be his wife, she needed to. It wasn’t really a hardship. She loved Jordan’s family. She felt comfortable and cared for with them. They were the polar opposite of her family back in Beacon Hills, so she agreed to spend the holidays with them, refusing to be apart from Jordan their first Christmas.

Just two weeks before, Lydia had stripped her old room at Stiles and Derek’s house, bare, to make room for the twins. She put her house that she shared with Stiles years ago on the market and moved in completely with Jordan. It was his Christmas gift, her moving in with him being the only thing he asked for, and Lydia was happy to oblige.

Stiles on the other hand, had taken it hard, feeling as though he were losing his best friend in one big swoop, instead of in small fragments as he had hoped.

He took to locking himself in the bedroom all day when Lydia told him she’d be in Palo Alto for Christmas instead of with the pack. Lydia cried, too, and fell asleep beside Stiles when they both sobbed themselves exhausted.

When Stiles woke up, Lydia was gone. Derek told him Jordan came to pick her up, along with the last of her things in her old room.

Derek called John asking what he should do. John told him to utilize Scott, and make Stiles’ favorite meal. Food always helped him when he’s sad.

Derek told Scott to stay with Stiles for the rest of the night. He grabbed the game console from Liam and Mason out of the guest house, along with Stiles’ favorite sappy movie on DVD (50 First Dates) and set them up in the master bedroom. He then made Stiles baked mac and cheese with bacon.

He sent Erica to the store to buy as much junk food as she could. He knew it was against Stiles’ dietary restrictions, but his baby was hurting and it was only for one night.

Stiles and Scott took the master bedroom hostage, playing Halo and Skyrim and stuffing their mouths with mac and cheese, Twizzlers, and Dr. Pepper.

Derek slept in the second family room and woke the next morning to soft kisses on his face.

Stiles.

“Thank you.”

“You okay?”
“No. But I’m better.”

The next day Derek told everyone that plans have changed and Christmas won’t be at their house, but in Colorado, where he proposed to Stiles.

Stiles had busied himself with everything the moment he walked in the door to distract from his favorite banshee being absent. He made sure everyone was getting there safely (Ethan and Kira’s taxi had a flat tire on the way up) and in one piece, seeing as how he, Derek, Liam and Mason were the first to arrive forgoing the caravan they assembled for Thanksgiving.

He had Liam and Mason start on making chili and cornbread for everyone when they arrived to warm them up from the mountain of snow outside. Derek lit fires in every fireplace in the house, while Stiles made sure there were plenty of towels and bedsheets in all the rooms.

His father, Melissa, and Derek’s parents arrived next. Melissa immediately went to the kitchen to make hot chocolate, while John and Theo gathered enough fire wood for the rest of the night. Talia dug all the Christmas decorations out of the garage and brought them inside.

Stiles shot off a text to Deaton and Marin— who were spending the holiday with the rest of their family in New York— to see if they landed okay. Marin text him back when Scott, Allison, Boyd and Erica arrived, saying she and Deaton were now safely in New York.

Over the next couple hours, the rest of the Hale Pack (minus Braeden) filed in, with Laura, her family, and ‘betas’ being the last to arrive.

Liam and Mason helped settle everyone in their rooms when they got there. The two boys were awarded Lydia’s usual room, given she wasn’t there this year.

Cora and Kira set up a shower schedule for the next couple days, with all the kids going first, and emailed it to everyone after they ate their chili and cornbread.

Derek and Boyd were sent to chop down a tree after they ate. Jackson came with, in case they needed an extra pair of hands. The rest of the pack nestled in cozily while Stiles assigned Ethan and Aiden to wash dishes while he and Valerie prepped dinner.

Just as the sun was setting, Derek, Boyd, and Jackson returned with a massive pine tree, applauded by the rest of the pack.

Talia, Laura, Valerie and Cora decorated the tree while Stiles took Derek to their room, to pick the pine needles from his hair. The wild scent perfuming off Derek’s skin, coupled with the musky, manly sweat mix within it, turned Stiles’ eyes tangerine and made him keen.

He pushed Derek into the shower and torn at him beneath the scolding hot spray of water.

They came back into the living room 20 minutes later to knowing, smug glances from Erica and Valerie. Peter rolled his eyes and swallowed his third glass of scotch.

Stiles took the bottle from him and hid it, refusing to let him have anymore until Christmas dinner tomorrow night.

Stiles returned to helping Valerie with dinner. Malia joined in to help, needing a break from her clingy, little cousins, pawning them off on Liam and Mason. Mason took to “babysitting” like a
duck to water, just as he did on Thanksgiving at Peter’s house. Liam, however, treated them like gremlins on the loose.

The evening was pretty relaxing, save for a moment when Stiles had to come between Jackson and Erica when she kept poking at him to tell her what (or who) he did while he was in Paris. Jackson, having enough of her mean teasing, broke from his chair and stormed out after yelling: “Why are you always so goddamn nosy, Erica?! Maybe if you weren’t such a bitch all the time you and Boyd would have worked out!”

The room grew silent a moment.

Stiles made to go outside after Jackson, but surprisingly, Isaac got up and went out after him instead.

“You will apologize to him when he gets back, Erica Vivian Reyes,” Stiles snapped.

“Stiles—”

“What did I just say?!”

Erica pursed her lips and pouted, picking at the label on her beer bottle with her thumbnail.

“Told you you were a force to be reckoned with,” Laura whispered in Stiles’ ear.

Stiles would have laughed had his thoughts not been on what was going on between Jackson and Isaac on the front porch…

Jackson stood on the porch staring out into the snowy, dark trees.

The front door opens.

Isaac? He was expecting Stiles. Lydia maybe, but Isaac?

Isaac stands beside him, staring out into the nothing right along with him.

They’re quite a minute; listening to the crisp winter air buzz with an ethereal cool and bluish tint to the nighttime sky.

 “…You must have really liked them. Whoever you met in Paris,” Isaac says.

Jackson rolls his eyes. Not Isaac, too…

“You always brag about who you sleep with, but this one… This one you want all to yourself. You liked them. A lot.”

Jackson puts his hands in his pockets. He’s not cold, just needing to hide all parts that are exposed. Especially from Isaac.

“It kind of makes sense to me now, why you wanted us sleeping together to be a such a secret. I thought it was because you were ashamed of me. Like you didn’t want anyone telling you you could do better, or have done better.”

“That wasn’t it,” Jackson snaps into the cold air, suddenly engaged.

“And I know that now. I really did mean something to you…. I’m sorry—”
“No more apologies. Please. I couldn’t stomach another one.”

“I’m—”

Jackson glares at him for forgetting already.

Isaac tightens his lips, then nods.

“…Sebastien.”

“What?”

“His name was Sebastien. He was…beautiful. Like you,” Jackson says with his eyes on the white, blanketed ground.

“Is that it? ‘He was hot and we had fun’.”

“No! I mean, he was hot and we had fun, but… He was sweet, and funny, and smart and adorable. He… He said he loved me. I didn’t say it back.”

“Why?”

“Because I don’t know if I do. I only knew him for three days.”

“Seemed like enough for him.”

“That’s because he’s sixteen,” Jackson lets fly out of his mouth a little too casually.

“Sixteen?!”

“Oh, shit. Don’t tell Derek and Stiles.”

“I won’t, but… Sixteen?”

“He didn’t tell me how old he was until he was naked in my bed. I thought he was at least nineteen, or twenty.”

Isaac bursts out into laughter.

“You’re a special kind of asshole, you know that,” Jackson says, trying to hold in a grin.

“Did he have a curfew, or was he allowed sleepovers,” Isaac laughs.

“You’re spending too much time with Stilinski.”

“I had to. It was too perfect a moment. It called for a joke.”

Jackson rolls his eyes again.

“Either way, I’m glad you had a good time, and met a boy who loved you like you deserve. Even if it was only for 3 days.”

“…I don’t want anyone thinking Sebastien was just this thing, to try and get over you. He wasn’t. Isn’t. I really liked him.”

“And I really meant what I said: I’m glad you were loved like you deserve to be.”
Jackson listens to Isaac’s heartbeat. He means it. He’s happy for Jackson.

A soft, dull ping of disappointment in his chest makes him slump a bit, but, for the most part, he’s…content. With all of it.

“You going to go visit him again?”

*Yes! A thousand times—YES!!!* “We’ll see,” Jackson says with a shrug.

Isaac snorts, and Jackson knows Isaac may know him better than he thinks… “I’m hungry,” Jackson says.

"Me, too," Isaac says with a knowing smile.

Jackson turns toward the door and enters the house.

Isaac follows.

The rest of the pack are starting on appetizers and salad when Isaac and Jackson walk back in. They quietly take their seats.

Erica fires off a half-assed apology to Jackson which made Stiles shake his head at her.

*Looks like Erica is doing clean up by herself tonight…*

Derek smiles at Jackson who returns it with a nod. *I’m fine.*

Stiles catches the shared smile between Jackson and Isaac when Derek’s attention returns to his plate.

*Oh, they are so cornered later…*

Theo taps lightly on his wine glass, silencing the room. “Before we start in on the lovely dinner Stiles and Valerie have made, I’d like to propose a toast—”

**BOOM!** The front door bursts open and splinters off its hinges as a battering ram slams into it!

FBI agents and a S.W.A.T. team flood the house! Every were in the place flashes their eyes and fangs, crouching in a defensive stance and roaring at the intruders!

Allison, Danny, and Mason crowd around Laura and Valerie’s daughters protectively, with Allison brandishing a hunting knife!

Agent Haigh and his partner walk in smoothly, wearing navy blue windbreakers touting ‘FBI’ in bold yellow on the back.

Agent Haigh walks right up to Stiles who is still sitting at the table, staring daggers at the cocky agent.

Derek growls at his closeness to Stiles. Stiles holds his palm out to Derek, silently asking him to stay put and remain calm.

“Told you I’ll be seeing you.”

“That you did,” Stiles says with a tick in his tight jaw. “What do you want? We’re in the middle of Christmas Eve dinner.”
Haigh drops a bundle of papers on Stiles’ plate. “That’s an arrest warrant for your husband. For the murder of Kate Argent.”

Stiles is willing everything in him to stay composed, but it’s beyond hard. It’s impractical.

His fingers itch toward the knife by his plate, ready to grab it and jam it into Haigh’s—

There’s a tight grip on his wrist, stilling his eager fingers. Melissa. “No,” she mouths to him, staring hard into his orange colored eyes.

“Well. That’s interesting,” Haigh says of Stiles’ eyes. “Knew you could practice magic, but I had no idea you were a kitsune. When did that happen?”

Stiles opens his mouth for a smart-ass remark—

“Kenny?”

Haigh turns his head to the voice calling him. “…Freya?”

Before Stiles knows what’s happening, Freya has Haigh pinned atop the dinner table with her claws at his throat!

Chapter End Notes

The link for Sebastien is for a model named Christian Johnson. Meow!

The Keanu Reeves "cameo" is because while writing that part I was reminded of an interview he did in Paris for SOMETHING’S GOTTA GIVE while at a hotel there. In the picture accompanying the interview, he was sitting on the balcony in his hotel suite smoking a cigarette and barefoot, and I thought it was one of the sexiest pictures I’d ever seen... I used to be kind of obsessed with him...before Benedict Cumberbatch, Ian Nelson, and Mehad Brooks.

And I'm sorry (NOT sorry really) for all the French dialogue. Check http://www.freetranslation.com/ for translation if you feel compelled.

***So, I created a BIG writing faux-pas when I posted this chapter on the 16th. As a writer, you are always taught to "Show, don't tell," but when I initially posted this chapter I TOLD of two very important scenes instead of SHOWED them like I should have, and it's bothered me since. I apologize. So, here are those scenes, which hopefully fleshes out the chapter a lot more.

Have a good night. xxx
Derek immediately grabs a snarling Isaac who is 3 seconds from pouncing onto the table and ripping Agent Haigh to shreds, despite it being his mate, Freya, who’s the one in the threatening position.

Agents with guns at the ready aim them at Derek. “I’m keeping my beta at bay. If you want me to let him go, I’ll be happy to,” he says through gritted teeth.

Freya’s claws poke a little deeper into Agent Haigh’s neck.

“Stand down! Stand down,” he orders his squad.

Reluctantly, they lower their weapons, but the weres in the room remain wolfed-out and in attack mode.

Freya leans in close to Haigh’s face and growls low…

“Frey. W-W-When did you become a werewolf,” Agent Haigh asks.

“Freya’s been a member of our pack for a while now,” Stiles gloats. “Almost 4 months. And why wouldn’t she be, considering Isaac is her mate, and wanting very much to eat your heart at the moment. You pissed him off, by upsetting his mate, and his pack. Isaac is the most dangerous person in this room right now. Aside from the girl that literally has your life in the palm of her hand right now.”

Agent Haigh swallows hard with Freya’s clawed hand around his throat.

“So I’d play nice if I were you,” Stiles smiles wickedly.

Haigh could easily order his squad to take down every were in the room with a single wolfsbane bullet to the head, but Stiles knew he was a selfish man, faced with the dilemma of risking his own life, and the glorious "takedown" of the inner Hale Pack, if he did. Yet, Freya was a millisecond from ripping out his larynx. Inciting a bloodbath between his agents and the wolves would do nothing but make the order his last words before his ex-fiancée crumbled atop his gushing body with half her head blow off.

Freya simply snarls at him. "Why are you here?"

"Answer her, Agent Haigh," Stiles beams.

"I-I’m here to arrest your Alpha." He gasps when her hand tightens a bit.

A low growl escapes Isaac that rumbles in an echo through the room.

Stiles can feel the tactical squad itching to pick up their weapons again. "Freya. Caramel Candy. He can’t answer your questions if you make it hard for him to breathe, sweetheart."

Freya loosens her grip a bit. "Why?"

"B-Because he killed a federal agent."

"He did no such thing," Freya grits.

Derek fights back an evil grin that could rival the one on Stiles’ face.

"Why must you continue to humiliate me, Kenny?" Her nails prick his skin.

"I-m-I’m not. I had no idea you’d be here. I didn’t know you were in the Hale pack."

"Sloppy recon, like I said," Stiles tsks.

"I want you to leave. You need to leave before I tell everyone in this room what a piece of shit you are," Freya says.

"Tell anyway," Stiles instigates with a smile.

"I-I- can’t do that, Freya. We’re arresting your Alpha."

Freya raises her other hand, ready to strike down and slash her claws across Haigh’s terrified face —

"Freya! No!"

Her hand freezes mid-air at Stiles’ booming command.

Boyd helps Derek to hold back an erratic Isaac, brought on by Freya’s need for violence at the moment.


Hesitantly, Freya releases her grip on Haigh and slips off the dining table. She stands beside Stiles, scowling at Haigh.

He quickly sits up, terror in his eyes at the she-wolf, as he rubs his fingers over the needlepoint pricks of blood on his neck. "I can’t believe you’re a wolf," he says.

"And why not? I thought you liked supe girls," Freya says with bite in her tone.

"I still need to arrest Alpha Hale," he responds.
The weres turn tense, defensive, making the air in the room thin and hot.

“It’s okay,” Derek says. “It’s fine.” He breaks away from Isaac, who’s calmed down since Freya’s stepped away from Haigh. He stands before Agent Haigh. “You can arrest me now.”

Talia, Theo, and his sisters vocally object to Derek willfully going with the agents. His mother looks ready to pounce.


Talia stays put, nodding to her son, trusting him. Theo wraps an arm around her shoulders.

“You going to read me my rights or not?”

Haigh nods to Agent Petersen. She approaches Derek. “Please place you hands behind your head.”

He does.

“Derek Hale, you are under arrest for the murder of Katherine Argent. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say or do can and will be held against you in a court of law. You have right to an attorney. If you can not afford an attorney, one will be appointed for you. Do you understand these rights as I have explained them to you?”

“I do. Stiles, come here,” Derek says as he’s being cuffed.

Stiles approaches. Surprisingly, Stiles is as cool, and as even, as he could be. He’s nearly apathetic. Derek leans into Stiles’ ear. “They got nothing. I’ll be back.”

“I know. And you better be.”

“Promise. Kiss me.”

Stiles kisses Derek, a deep, hungry, lasting kiss that stuns even Haigh.

“Say it,” Derek tells him, breaking their kiss.

“Come back to me, or I’ll kill you.”

“Always. I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

Agent Haigh and his partner escort Derek through the house, past the wide, horrified eyes of his pack, but Derek remains calm, trying to silently reassure them that everything will be okay. Even Peter looks lost, and a bit scared.

Haigh and Petersen make it out of the house with Derek in tow.

The tactical squad waits a few clicks before slowly backing out of the house, toward the front door and leaving.

“Laura,” Stiles calls, nodding toward the door.

She nods back, understanding it’s her cue to follow them out. She hurries to grab her snow boots and slips them on, along with her coat and hat. She kisses her parents and Stiles before heading out
the door.

“Where are they taking Uncle Derek,” Star, Laura’s middle child, asks.

“It’s okay, honey. The police just need to asks Uncle Derek some important questions. He’ll be back,” Thomas, her father, responds, scooping her up in his big arms.

“Most definitely,” Stiles adds with nothing but confidence.

“Why’d they knock the door down,” Mason asks.

“Because they’re assholes,” Liam answers.

“Pretty much,” Stiles agrees. “Alright, people. Here’s what we’re going to do: we’re going to not panic. Derek’s been arrested before and every time he’s beaten the charge. They got nothing. Fucking nothing. But I want to be 110% sure. So I want leverage, from any and all angles. That means, Danny—”

“I got it. Already know what you need,” Danny says before scurrying off for his laptop.

“Christ, I love him.”

“I’ll help Danny. Get a hold of some contacts I have,” John says, heading upstairs to where Danny disappeared.

“Him, too. Freya come with me, and someone call Lydia. Immediately,” Stiles says.

“WHAT?!?” Lydia, without thinking, grabs her suitcase from under the bed, as she keeps her cell glued to her. She runs around the guest room throwing her things into her baggage frantically.

“Why can’t these assholes just leave us be?! Kate is dead! Sleeping dogs need to lie!”

Jordan steps into the room. “Lydia, my love, what’s—”

“Okay. I’ll be there as soon as I can… No… I don’t know… I know, Allison… How’s Stiles…? Right… I’m packing now…”

“Lydia. Packing for what? Where are you going?”

She continues to ignore him, slipping on her shoes and grabbing her purse. “I can’t fucking believe this… Those glory-hound, fed bastards… Okay… I won’t… See you soon.” She hangs up her cellphone.

“Lydia—”

“I’m going to Colorado. Derek was arrested for murder.” She makes for the door as though her brief explanation is more than enough.

Jordan puts his hand out, asking her to stop. “That’s it? that’s all you’re going to say before you just up and leave? It’s Christmas Eve, Lydia. You’re at my parents’ house.”

“I know. Which is why I need to leave. So I can catch a flight out to Aspen. The pack is probably freaking out. I have to go,” she says with more determination in her tone.

“Okay. Okay. Fine,” Jordan says blocking the door. “But let me come with you.”
“You don’t have to.”

“I know I don’t, but it’s your family and they’re in a crisis. You feel like you should be with them. You’re worried and scared, so let me come with you.”

He grabs his suitcase, keys, wallet, and cellphone.

She hugs him, long and tight, pouring all the gratitude she can muster into it.

He pulls away a bit to gently touch her face; his thumb running along her jawline. “It’s going to be a bitch to catch a flight. Painfully expensive.”

“I got that covered. I don’t care. My family needs me.”

He nods. “Okay. Then let’s go.” He takes her hand and they fly out of the room.

“I want to be honest with you. Jordan told me before you and Isaac discovered you were mates that you dated a man named Kenneth Haigh. That you were engaged but never made it to the alter because you found out he was cheating on you with a vamp girl he met at a nightclub. At the time I knew Kenneth Haigh as Agent Haigh and was told by Edmund, the vampire that runs the club Haigh’s ‘girlfriend’ works at, that Haigh was not only a regular at the club, but he’d fallen for one of his bottle service girls. With that knowledge, Edmund has been blackmailing Haigh in order to keep the FBI from investigating his business activities. We were hoping to use him for the same reason, but Edmund refused, believing Haigh wouldn’t hold strong due to all the added pressure. We couldn’t challenge Edmund given the history of bad blood between us and his colony, and the hard work and lives lost it took to get us all to be civil with one another,” Stiles says.

He takes a deep breath, wanting to emphasize how serious and sincere he’s about to be.

“I won’t lie to you. I thought I could somehow use you against Haigh, but then the unexpected happened and you turned out to be Goldilocks’ mate. Whatever intentions I had with using you ended the moment I saw you two lock eyes with one another and I knew my baby pup found his other half.”

Freya looked weary at him; her arms folded across her chest, eyes narrow, skeptical… “I heard you’re heart. You’re telling the truth.”

“I’m your Alpha, Freya. I would never lie to you. At least not to hurt or manipulate you. I love you. All of you.”

Freya knew that to be true. Completely. Say what one must about Stiles, but he loves his pack. Everyone. They all mean the world to him. It’s why he’s such a ruthless, vicious fighter. It’s why most are scared, and should be if they aren’t.

“I believe you. About everything.”

He unfolds her arms, and takes her hands into his. “You can trust me.”

“I do, Stiles. I trust you and Derek. Why’d they take him? Who’s Katherine Argent?”

Stiles sighs. “I’m going to tell you something private, but it’s the utter truth. You deserve to know, because your loyalty is real. I know that.”
She nods.

“Katherine—Kate Argent was a supe hunter, mainly werewolves. Her family, her clan, is centuries old, and has had a 400 year beef with the Hales until earlier this year.”

“What happened this year?”

“…We killed their entire family, except Chris, Allison’s father.”

“They were Allison’s family…? She…She told me she was raised by a bunch of species-ists that thought all supes were dirty, and some sort of abomination. She said her elders thought we should all be exterminated.”

“They did. None more than Kate. It started years ago, when Kate and Chris were only kids and their mother was killed my a rogue Omega. It fueled their father’s anger. It was the catalyst that made them so fucking hateful. Kate sexually abused Derek when he was a young teenager, after a horrible accident with his first girlfriend. She was trying to use him to get to the pack, namely Theo.”

“Oh, my God….”

“Chris switched sides and betrayed his family, his clan, when it started looking like he’d never see Allison again.”

“She told me about her fucked up family, and what they wanted her to do, but…”

“I know. Seems the FBI needs to do more thorough background checks when they decide to give hunters authority by other means.”

“She was an agent.”

“Sort of. She and Chris were kind of ‘deputized’ into the bureau.”

“…Did-Did Derek kill Kate…himself?”

“Yes. He wrapped his hand around her throat, and threw her off a cliff.”

“Holy. Shit.”

“I know it’s a lot to take in, but—”

“No. No. No, it’s okay. I just… This is a bit of a rough first Christmas with the pack.”

Stiles gives a small smile, enjoying the fact that she can still try and make light of it all in the midst of ‘pressing matter’.

“He was stealing from me. To buy that little whore gifts and trips and paying her bills. He actually took all the money from my savings to splurge on her after he used all the money in his own accounts… The fucking audacity.”

“Can you prove that? Can you prove that he was stealing from you?”

“Yeah. I did. I filed a suit against him for all the money he took from me, and to pay for my lawyer fees. He begged me to drop the lawsuit, said it would cost him his job and then he really wouldn’t be able to pay me back. So, like an idiot I did, and I haven’t heard or seen him since.” She chuckles wryly. “You know I had no idea he was even in the fucking FBI? He told me he was a junior
executive at a law firm. No wonder he knew how to vanish; he had at the tools to do so at his disposal. That bastard.”

“I know, and I am going to take care of him. I swear to you.”

“How?”

“Well, clearly he’s afraid of you, and what you know. He probably knows how much shit he’s in if you’re a part of the pack now, but we need something heavier, something bigger to end his shit and get him off our backs.”

“Would this help?” Freya holds up a Blackberry.

“…Is that Haigh’s phone?”

“Fell from his pocket when I slammed him on the table, rolled under it. Just didn’t tell him so,” she shrugs nonchalantly.

“You are definitely my new favorite beta,” Stiles says with a smile.

Derek and Laura sit at the metal table across from Haigh and his partner, appearing very bored.

“Where is this going Haigh? We both know you don’t have exhumation privileges. I already talked to Chris Argent. He says you didn’t touch his sister’s grave,” Laura says.

“Didn’t need to. We went back over the coroner’s report. There was a partial thumb print at her neck and werewolf DNA under her fingernails when she was found at the bottom of the gorge.”

“Three days later by a bunch of hikers. By then she’d already started to rot and had been pecked at by birds, inhabited by maggots, and gnawed on my woodland creatures. Who’s to say any of that DNA was my brother’s?”

“So some random werewolf happened by that she got into a scuffle with, after she fell off a cliff, breaking every bone in her body,” Agent Petersen asks sarcastically.

“Possibly. Just like you possibly believe my brother killed Kate Argent.”

“I thought Kate killed herself by jumping off the cliff after murdering her father,” Derek says coyly.

“Who says he was murdered,” Petersen asks.

“Isn’t it assumed by everyone that she killed him. I mean, the house was burned down, and I know they haven’t found his body …”

“You think you’re sitting awfully pretty don’t you, Mr. Hale,” Agent Petersen asks rhetorically.

Derek responds with a crooked, shy smile, further annoying her.

“It’s Alpha Hale. And I can’t believe you knocked down our door with a tactical S.W.A.T. team for these bullshit, speculative charges. You can’t even place my brother at the scene of this alleged crime. You’re a joke. So was Kate Argent, but at least she had balls and tad bit more suspicion to go on.”
“We can place your brother at the scene,” Haigh says.

Now they have Derek and Laura’s undivided attention.

Haigh opens a folder, spins it around so Derek can take a look at what’s inside: a slightly grainy, black and white picture of what appears to be a naked man riding a big, black dog. A wolf.

Goddamnit. It’s me and Stiles. Fuck.

“Look familiar,” Petersen asks.

Derek coolly tries to shake his head.

“What the hell is this,” Laura asks.

“That is a traffic light photo capturing Alpha Hale in his wolf form, carrying his mate, across an intersection and through the woods, a county over from Beacon Hills, where Gerard Argent’s cabin is located.”

“Really? To me it looks like a giant black lab being ridden like a pony by a naked, teenage boy. But if you say it’s Derek…” Laura teases.

“We do.”

“Can you prove it’s my brother’s supposed DNA under Kate’s fingernails, or can you just tell it’s were-DNA? And do you have undoubted proof that it’s my brother in his Alpha form in the picture?”

“We have enough proof to kick down your door and make an arrest,” Petersen says.

“But not enough to make the charges stick. Not for long anyway. Jokes. The two of you. Like I said.”

“Alpha Hale please stand,” Petersen says.

Derek rolls his eyes and stands, placing his hands behind his back. Petersen rounds the table and cuffs him.

“Derek, I’m filing a motion right now. I’m going to talk to the judge in the morning,” Laura says, tapping away on her cellphone.

“Just check on Stiles. Make sure he’s okay.”

Haigh opens the door and two other agents remove Derek from the interrogation room.

“You know Kate jumped the gun with no evidence whatsoever and ruined her career. Took her own life she was so embarrassed and upset by her mistakes. It’d be a shame if that happened to the two of you,” Laura says before storming out.

“I really hate that pack,” Petersen glowers. She turns to Haigh. He’s looking perplexed and searching all his pockets.

“Have you seen my phone,” Haigh asks.
“He’s not seeing the vamp girl anymore. It’s all just a bunch of pleading and begging texts asking her to give him another chance and how sorry he is. They start about 3 months back, but the last time she replied was almost 4 months ago,” Danny says, sifting through Haigh’s phone.

“They going to know you were snooping through his phone,” John asks.

“No. I disabled the GPS and tracer on his cell by linking it to my laptop and burning the codes.”

“Why’d they break up,” Stiles asks.

“Well went dry. Sugar daddy ran out of sugar.”

Freya scoffs at the whole ordeal.

“So the girl’s out of the picture because he has no money left and he can’t borrow from Edmund anymore because he’s already up to his eyeballs in debt to him,” Stiles says, thinking aloud.

“Then Edmund’s patience is going to run thin with Haigh, no matter how much interference he runs between him and federal charges. He’s a liability and pissing everyone off,” John says. “Edmund can get another mole and save himself the headache with Haigh.”

“Haigh probably knows that and knows he needs to do something big to get back in Edmund’s good graces before he ‘relieves’ himself of him,” Stiles says.

“Like what,” Danny asks.

“Like taking out a stronger competitor. Didn’t you tell me you had to go to war with the vampires over territory,” Freya asks Stiles.

“Fuck... That’s what this is! That’s why Derek’s arrested! ‘Take down the Alpha, take down the pack’. If he can throw Derek in jail on some bullshit charge, we’ll be incapacitated. He’s our leader, we can’t fight without him.”

“Which leaves us open for attack by fucking vampires,” John adds, getting it with his son. “He hinders Derek, tells Edmund we don’t have an Alpha, Edmund sees a opportunity, goes in for the kill and takes San Francisco.”

“No way in fucking hell is my husband going to jail and our territory getting taken from us,” Stiles snaps, his eyes glowing like tangerines.

“What do we do then,” Freya asks.

“We get to Haigh before he gets to Edmund,” Stiles answers.

“And do what? We can’t kill him, Stiles,” his father says.

A devious smile grows on Stiles’ face... “No. We help him.”

Chapter End Notes

Will reply to comments later tonight. Sorry for the delay in that as well.

p.s.-- How is THE FOLLOWING something I'm just discovering?!? That show is so
good.
Agent Haigh finds himself presented with an offer he can't refuse.

Jackson rips the black bag off his head. Immediately, he starts hyperventilating when he sees himself faced before three very pissed-off looking werewolves, all beta eyes and snarls.

“Pups. That’s good. Don’t want to make him piss his pants anymore than he already has,” Stiles says as he approaches with Boyd, whose carrying a chair and lantern.

Boyd sits the folding chair before Agent Haigh. Stiles takes a seat in it.

“Christ. You have no idea how good sitting down feels when you’re pregnant. I mean, I know I still have a ways to go, but still, these two are killing my back and my joints.”

“W-W-What am I doing here?”

“Is it not gorgeous here? I know it’s an abandoned train depot, but there’s something beautiful about how decrepit and dark it all is, you know?”

Stiles doesn’t expect the frightened federal agent to answer. He knows he’s too terrified. Besides, prolonging his motives makes the agent even more nervous, and Stiles likes that. It’ll make him more susceptible to agreeing to Sties’ plan.

“Plus, the cold, dead, winter air, makes it even more…haunting. Lydia, my beta, the redhead banshee, you know, she said I have an attraction to the brooding and the macabre. I think she might be right. I like when things are Gothic, with a menacing undertone.”

“Why am I-I here, M-Mr. Stilinski-Hale?”

Stiles stares at him, with an unnerving, quiet glare that makes Agent Haigh fidget in his duct-taped wrists and ankles.

“Alpha Hale and I are mated. I know you’re aware of that, and the concept of being mated, but I don’t really think you truly know what it means. It means we’re literally two lost souls who found each other. It means this is not the first, nor the last, lifetime we’ve spent together. We’ve been together since the beginning of time, and we’ll be together for the end of it, too. And I’ll be damned if that end comes before either of us are ready. We’re not done in this lifetime. Not by a long shot. We’re just getting started, if the two werecubs gestating in my belly are anything to go by. So, I am nothing but serious when I tell you being without Derek is not ever going to happen. I did that to him once already, and it was torture. We will not go through that again.”

“Killing me isn’t going to fix your problem,” Haigh says.

“No. No, I imagine that that would create a whole new set of issues that I am in no mood, or
condition, to take on. I’d really like for all this bullshit to be put behind me, and focus on my children and my pack.”

“Y-You’re not going to kill me?”

“I’m going to try not to.”

Haigh visibly gulps.

“It doesn’t benefit Derek if I do...but it doesn’t mean I won’t, if I have to.”

Haigh nods, understanding.

“You’re in so much debt to Edmund I’m shock you aren’t chained to his bed and kept as a pet. He never lets anyone get this far ahead of what it is they owe him. He doesn’t do favors. Which means he’s probably growing increasingly tired of you.”

“E-Edmund?”

“Please don’t. I’m already exhausted.”

Haigh at least has the dignity to look a little bit sheepish.

“You think we’re vicious. Edmund is... Well, you’ve spent time with him.”

“I-I never seen him do anything to anyone.”

“But you know he has. You’ve heard tales, and seen people screaming, begging for their lives, being dragged off into dark rooms, or in unmarked cars, driven off somewhere no one can hear them. I know you have.”

Haigh actually appears nauseous at the memory of said situations.

“We are far from a convent, but Edmund...” Stiles whistles. He leans in close to Haigh. “He’ll draw every drop of blood from your body, slowly, all the while with a big, handsome smile on his face. He hasn't been human in a very, very long time, and I don’t think when he was, he was a very good one.”

Stiles leans back, taking in the scared, glossy-eyed look on Haigh’s face.

“I’m going to help you.”

It’s almost comical how wide-eyed Haigh looks at Stiles statement.

“I’m going to pay your debt to Edmund, in exchange for my husband being released from FBI custody and your bullshit charges dropped.”

“W-What? Why?”

“Just told you.”

Haigh thinks a moment... Then his nostrils flare. He glares at Stiles. “Oh, so then I’ll be in your pocket now,” he says snidely.

“Don’t take that tone with me. You wouldn’t be in this shit pile if you weren’t crooked to begin with.”
Scott, Boyd, Jackson, and Erica snarl at Haigh and his testy exchange with their pregnant Alpha-mate. Stiles holds up his hand, signaling them to ‘calm down. Everything’s under control’.

“I wasn’t,” Haigh protests.

“No. You just decided to screw over a really sweet girl that loved you.”

“I didn’t screw over Amber! I love her!”

Stiles scoffs, shaking his head. “I was talking about Freya, you idiot.”

Haigh looks ‘shame-faced’ again.

“How much do you owe Edmund?”

“…Almost 300,000 dollars.”

“That’s a drop in a bucket to him. You must have really kept the feds off his back.”

“I worked in the FBI’s Violent Crime division, serial murders, before I got moved to Organized Crime.”

“And you not being the head of that division anymore hasn’t given Edmund much protection lately, has it? Marry that with the fucking money you owe him he’s let slide, and I’d say Edmund is starting to think you’re not that essential to him anymore. Have you been feeling ‘daddy’ grow distant from you lately, Haigh?”

His betas snort, laughing at the agent and Sties’ mocking him.

Haigh wants to retort, to say something witty and cutting, to spit back at Stiles with his own sarcasm, but he keeps quiet, because: (1) it’s the truth, (2) Stiles’ betas would claw his chest open if he even thinks about getting smart with Stiles…again, and (3) he’s not clever enough to banter with the Alpha-mate.

“…Yes,” he says instead, low and embarrassed.

“Well, like I said, I’m going to help you. I’ll pay your debt to Edmund, you get Derek released—I don’t give two shits how—and we’re square.”

Stiles stands with a heavy groan, holding his belly. He’s only 6 months, but carrying two. He feels (and looks) heavy, like he’s approaching his due date.

“Oh, and by the way, you’ll pay Freya back for all the money you stole from her, then kill Edmund,” Stiles says with a nonchalant ease.

“No! Wait! What?!”

“You need to pay Freya back. And kill Edmund.”

“’Kill Edmund’? I-I-I can’t do that.”

“Then I can’t pay your debt. So, Edmund can kill you instead. I mean, it’s going to come to that anyway you know. That’s why you had Derek arrested in the first place. You need him out of the way so Edmund can attack our pack while we’re without our leader. It’s your gift to him, isn’t it? So ‘daddy’ can forgive you and tell you what a good boy you are.” Stiles tilts his head at Haigh with a smile. “Don’t look so shocked. Kate told you I was smart.” Stiles winks at him.
“Fine. I don’t get Derek released, and I’ll tell Edmund you’re Alpha-less. He’ll attack, and take you all down. He’ll snatch all your territory and kill every last one of you. Including those babies you’re carrying.”

Within seconds, Scott shifts and lunges for Haigh—!

Boyd manages to grab Scott before his fangs sink into Haigh’s neck!

Haigh is whimpering, terrified at having escaped his throat being torn out.

Stiles steps close to him. “I will never let this pack succumb to extinction. Not by you, the FBI, Edmund, God— no one. This is my family, and it is not only my job, but my fucking destiny, to make sure they are protected, and I will do all it takes to fulfill that providence. Do you understand?”

Haigh doesn’t respond quick enough. Stiles backhands him across the face!

“Understand?”

Tears run down Haigh’s face. “…Y-Yes.”

“Good.” Stiles takes a step back. “You don’t have to take me up on my offer, but I should warn you of the wrath headed your way if you don’t.”

“Y-You said so yourself, they’re weak, bullshit charges. Why not wait for your lawyer, for Laura Hale, to argue that in court, to get Derek off?”

“Because that’ll take weeks, and I’d like my husband home by New Years.”

“He can be released on bail. You can afford it.”

“What part of me saying I want to be forever rid of you and every other fed, don’t you get? This is it. There is no more coming after my husband, me, or my pack. It ends right now. All I want, is to raise my family, like I said. I’m sick of bogus arrests, and bail money, and interrogation rooms, and trials. We want to be left the fuck alone.”

“That’ll never happen. As long as there’s an FBI, and as long as there’s a Hale Pack, there will always be those things.”

“Then cut us a fucking break,” Stiles says through gritted teeth.

“I can’t kill Edmund. He’s a vampire. He’ll know, and he’ll…” Haigh panics, boxed between a rock and hard place. With every scenario ending with him dead. Except one. The one Stiles is offering.

“You’re hardly an assassin, so there’s a 75% chance you’ll fuck it up. That’s why Boyd will be there. Edmund likes him.”

Boyd rolls his eyes.

“Edmund will be too distracted by him to even notice you injecting him with ‘fairy wings’,” Stiles continues.

‘Fairy wings’ was it’s street name, but the technical terminology was Faelis. The sun wasn’t vampires’ only weakness, turns out they could catch a virus that caused death within 60 seconds if not cured immediately with an antidote. Much like werewolves with ‘Midnight Shade’.
It’s name was derived from exactly what it said. The shimmering, white magic held within a Fae’s wings worked as Kryptonite against a vampire, which was a creature born out of dark, black magic. The smallest of shavings could boil the blood inside a vampire until his skin turned to goo and he bleed from every orifice.

“You’ll get the money when Derek is let go. Bring him to the drop off site and we’ll exchange; my husband for the money. Then I’ll give you the needle of Faelis. Boyd will then go with you to Edmund’s club.”

“He’ll know something is up when I show up there with a Hale Pack beta and a bag of cash.”

“Boyd is going to explain to Edmund, as sweetly as he can, that we’re paying off your debt—a pounding headache for him, I’m sure—for something we want in return. Something small, trivial enough that it’d only cost $300,000…”

“Vamp blood. To sell in Sacramento, Valerie’s territory. There’s no colony there. We tell him we’ll give him 15% of the profits to set up a pipeline there,” Boyd says.

“Exactly why he’s our number two,” Stiles beams. “Quick on his feet, in every way.”

“I-I don’t know if I can… I don’t know if I can do this,” Haigh says, looking emotionally wrecked and 5 seconds from puking all over the floor.

“You got no choice. You don’t, and I’ll kill you. Derek goes to jail, and I’ll kill you. You renege on our deal, and I’ll kill you. Edmund doesn’t get what he wants from you refusing me, he’ll kill you. Trust me, he will, because I will not let everything we’ve built fall into anyone else’s hands. And if you fuck up the plan, Edmund will kill you. You’re only chance at staying alive is me and this deal.”

“I wouldn’t call a double-edged sword a ‘deal’.”

“This is hardly a double-edged sword. More like a Hobson’s Choice. Which in fact, is a deal,” Jackson pipes up.


He’s shaking. Face wet from tears and pale from the crisp, night air wafting snowy winds through the broken windows of the depot. Without warning, he vomits on the floor.

“Really, dude,” Jackson says with annoyed, dismissive tone.

Stiles rolls his eyes at the agent, and Erica scrunches up her nose at the orange-pinkish glop of bile.

“You really think he can handle this, Stiles,” Boyd asks.

“No. That’s why you’re going with him, but he has to sack up. We need him. Unfortunately.” Stiles nods to Erica.

She approaches Haigh with a sexy, wicked smile…then snaps out her claws.

“No! No! Please don’t! I—”

The duct tape from his wrists and ankles break away. Erica retracts her claws.

She laughs. “Pussy.”
Boyd grabs the chair Stiles was sitting in. He, Stiles, Scott, and Jackson exit the train depot.

Haigh sits there, nervous, with a vixen-y Erica purring and hissing with her eyes and 'come-hither' smile at him.

Headlights flash from outside.

She pulls a cellphone from her back pocket. Haigh’s cellphone. The one Freya snatched. “We took out the GPS and copied all your text messages, emails, and voicemails.”

Haigh looks completely crestfallen, like at any minute he’s going to either breakdown in tears, or collapse.

“You tell anyone, and we reveal all the dirt on there to all major news networks. Your bosses will have no choice but to make an example out of you. We go to jail, so do you.”

She tosses the phone at him, grabs the lantern, then walks toward the door.

“Wait! You can’t just leave me here! In the middle of nowhere, in Aspen! I don’t even have a coat and shoes on!”

They cased Haigh’s shitty hotel. Scott went to the front desk and asked the hefty, middle-aged woman in the blue blazer to call his room, claiming ‘Edmund’ had left a message for him in the lobby.

When Haigh stepped outside his hotel room, in nothing but his pjs and a robe, Erica chloroformed him, while Boyd and Jackson carried him through the stairwell and to the van.

“Not my problem. You’ve got a phone. Call for help. Merry Christmas,” she smiles. She giggles, curls bouncing, as she runs out of the depot.

Haigh watches the headlights move around what’s left of the walls and windows, and hears the van grow more and more distant as the light disappears…

The rising flood suffocates him. The dam breaks and the sound of rushing water and waves overflow in his ears.

He slips from the chair onto his knees, clutching his chest, and wondering how it got this bad. How he got this in bed with the ruthless. How he went through it all for a girl, and girl that doesn’t even want him anymore. Probably never wanted him.

It’s too much.

He screams. So loud it hurts his own ears and causes a throbbing in his head.

But he needs to. He needs to let it all out now. Because soon, he has to kill a vampire. And if he doesn’t, he’ll never scream again.

Chapter End Notes

Not to give too much away, but next chapter is the last we'll see of Haigh...and something special occurs with one of the betas.
New Year's Eve

Chapter Summary

Stiles and Derek start the new year off with more good news than bad.

Laura's car pulls up to the house.

The front door immediately opens and Stiles comes flying out, followed by Boyd, Lydia, and Cora. Laura climbs out of the car with Derek.

Stiles makes a b-line for his husband, wrapping his arms around him, burying his face in his neck. “Derek…”

“You okay?”

Stiles nods.

“Hey. Look at me.” Derek peels Stiles’ head from his body to look right into his eyes. They're brimming wet with tears. “Oh, baby. I’m so sorry.”

“We can’t keep taking turns going to jail, Derek.”

“I know.”

“We can’t raise a family like this.”

“And we’re not going to. I swear to you.” His hand moves to Sties’ belly. “Everything alright?” Stiles nods again.

“We’re going to fix this. For good, Stiles. I promise you, baby.”

“I know. Because I have a plan.”

Haigh, looking a little worse for wear, approaches them.

He takes a seat at the picnic table across from Stiles and Derek. Suddenly, out of nowhere, Boyd and Danny take up space on either side of Haigh.

“Lift your shirt and empty your pockets,” Derek says.

“Why?”

“Lift your shirt and empty your pockets,” Derek repeats, keeping a subtle eye on passersby. Stiles, sitting beside him, allows his gaze to flit around the area as well.
Haigh gives a resigned sigh, then empties his pockets onto the table, then manages to lift his shirt up while a hulking werewolf and well-built computer hacker crowd him.

No wire.

Danny gives the meager contents of his pocket a once over before giving Derek a nod.

“Give Danny your phone.”

“Are you—”

Derek snarls.

Haigh reaches into the breast pocket of his jacket and hands Danny the phone. Danny takes the lid off the large coffee cup in his hand and dumps Haigh’s phone inside, surging the device in French roast, shot of espresso, no cream, two Splenda.

Haigh rolls his eyes with another put-upon sigh.

Danny hands him a small cellphone.

“It’s a burner phone.”

“I see that,” Haigh says sarcastically.

“There’s only one number programmed into it. Call it after you’ve injected Edmund with the Faelis.”

“The phone has a tracking device inside it, and a self-destruct mechanism that will initiate after you’ve called Derek,” Danny tells him. “If you try to remove the tracking device, the phone will send a signal to us what you are doing then self-destruct.”

“And you better hope to whatever deity you believe in that we don’t find you if that happens,” Stiles adds colorfully.

Derek reaches under the table and pulls up a box, gift-wrapped in brightly colored paper, with a big bow on top. It’s about the size of a bread box. He pushes it toward Haigh.

“What’s this?”

“Well, we can’t exactly give you a brown, paper bag full of money in the middle of Crissy Field, now can we,” Derek snarks.

Haigh lifts the box a bit. “Cash is really in here. What’s the point though? Why even bring the money if I’m just going to kill Edmund anyway?”

“It’s to give credit to our cover story. And it’s also yours. To keep. After you kill Edmund,” Stiles answers.

“Where’s the ‘fairy wings’?”

Boyd wordlessly opens his coat. He lifts a syringe from his breast pocket a bit to show Haigh. It’s shimmering, like it’s filled with glitter nail polish.

Boyd tucks it back into his pocket and closes his coat.
“You drive here,” Derek asks.

“No. I took a cab,” Haigh responds.

“Good. Boyd’ll drive you two to Edmund’s club.”

Derek and Danny stand. Derek chivalrously helps Stiles up from the bench.

Stiles looks directly at Haigh, right into his eyes. “If anything at all happens to Boyd, I won’t kill you. But I will pay your sister in Murrieta a visit, and make her blood splattering across my face the last thing she’ll ever see.”

Of all the threats he’s ever received, that one had to be the chilliest, sending an icy shiver down his back, and a cold sweat to break out on his forehead.

Boyd tries to hide a proud smile at Stiles being so defensive of him.

They watch as he, Derek, and Danny turn off the field and onto the pavement, heading in the direction of the bridge.

Boyd nudges Haigh, then nods in the opposite direction.

He lifts off the bench and follows the werewolf.

It’s New Year’s Eve, so the club was crowded, excessively loud, and particularly noisy with intoxicated patrons in their best nightlife clothes.

Haigh couldn’t keep up with Boyd, every so often getting bumped, or pushed, by someone. Boyd stopped a few times to wait for him to catch up.

Just before Stefani lead them to the back of the club, he saw Amber. She was working the bottle service area, pouring expensive champagne for some baller and his entourage of cronies and ‘jersey chasers’.

He called out to her, believing she’d be able to hear him over the volume of the place, due to vampires and werewolves having heightened senses (though werewolves’ senses are far more keen than a vampire’s).

She continued to pour Moët into champagne flutes and clearing the area of used plates of blinis crumbs and martini glasses with half-eaten shrimp cocktail inside.

“Let’s go, Haigh,” Boyd said, looking a little impatient.

Haigh watched his former vampire mistress head toward the bar without the slightest glance in his direction.

“S-She… She didn’t hear me,” he says to no one in particular.

“It’s loud in here. That’s all,” Boyd answers, feeling a little sorry for the guy.

Haigh nods slowly. “Yeah… Yeah. It’s…loud.” He watches her disappear in the sea of people, like a distant memory.

“Come on. Edmund’s waiting.”
Reluctantly, Haigh follows Boyd toward the entrance to the private, back area of the club where an impatient-looking Stefani waits by the door.

“Vernon. How are you,” Edmund asks.

If Haigh didn’t know any better—and if Edmund weren’t an undead creature that roamed the city at night—he’d swear the vampire was blushing at Boyd’s presence.

“Good,” Boyd answers in his usual monosyllabic exchange.

“And your holiday. How was it?”

“Not that great,” Boyd says, eyes darting toward a sweaty-looking Haigh.

Edmund rounds the desk and takes a seat at the edge of it, in front of Boyd. “Yes. I was curious about this little ‘friendship’ here.”

“We’re nowhere near friends,” Boyd says of Haigh.


Haigh tosses the ‘birthday present’ on Edmund’s desk.

Edmund nods to Stefani, who comes over and careful unwraps the ‘gift’. She lifts the lid—bands of cash.

“Three hundred thousand dollars. The debt he owes you,” Boyd tells the vampire.

“And why would Derek Hale want to pay this lowly worm’s debt to me?”

Boyd takes his cellphone out of his pocket and speed dials a number. He puts it on speakerphone.

“Boyd. You okay, pup,” Stiles’ voice sounds through the werewolf’s cellphone.

“Yeah. I’m fine. I got Edmund.”

“Please tell me this is Derek Hale’s pouty-mouth, amber-eyed mate,” Edmund says with devilish grin.

“And I thought you had a little crush on my beta...”

“I do,” Edmund smiles at Boyd, “but my lifeless heart is big enough for you both.”

“Don’t let my Alpha hear you say that.”

“I already know the wrath to be had when one tangles with Derek Hale. I am sure to stay within my bounds.”

“Good to know.”

“But I am, however, curious as to why Agent Haigh and a box full of cash are in my office, along with the always-welcomed presence of Mr. Vernon Boyd.”
“Oh, well, I can explain that: Mr. Haigh was deceptively under the impression that it he killed you on my behest that he’d be entitled to said cash.”

Haigh’s blood runs cold. A sweat cracks over his entire body. He can’t breathe. Everything in him screams for him to run, but he’s paralyzed by the hard, piercing glare from the blonde-haired vampire.

“Is that so…?”

“Very,” Stiles says. “See, Agent Haigh arrested my Alpha on Christmas Eve, much to, my, and my pack’s, disapproval; in an attempt to curry favor with you, and allow my pack to be vulnerable to attack by you and your colony, if you were feeling so inclined.”

“Admittedly, I’d find that to be a very interesting suggestion if presented,” Edmund says with a cold smile at Haigh.

“And who wouldn’t? Truly. But as you might assume, that play meets greatly with my dissatisfaction.”

“Understandable.”

“So I offered Agent Haigh a deal: the Hale Pack will pay his debt to you, in exchange for Derek being released from FBI custody, immediately, with all charges dropped. And he also had to kill you.”

“Why go through the trouble of killing me? Why not simply pay the debt and let myself to be rid of this boil of a man?”

“Kenny, here, asked the same question. We told him that the money was a prop, for some fake, insignificant, territorial trade agreement, and also his to keep once you were dead.”

“And what is the money now?”

“Yours. To kill Agent Haigh.”

Haigh is trembling. Frozen in place, shaking in his shoes, and one second away from pissing his pants.

“Three hundred thousand dollars is a lot of money to owe me, to piss me off, but it’s not a lot to kill a federal agent.”

Boyd reaches into his coat pocket and pulls out a manila envelope wrapped in packaging tape. He drops it on the desk beside Edmund.

“And what’s this?”

“$700,000,” Boyd answers.

“A million dollars to get rid of the nuisance? Is there no one in you illustrious pack that could off this little man for you?”

“His death can’t be traced back to anyone in, or associated with, my pack. No one but us knows he has any connection to you,” Stiles tells him.

“They will if they ask the wrong people the right questions about Mr. Haigh, and the considerable amount of time he’s spent here at my club, fucking my bottle service girl and lavishing her gifts he
can’t afford. I mean, you and your wolves did.”

“True. But the FBI couldn’t find their ass with both hands and a map, let alone a clue.”

Edmund chuckles.

“They’re idiots, Edmund. I mean, look at the sobbing pile of shit before you,” Stiles says.

Edmund looks Haigh over. He’s not in tears, but near there.

“Haigh being traced back to frequenting your club wouldn’t be an issue, even if the feds decided to work a case like they have a few brain cells.”

“Why is that?”

“Because you’re going to make it look like a suicide. Like he killed himself over the unrequited love from his vampire mistress. It’s easy enough. Especially considering we have physical proof of his obsession with her.”

“We have his cellphone,” Boyd responds to the quizzical look on Edmund’s face. He takes a small plastic baggie from his coat pocket and hands it to Edmund. Inside is a folded piece of paper.

“And this is…?”

“His suicide note.”

“My beta, Lydia, is very good at handwritten forgery,” Stiles interrupts over the phone.

“Please! Please, God, please! Don’t kill me. Please don’t kill me…” Haigh sobs, finally breaking down, falling to his knees, face wet with tears, screwed up in emotional agony; sick with torment.

Boyd and Edmund consider him for a beat, then—

“Killing Haigh rids you of your problem, but he was my rat. Ending him is a win for you, but a loss for me.”

“Haigh has been loss for you for some time now. Since he was switched over to Organized Crime.”

“Are you sure you’re just human? Because you are a very clever fox, Alpha-mate,” Edmund says with an impressed smile.

He and Boyd continue to tune out Haigh’s pleas and woeful begging.

“I assure you that I’m merely human.”

“And I see now why the fates decided you should be mated to a powerful Alpha…but you still have yet to tell me how to solve my dilemma.”

“Have you ever seen the movie The Departed?”

Edmund rolls his eyes, then rounds his desk again, sitting in his chair. “Please tell me your plan is not derived from a mediocre gangster film.”

“Hear me out.”

Edmund considers it a moment… Curiosity allows him to lean back in his chair and appear
amused. “Go ahead.”

“Instead of turning someone on the inside into a rat, we plant a mole within the FBI.”

“From what I remember from that sub par film—aside from how gorgeous Matt Damon continues to look, even approaching forty—was how long it took for him to infiltrate the FBI.”

“Well, then it’s a good idea I know a mercenary with nothing better to do. Mercenaries and hunters are pushed through training quickly by the feds. They already have the physical skill, supernatural background, and the tactical, survival, and recon expertise needed for the job. They just have to pass a bunch of written test, piss in a cup, and clear a background check.”

“Won’t this mercenary friend of yours be linked to your pack?”

“No. She’s not an official member.”

Haigh sees Edmund mulling it over, leaning closer and closer toward a ‘yes’… He slips his hand inside his pocket, carefully.

“You know this is a good deal, Edmund,” Stiles coaxes.

“Where’s Derek? Does he know you’re wagering this proposal?”

“I don’t ever make a play without my Alpha’s con—”

“AAAHH!”

“BOYD,” Stiles shouts through the phone.

The beta wolf growls, reaching back to grab it. With a snarl, he yanks the syringe out of his shoulder blade. His eyes turn to gold rings at the stunted human.

“Boyd! BOYD!”

He hears Stiles calling his name atop Edmund’s desk. Edmund suddenly standing beside him. He hadn’t seen him even lift from the chair.

“Are you alright? Are you hurt,” Edmund asks, fangs out and serious concern on his face.


“What happened?!”

“Haigh stabbed me with the syringe.”

“Idiot! And what were you going to accomplish by doing that, you fucking moron?! ‘Fairy wings’ is only deadly to vampires. The most that would happen to Boyd is a sneezing fit.”

“‘Fairy wings’?! You gave him ‘fairy wings’ to inject me with?!”

“No. We didn’t,” Stiles says assuredly.

Hesitantly, Edmund takes the needle from Boyd’s hand. He cautiously brings it up to his face, and sniffs… He turns to Haigh, the man looking frightened and nervous. “It’s nail polish, you halfwit,” the vampire snaps. “I’m going to enjoy your murder,” he says with a deadly grin.
“NOOOO! PLEASE! PLEASE DON’T!! EDMUND, DON’T! PLEASE…” Haigh sobs on his hands and knees.

“I’m sorry, my friend, but your usefulness has expired. I am no longer in need of your amateurish assistance. Henry. Georgina.”

Two brutish-looking vamps enter the office from the front door.

“Mr. Haigh here, needs to go for a long drive.”

Without hesitation, the two vamps grab Haigh and haul him out of the room, kicking, screaming, and crying.

“Stefani. Go with them. Make sure they don’t bruise him. It has to look like a suicide after all.”

The leggy, blonde vamp follows out the door.

“I don’t expect to see a single badge come knocking at my door, Alpha-mate. Not. One. Or no amount of nicely wrapped cash will suffice for a severed wolf’s head.”

“You won’t. You have my word on that. A pleasure, Edmund. Happy New Year.”

“And a happy new year to you, too.”

Stiles hangs up.

Boyd grabs his phone and puts it in his pocket. He nods to Edmund, then turns to leave—

“Going so soon?”

“Yes.”

“You should stay. Ring the new year in with champagne and fireworks.”

“No. Thank you. I have plans.”

“Of course you do,” Edmund says, trying to hide his disappointment. “A very handsome man such as yourself… Well, I bet all the sweet, young things line up to fill your dance card.”

“Where in the south are you from,” Boyd asks, seemingly random.

“And what makes you think I’m from below the Mason-Dixon line?”

“Your accent slips sometimes. And you make these folksy, antebellum references. Plus, you have an vicious charm, like you'd wait until after the dinner party to kill the host, because otherwise it'd be bad manners.”

Edmund laughs heartily. “That’s the most I’ve ever heard you say, and it just so happens to be the most poignant thing anyone’s ever said about me.”

Boyd shrugs.

“Savannah, Georgia. I lived there for over 200 years, until the 60s.” Edmund steps closer to Boyd, looking over his face with such intent. Such carefulness. “It’s uncanny how much you look like him. If only I kept that picture…”
“…I’m sorry he’s not with you now,” Boyd responds, not knowing what else to say.

“Me, too,” Edmund says, his voice almost broken by the memory of his first love. He blinks and the past is suddenly gone. “My apologies. Go. Welcome the new year with a kiss from a beautiful woman. Ignore the lovelorn vampire,” Edmund jokes behind a false smile.

“Thank you.”

Boyd shakes his hand.

He’s already out the door when Edmund wipes away a fallen tear with the hand Boyd shook, still tingling with his touch.

“Boyd just text me. He’s on his way.” Stiles crosses the room toward Derek, helping him with his bowtie. “I can’t believe you still wanted to throw this stupid party.”

“It’s New Year's Eve. You love New Year's Eve.”

“I love that you proposed to me on New Year’s Eve. I don’t love this stupid holiday,” Stiles says with a little bit more venom in his tone than necessary.

“Hey. Stop.” Derek takes Stiles’ hands into his. “I’m home. Edmund’s on board with the second part of your plan. Haigh is no longer a problem, or very near on his way to no longer being one. Boyd is safe and on his way here. Everybody is good. Except you right now. Tell me what’s wrong.”

Stiles looks away, embarrassed. “It’s stupid.”

“Tell me, baby. Please.”

“I… I… I feel so fucking fat and look horrible in this tux!”

The only thing that keeps Derek from bursting into a laughing fit is the tears in Stiles’ eyes, because Derek thinks his mate's pregnancy hormones are fucking adorable.

“Stiles. You look amazing.”

“No, I don’t. I look like Pavarotti. I’m a fucking whale in a tuxedo,” he cries.

“No, you’re not. I swear you look really sexy.”

“Don’t lie to me,” Stiles says wiping his eyes.

He’s not. Truth of the matter is the further Stiles gets in his pregnancy, the bigger his belly gets, the more time they spend on preparing for their boys, nesting, the more turned on Derek gets. The wolf in him wants. And wants all the time. Especially when Stiles is shoving raw broccoli dipped in marshmallow crème into his mouth, debating nursery color swatches with Lydia and Cora, or doing pilates in the living room with Erica every morning before breakfast.

He’s wanted to mated and breed Stiles since laying eyes on him. And being an Alpha with a healthy-sized pack adds to his wolf’s desire to grow it further with his own offspring. But now, with Stiles swollen with his cubs, desire seeps over him like a burning need sometimes, and it takes everything in him to focus and control himself into not slamming his mate onto any flat surface and
fucking him into unconsciousness.

Like now. Yet, this time, Derek decides to give into the wolf’s want. He’s been kept away from Stiles for a week. His scent not right under his nose. His fingertips lonely at not being able to scratch them at the base of the human boy’s neck.

Stiles is feeling unattractive, but Derek has nothing but a salacious craving for him.

The remedy for them both is simple.

Derek walks to the door. And locks it…

“I can’t believe I’m here. Why am I here,” Braeden complains.

“Because my Alpha asked you to be,” Malia says simply.

“Actually he threatened me.”

“Potato, pa-ta-toe. The point is you’re here and I’ve been dying for you to come to a pack party since forever.”

Braeden smirks. “You just want me to act as a buffer between your dad and whoever you find good-looking enough to kiss at midnight.”

“Do you want me to completely get over Stiles or not? Well, this is a good opportunity to try.”

“You’ve been over Stiles for months now. You just want to hook up with someone.”

“Are you judging me,” she smiles at her friend.


Their eyes scan over the crowd.

“...Would you think it weird if I said I wanted to hook up with Aiden,” Malia asks.

“Didn’t he and Lydia have a thing at one point?”

“Pfft! Years ago. At the Halloween party, in the laundry room.”

“It was the garage actually.”

They turn to Stiles standing beside them.

“Oh, my God, Stiles! You reek of sex,” Malia exclaims.

Braeden rolls her eyes, ready to make a run for it.

“Might have something to do with the fact that I just let Derek jerk off on my belly. I need to talk to Braeden. Alone.”

Malia nods, then heads toward the patio.

“What am I doing here, Alpha-mate?”
“I need you to do something for me.”

“You’re joking, right,” Braeden chuckles wryly.

“No. I’m not. And you’re going to do it.”

“Excuse me?”

“Look, I don’t want to be an asshole about this—”

“But you will be.”

“Only because I know if I asked you nicely you’d be a bitch.”

“Can you blame me?”

“No. Just like I didn’t blame Malia, for a long time.”

“Well, I’m not quite where Malia is just yet on the whole ‘my-boyfriend-cheated-on-me-and-thinks-it’s-okay-because-it-was-with-his-mate-and-they’re-Alphas’ thing.”

“Which is why I have to be an asshole about what I need from you.”

“I’m not going to do it. Whatever it is. But satisfy my curiosity,” she says with a smug grin as she sips her champagne.

“We need a mole in the FBI. Who better than a mercenary?”

She laughs boisterously. “You have got to be kidding. You’ve seen one too many gangster movies.”

“Braeden--”

“That is a serious operation, and 15 to 20 stretch in federal prison if I get caught; 5 to 10 for anyone else involved. Fuck you for asking.”

“You’ll have to go to Virginia, to Quantico, for training, but since you already have an attractive background it won’t be long. Probably about 3 months.”

“Did you hear what I said?”

“Shut up and quit posturing! You’ll do it,” he barks at her.

“You’re not my Alpha. I didn’t submit to Derek. This isn’t my pack.”

“No, it’s not, but I’ve been very generous in letting you play with my pups despite that being the case. I’m already being an asshole, don’t make me be a dick, too.”

She’s got nowhere to go if Stiles throws her out of Peter’s house. She’d be alone. She’s not an Omega, but having no one, being nowhere, belonging to nothing, would certainly make her feel like one.

“Where’s Derek? I want to talk to him. He said I could stay.”

“And you can, if you do this.”

“Why should I do anything for you,” she says with glossy eyes.
“It’s not for me. It’s for Derek. If we don’t know what’s happening on the inside, we don’t have the upper hand. Which means they’ll arrest Derek and the pack will fall apart. I no longer give a shit about how much you hate me, but I know you still love my husband. You don’t want to see him in prison, or his family and his business fall apart.”

He struck a nerve with her. He can see it. She’s quiet, thinking it over; considering…

“STILES! DEREK!”

They’re attention darts toward the patio!

“CALL AN AMBULANCE! SHE’S HAVING A HEART ATTACK!”

Derek breaks out onto the patio, shoving people aside. His heart thumping loudly, feeling the connected distress.

His baby sister on the ground, shaking, convulsing. Tears run down her face, and blood drips from her lips; her fangs having sunk into her bottom lip.

Derek bends down to cradle her in his arms. “Cora! What—”

His eyes draw to the young, blonde woman across from them. She, too, is on the ground, vibrating, seizing with tears running down her face, gasping in pain as she clutches her chest.

“Cora…” he says, a smile forming on his lips.

“What’s going on?!” Stiles rushes to the center of the action, standing beside Derek. “What happened to Cora?! Is she—”

Derek points toward the woman convulsing on the ground, too.

“Oh, sassy-wolf…” Stiles says, getting to the ground, taking her hand gently into his own.

Derek finally notices the barrage of people; gaping spectators. “What time is it?”

“Ten, I think.”

“We need these people out of here.”

Stiles looks around for a familial face. “Malia. You and Erica get these people out of here. Now.”

She heads off to find Erica.

“Peter. Go make sure no one overreacted and called the cops please.”

“The party’s over,” he groans, disappointed.

“Peter Hale, I swear to God…”

Peter rolls his eyes, then takes his cellphone from his pocket, calling the police.

Kira comes rushing out of the house carrying a blanket. She hurries over to the blonde woman, draping it over her. She runs her hand up and down her arm, trying to soothe her.

Stiles catches the kitsune’s eye and smiles. He misses her being at the pack house sometimes.
Especially at times like these, when all anyone can do is gawk instead of act, and with care.

“D-Derek…” Cora manages through a mouth full of blood.

“Shhh… It’s okay. Don’t fight it. Just wait for it to pass.”

She nods with a shutter.

“Well, how’s this for starting the new year off with a bang,” Stiles says.

The corner of Derek's mouth turns up. He moves a strand of hair from Cora’s face, then looks at his husband. “I happen to think it’s a good end, to a good day.”
New Year's Day

Chapter Summary

All Cora, all day :)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Cora huddles in a corner of Derek and Stiles’ room. She’s sweating. Shaking. With bated breath. Her head down low, facing the wall; claws digging into her arms as she wraps them around herself.

Her wolf can’t calm down. It wants to flee. To run for miles and never look back.

A soft knock at the door emits a low growl from the she-wolf.

The soft hinge of the door squeaking open emits another growl. More warning than the last.

A tread of light beacons into the room, shining on her. She snarls at the intruder and huddles closer to the wall, like a cornered animal.

The light is quickly gone. The door closed, but the “intruder” still inside.

“Cora? Cora, it’s me, honey.”

She knows that smell: plums, violets, nutmeg, fresh linen, and evening air. Valerie.

She takes a cautious seat on the side of the bed, nearest to Cora.

Cora flashes her fangs at her sister and snarls.

Valerie snarls back fiercely with beta eyes and fangs!

Cora hisses, but remains hunkered down in her spot.

“I don’t know what’s going on with you. But I’m sure it’s probably common. Allison said she screamed at Scott when they met. Yelled at him so bad he fled to our house. She said you were there with her. I asked her why, and she said it was because Scott was a wolf, and at the time, her soulmate being one, was one of the worse fates she could have ever imagined. She denied him. From the beginning. That’s what you’re doing. Why?”

Cora’s breathing becomes a bit shallow, wanting to answer but feeling too feral to speak.

“Cora. Take it easy. Breathe. Find your words.”

She tries. She closes her eyes trying to quell her wolf; telling herself to breathe. The wolf snarls and bites, fighting it’s way to the surface, but Cora counts.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5… Only three things can not be hidden: the sun, the moon, and the truth. The sun, the moon, and the truth. The sun, the moon, and the truth. The sun, the moon…
“Cora…?”

“...I’m sorry.”

“You don’t have to be sorry.”

“Yes, I do,” she cries.

Valerie slides off the bed, sitting beside her teary-eyed, baby sister. She takes her hand. “Why should you ever be sorry for finding love? It’s scary, and messy, and complicated. We all react differently.”

“Not like this. I didn’t want it to be like this.”

“What did you want it to be like?”

“Like when dad and mom found each other. You and Jason. Laura and Thomas… Perfect.”

“Nothing’s perfect. Trust me.”

“Does… Does she hate me?”

“She’s bound to love you for all eternity. No. She doesn’t hate you, silly-girl.”

“Is everyone mad at me?”

“No, Cora. No one’s angry. I promise you that.”

“It hurt so bad. I could feel her pain, too, and it hurt so bad.”

“Par for the course.”

“Is she gone?”

“No.”

“I can’t face her,” Cora says with shaking breath, her wolf wanting out again.

“Hey. Look at me. No one is disappointed in you. No one is angry. Especially not Zoë.”

It sounded like church bells in her head. Like an awakening. Like novelty. Like an announcement. She supposes that’s exactly what finding a mate is: the coming of new. “That’s her name? Zoë?”

Valerie nods with a smile. “You should probably go talk to her.”

Cora shakes her head.

“Don’t be scared, honey. You’re going to have to at some point.”

“Not… Not now. Later. I want to talk to mom and dad first. To all of you.”

Valerie nods. “Okay. That’s fine. Let’s clean your face first. Tears and snot don’t look good on anyone.” Valerie stands. She extends her hand to Cora.

Cora takes it, letting Valerie help her up.
Cora steps hesitantly into Derek’s office; Valerie holding the door open for her.

Everyone stands. Her whole blood-related family is there: Talia, Theo, Laura, Thomas, Jason, Peter, Malia, John, Derek and Stiles. Valerie closes the door. She walks to the center of the room and stands beside Cora, holding her hand.

“I’m sorry…about all that.”

“You don’t have to be sorry, my love,” Talia tells her.

“I know. It’s just…that’s not how I pictured any of this. This is not how I wanted it to go.”

“Different people react differently to finding their mate. It’s all about what’s going on in you at the time that makes for how you’d respond,” Theo says.

“I know. That’s… That’s what I wanted to talk to you about. About why I might’ve behaved that way. I was, um, struggling with it a bit in high school, trying to understand, and figure things out, but when I went to Berkley, um, every-everything just sort of f-fell into place, you know? And I finally understood why I felt a certain way about things…people, mainly. And, um, even though I’m not struggling with it internally anymore, with-within myself, it-it’s been hard to tell you guys about it exactly. I want to. I’ve always wanted to, it’s just that… I’m gay. I-I-I’m a l-lesbian.”

The room is so silent, the air so still, Cora feels like she’s in a room full of mannequins. She tunes into everyone’s heartbeat just to double-check.

Even. Normal. Steady. No one is freaking out.

…No one is freaking out… No one is freaking out…?

“Why aren’t you guys freaking out,” she asks.

Peter responds with an obnoxious snort. Talia swats his arm to ‘shut up’.

“W-What’s going on? Why don’t you guys seem…surprised? Val?”

“Uh…Well, we, um… It’s-It’s not— Well…” Valerie articulates.

“We’ve known since you were 10 years old that you’d end up eating box lunch at the ‘Y’ eventually,” Peter resolves, inching closer to the whiskey bar by the fireplace. “We got confirmation months ago. Plus, you being mated to a woman, I mean, not rocket science, Cora.”

“Peter. Shut up before I rip both your arms off,” Theo tells brother-in-law.

Peter scoffs, but keeps quiet, searching for the whiskey he wants.

“What do you mean ‘confirmation’,” Cora asks.

The room turns silent. All but the sound of Peter’s snickering.

But there’s one loud, thumping heartbeat. Belonging to a very nervous-looking Alpha-mate.

“Stiles!”

“I’m sorry! I had to! You said you would come out to everyone and then you didn’t! And I can’t keep a secret from Derek! He’s my mate and our Alpha! And then you and Danny were online dating—which is so fucking dangerous—and I was scared, and worried about you because I know
what it’s like to have that type of stuff inside you, eating you up! And I’m so so sorry!"

“God, Stiles, I can’t believe you! It’s not your place to tell people something that personal about me when I confide in you! You always butt in!”

“I had to!”

“You keep saying that, but it’s not true!”

“I wasn’t being malicious!”

“No! You were being your normal, nosy ‘mother hen’ self! God! I just can’t trust you!”

Cora storms out of the room, slamming the door behind her!

“St—” John doesn’t finish.

Stiles slams out of the office through the other door!

“I got Cora,” Derek sighs.

“I’ll get Stiles,” Laura counters.

The two of them head after their targets.

“Don’t you dare defend him, Derek.”

“He’s my mate. What do you think I’m going to do,” he says, taking a sit by the pool beside her.

“I don’t want you to defend him, because if you do, you’ll just justify what he did and he’ll be right, like always.”

“Stiles isn’t always right, Cora.”

She gives him a dubious look.

“He’s right most of the time. Like 70% of the time,” he relents.

She scoffs.

“Fine. Eighty-five.”

“Close enough.”

“What Stiles did was wrong. But it was from a good place.”

“Don’t care,” she scowls at the water.

“It’s like he said: he was worried about you. You were keeping a really big secret inside and he could relate.”

“Exactly! What if Scott outed him to his dad before he was ready to tell him? He’d be angry, and mortified, and hurt that someone he trusted, someone he loves, humiliated him and broke his trust! I have every single right to be pissed!”
“Didn’t say you didn’t.”

“But you want me to be ‘understanding’ and ‘forgiving’.”

“In the future, yes. But for right now, I get it. Look, Stiles goes about things in a very ‘Stiles’ sort of way sometimes. He rationalizes things in his head that seem so…fucking reckless and erroneous, but then turn out to be the best thing that could have happened. Like with Jackson going to Paris, or turning Braeden into a mole.”

“We’re turning Braeden into a mole?!”

“I don’t know, but knowing Stiles—”

“She’ll do it, and he’ll get his way and be right. Like always.”

“One thing I’ve learned from being with Stiles, with him being pack, is that there’s no such thing as ‘Stiles’ way’.”

“You are fucking joking, right?”

“I’m serious. There’s how he goes about doing things, but he doesn’t always get his way necessarily. A lot of times what he really wants doesn’t happen, but he’s okay with it, because it’s what someone else needs. His motivation is always the same: to make the people in this house nothing but happy. To make sure they’re safe and cared for. He lives to love and protect. You know that. And you just told him you don’t trust him anymore. I guarantee you he’s heartbroken.”

Cora felt a bit of herself crumble at the idea of upsetting Stiles. Especially now, with him being pregnant and so emotional. She knows he means well, and nothing he ever does is without a loving intent, but it still angers her that he spilled a secret she told him; the biggest secret she could ever tell anyone.

She had worked up such courage to even speak to Stiles and Danny about it, to even come out to them, and her second moment of bravery and self-acceptance was tarnished with everyone already knowing. “I’m not apologizing. That’s not fair, Derek.”

“Not asking you to. But at least talk to him, instead of howling at him, and hurting his feelings.”

“He hurt mine!”

“And Stiles will apologize, regretting he ever did that. You know it, Cora. All I’m asking is that you go a little easy on him.”

“…Fine. But only because he’s pregnant, because if he weren’t, Derek…”

“I know. I know.” He pulls his little sister close, wrapping an arm around her shoulder, then places a kiss on her temple.

“Did you hear what she said to me, Laura?! In front of everyone!” Stiles paces, worry up and down the length of the master bedroom.

Laura sits on the edge of the bed, looking very smug.

“She called me ‘nosy’ and implied I’m overbearing and said I’m not trustworthy. That…”
Stiles stops pacing and Laura replaces the know-it-all half-smile on her face for a troubled frown.

“That had to be one of the most hurtful things anyone has ever said to me.” Tears pool in his amber-colored, doe eyes. “I am nothing if not trustworthy to those I love. And I love Cora.”

“She knows that Stiles. We all know how much you care about this family. No one is questioning that. But you did betray her trust, and she’s hurt. How would you like it if Scott outed you to your dad? That’s how she feels.”

“I’m not saying I wasn’t wrong, I just need her to understand that I was worried for her and scared for her with this. It was eating her. I could tell.”

“Still not your call. Not your decision to make to tell me, mom, dad, and Val. You shouldn’t have even told Derek. It may not be a damn bit of a surprise to anyone in this family—this pack—but it was Cora’s to tell. It was for her to come in her own with. It’s not like you spilled the beans about her getting a tattoo or something, Stiles. You revealed someone’s sexuality without their permission.”

She crosses the room toward him, pulling him into an embrace. “You need to apologize for that, and reconcile with the fact that Cora does feel hurt and deceived by you. You need to make it up to her, and prove you’re worthy of her trust again.”

Stiles wipes his eyes. “I didn’t mean to hurt her. I was only trying to help.”

“She knows that, but right now she needs you to be humble and say you’re sorry. Not throwing your Alpha-weight around this time—”

“I don’t do that!”

“Want me to make a list? I warning you, we could be here all night. I mean, did you not just strong-arm Braeden into being our mole?”

“Braeden’s not even pack,” he says with disdain in his voice.

“All the more it’s the best example I, or anyone else, can give. You wield your authority around like it’s a magic wand sometimes…a lot of times…more often than not…like 85% of the time, and admittedly, it usually to a benefit, and for a good ‘cause’, but not this time, Bambi-eyes. This time, all that’s required is a heartfelt apology to your beta, that’s really hurt right now.”

Stiles nods. Laura’s right. He fucked up. He’s an Alpha and betrayed the trust of one of his betas. He has to atone for that and nothing else. “Not now though. Later. Now, Cora should really meet Zoë.”

“I agree,” Laura says, giving Stiles’ arm a gentle squeeze.

“I’m sorry. I heard voices out here and…”

She stops. She and Cora locking eyes.

“Hi. I’m Zoë. Apparently, we’re soulmates,” she chuckles, a little nervous.

Derek presses a kiss to Cora’s forehead. “Please remember what we talked about,” he whispers.

She nods.
He stands. “I’ll leave you two to it.” He gives Zoë’s shoulder a little squeeze (scent marking her) before heading back inside the house.

Cora stands. “I’m sorry about how I reacted. It all just…took me by surprise.”

“For a minute there I was scared you rejected me.”

“No. I was just—”

“Overwhelmed. I get that.”

“I didn’t even know your name before I ran away like a big chicken.”

“It’s alright. I got yours, Cora Samantha Hale,” she says with a flirty smile. “Your brother told me. He’s really sweet by the way. Quiet, but sweet.”

“He can be. He’s a good Alpha though. A great Alpha actually. But clearly I’m a little biased.”

Zoë giggles and Cora wants nothing more than to devour her. Her hair is gold like wheat touched by morning sun, with buttermilk skin, and eyes like cerulean crystal pools, sure to give Isaac’s a run for his money. Her lips are painted an inviting strawberry color. And Cora wants. Her wolf wants; coming a little closer, inch by inch, toward the surface.

“I’m sure you are. Hopefully I will be, too,” she says with a bashful smirk. “You’ll have to teach me though; how to be in a pack. I don’t know.”

Cora was so busy running away when she and Zoë met, then fighting with Stiles, and talking it out with Derek, that she hadn’t taken the time to really recognize her mate.

Cora leaned in close, taking a deep whiff…

*Human.*

Yet, there was something underneath. An energy.

“Witch,” Zoë answers in a soft whisper, millimeters from Cora’s mouth, eyes fixed on her dark counterpart with a hint of mint perfuming off her body. “What do I smell like?”

Cora’s eyes flash gold. “Mine.”

“What else,” Zoë asks, with a smile at Cora’s possessiveness.


“What does magic smell like?”

“Like smoke. Like the crackle and hiss from a sparkler, or roman candle. Like a firework.”

“Wow. Didn’t know fireworks had a smell.”

“Everything has a smell.”

“Wish I could smell you.”

The wolf scratches hungrily at the veneer, begging Cora to let him out. It smells peppermint and hears the soft, seductive tone in Zoë’s voice. It’s screaming in her ears: *Mate. Mate. Mate. Mate.*
“Ask me my last name.”

“Why?”

“So I don’t feel guilty about kissing a woman that doesn’t even know who I am.”

“What’s your last name?”

“Finch.”

Zoë crashes her mouth against Cora’s, and Cora lets her take.

She’s drowning. Underwater and barely breathing. But she doesn’t want to come up for air. She’s happy letting the cool darkness surround her and pull her down.

She hears nothing.

Sees nothing.

But knows there’s a beautiful witch kissing her, breaching her mouth with her tongue, and holding on tightly to the back of her shirt, as though she were afraid any minute Cora would run off, leaving her for real this time.

Cora plants her feet firmly on the ground, and grabs two fists-full of gold hair, tilting her head back just a bit, angling it to allow Cora to take control. For Cora to tell her with every movement of their hot, wet mouths, that she isn’t going anywhere.

She’s here, way past midnight on New Years, with her mate in her arms.

And it’s the first day of the year. The first time she’s not going to start it alone.

Not anymore.

Chapter End Notes

Okay, I didn't cheat you out of some very hot, lesbian sex. That happens next chapter--PROMISE! Flashbacks start back up in the next chapter, too. And the link for Zoë is of LOST actress Emilie de Ravin, but I know her from ROSWELL :)

My favorite AO3 writers (in no particular order):
Stoney (She truly is the Sterek porn queen. Long may she reign!)
DiscontentedWinter (She switches it up with her fics, never writing one type of trope or AU, and it's always wonderful)
exclamation (She always creates these incredibly detailed worlds, AUs, that are just so enthralling, not to mention, she updates daily)
Omni (You want dark, angst-y, or sexy? Go see Omni)
thepsychichclam (Her domestic series is my life)
DevilDoll (Nobody does oblivious idiots in love like she does. And it's always sexy)
theroguesgambit aka halekingsourwolf (This woman and her mastery[propensity for angst has done nothing but destroy my soul)
There's TONS of other fic writers I subscribe to, but these fair, 7 ladies update frequently, engage with readers often, and can do no wrong in my book. They make me LOVE everything they post. Truly.

My favorite tags (IN ORDER):
Mpreg, Pack Mother Stiles Stilinski, Angry Sex, Alternate Universe-Serial Killers, Alternate Universe-Psychopaths In Love, Kid Fic, Phone Sex, Alternate Universe-Werewolves Are Known, Love Confessions, Jealous!Derek, Pack Dynamics, Vernon Boyd/Cora Hale, Scott McCall/Lydia Martin

*I used to love me some Slow Build, but some fic writers out there are just too damn good. By the end of the fic I was either in tears, on the floor in the fetal position, shaking, or losing my mind because I'd be on like, chapter 17 or something, and they'd have yet to kiss!!! LOL
January

Chapter Summary

Cora's mating ceremony, Boyd's birthday, and a trip to the hospital for Stiles.

Chapter Notes

***LESBIAN SEX WARNING!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

There is no way that Cora Hale is going to be mated with just she, Zoë, Derek and Stiles in Derek’s office, followed by cake and champagne in the kitchen.

She’s a Hale. A true Hale, by blood. She’s the Alpha’s baby sister, and her parents were Talia and Theo Hale. Her mating ceremony was never intended to be a small, intimate affair.

So, the entire pack, all three ‘houses’ load up their cars and caravan to Beacon Hills for the weekend.

Her parents spare no expense, just like they had with Laura, Valerie, and Derek when they had their mating ceremonies. The difference being, Cora and Zoë want to combine their mating ceremony into a traditional wedding as well, making them the first mating pair that’s officially married since Derek and Stiles. And though her pack is happy for her, Cora picks up a small tinge of the cinnamon scent of jealousy from Allison, Lydia, and Freya, at having been the last mated but first married.

Mating ceremonies are considered a wedding by weres and other supes, but in quotations, seeing as how they are not legally recognized by the government. So supes also have to have a legal marriage—marriage license, name change, ‘power of attorney’, all of that— if they want their union to be recognized by the government as well. Hence, Cora and her mate thought it best to combine both their legal marriage and their mating ceremony into one, and spend the week before heading to Beacon Hills in county courthouses and with attorneys signing legal document after legal document.

At Hale House, Zoë and her hippie parents seem both overwhelmed and in awe of all the preparation for such a "quick, little ceremony," but the pack makes them and Zoë feel so welcome and a part of it all that their anxieties eventually wear off.

Zoë quickly becomes the most comfortable around Stiles, Lydia, and Deaton; the four of them experiment with magic and play magical tricks on the others, such as turning Peter into a donkey in the middle of the night.

Zoë has skillful and easy powers of transformation, which is still a very rough area of magic for Stiles, and not one Deaton has ever experimented with before.
She helps Stiles to center his magic, and draw from his spark with a bit more concentration and force that allows him to conquer a few transformation spells he usually finds tricky.

Zoë explains to him that being pregnant makes his magic more powerful, because it not only connects him closer to Derek, by carrying the children of a strong supe, but also taps into the energy of his pack members who have felt closer to him emotionally since being pregnant, and are close to him physically having moved back into the ‘pack house’ during his pregnancy.

Derek smirks a big ‘I told you so’ to Stiles when Zoë tells the Alpha-mate that.

Zoë’s mother, a werecoyote, is proudly tasked with the catering menu choices. She chooses a lot of healthy, organic/vegan food that initially turns off all the flesh-eating weres in the pack, but quickly brings them around when they manage to snag samples when Talia isn’t looking.

Though she is incredibly grateful for it all, Cora really wanted to have the ceremony at the beach house in Padre’s Shore. Committing to her mate on the warm, sandy beach as the sunset with a burning bonfire close by would have been the most romantic setting in Cora’s opinion…but under the crescent moon, on a clearing, in the preserve, turns out to be just as good, when she’s standing before Zoë, and her beautiful face glows from the mason jar candles and white Christmas lights strung through the trees.

“I, Cora Samantha Hale, would like to declare, Zoë Starla Finch, as my one and only mate,” she says, standing before Derek and Stiles. “She is bound to my wolf, just as I am bound to her spirit.”

“Zoë is this true? Do you feel bound to Cora as her mate,” Derek asks.

“Yes,” she answers. “I love her. I am hers, and she is mine.”

“Stiles. Objections,” Derek asks his husband.

“Absolutely not,” he smiles.

Stiles had apologized four times since Cora found out he outed her to their family. It wasn’t until the third time that she decided to ease up a bit and bestow her forgiveness onto him. She was always going to accept his apology, but thought he deserved to sweat a little bit.

She was however truthful when she said she doesn’t feel him as trustworthy as much as she used to, and Stiles knew it. So, the she-wolf knew she was in for Stiles doing all he could to make it up to her in the future.

“Is there anyone here that would like to object to this union?”

Of course there isn’t, but it doesn’t stop Cora from scowling and glaring over the crowd of her family, her pack, for someone who might. After all, she was there when Freya was permitted into the pack, and she saw how hard it was for Jackson to give his blessing.

Zoë’s parents sit beside Talia and Theo with happy, wet eyes. They hold tight to one another, watching their little girl, their only child, marry and join another pack.

“Zoë, there has been no objection to you joining this pack. You are welcomed here. Always. If you wish to make the Hale Pack your family, your home, and Cora your mate, then I ask that you submit now, or refuse.”
“I choose to submit,” she says. She lowers to her knees and bows her head. Cora moves her hair from the back of her neck.

Derek’s snaps out his claws. He scratches the back of her neck in one swift, bloody swipe.

Stiles rubs a potent cream on her scratches that makes Derek and Cora scrunch up their noses.

“Zoë Starla Finch, you are now pack, mated to beta Cora Samantha Hale, and henceforth Zoë Starla Finch-Hale.”

“Thank you,” she says with teary eyes and a proud smile.

Derek helps her to her feet.

“Stiles.”

“I am overcome with happiness for you both, but especially for my sassy-wolf. She likes to pretend she’s all hard edges and rough surfaces, but she really is nothing but pure love and respect; for her family, her pack, and her mate. Treat each other as though every day may be the last you have with them.”

“Yes, Alpha,” Cora and Zoë answer in unison.

“As True Alpha of the Hale pack of Northern California, I, Derek Stephan Hale, give my blessing for this mating.”

Derek rubs his cheek against Zoë’s face.

“Thank you, Alpha Hale.”

Derek scent marks Cora with teary eyes. “I love you so much, Cora.”

“I love you, too, big brother.” She hugs him, wiping at her eyes.

They pull apart, smiling happily at one another.

Zoë takes Cora’s hand, beaming with a goofy smile.

“Mrs. and Mrs. Cora Hale,” Stiles announces.

The humans cheer loudly while the weres howl joyfully into the cold, night air.

Cora and her girl are all smiles.

Cora is losing her mind. She knew having sex with her mate would probably be mind-blowing—if the loud sounds coming from Derek and Stiles’ room, or Isaac and Freya’s room, and the detailed descriptions Lydia gave about sex with Jordan were anything to go by—but she didn’t know it’d be as indescribable as this.

Cora had already planned to unleash her wolf the minute she and Zoë were alone in Cora’s apartment downtown, but Zoë throws her for a loop and takes the reigns of control from her almost the moment they start kissing.

Zoë tears Cora’s dress open, right down the front, exposing her supple breasts to the open air and
her gaze. She leaves soft kisses on her stomach as she massages her breasts, gently pinching her pert nipples between her fingers.

She eats Cora out until she's a screaming, withering mess, sweating and panting, soaking the bedsheets.

She then crawls off the bed to rummage through the **duffel bag** she brought over. Cora was still a sopping wet puddle of arousal when Zoë appeared back on the bed completely naked and holding a **jelly, double dildo**.

Zoë is proving herself more than capable to handle Cora, and might be more of an exhibitionist than she had realized. Cora wasn’t prude by any means (she ran two sex clubs and a brothel, for God’s sake), but when it came to sex she was a simple girl. It seems Zoë was determined to end that.

She wraps her arms under the she-wolf’s knees and yanks her forward, surprising the hell out of Cora with the strength she exerted to do that. Zoë hitches Cora’s dress further up her body, past her navel and exposing her cunt and the wet ‘**landing strip**’ of hair there.

Cora watches with wide eyes as Zoë takes one end of the dildo into her mouth and sucks, wetting it with her saliva. Cora wants to tell her that she has lube in her nightstand, but watching her mate felate the sex toy with her eyes trained on Cora, makes her wolf growl with approval. She also gets the impression Zoë may like what she's doing and how much it turns Cora on.

Zoë pulls the toy from her mouth with a wet slurp, then slips three fingers inside Cora’s still dripping hole. She pulls out of her and used the dampness on her fingers to slick the other side of the dildo. She slides the end she made wet with her mouth into Cora. Cora gasps, feeling herself stretched. She has a vibrator, but it's not as wide and ribbed as Zoë’s dildo. She clinches around it and Zoë fucks her with it for a good minute while Cora’s grapples at the headboard.

Zoë maneuvers their bodies into a ‘**scissoring**’ position and slides the other end of the toy into herself.

They work in a compatible rhythm, fucking themselves on the toy in sharp gasps and squeaky moans.

Zoë’s ministrations speed up, pushing harder and harder against Cora. She’s in her own ecstasy; she props herself up on one hand while rubbing her swollen clit with the other as she glides hard on the toy.

Cora watches her mate; Zoë chases her orgasm, bouncing on the dildo. Cora doesn’t want to miss a thing. She wants to catalogue every minute detail of the first time she saw Zoë Finch-Hale come.

Zoë shouts Cora’s name in along, loud song as her body spasms when a shock wave corrupts her whole being.

Cora feels it, too, and she grabs the blonde-haired woman, holding her as tight and as close as she can when the currant spreads through her as well.

When they gain their breath back, Zoë explains that as a mated witch her strongest emotions can be transmitted to her other half. Supernatural lore states that mates/soulmates are simply two souls that were joined at the beginning of time, then split apart, only to be determined to find one another through each lifetime. Sharing emotions, connecting on a more mystical plane, shouldn’t be unheard of, especially not when both souls are eyeballs deep in intense feelings.
Zoë climbs out of bed again and extends her hand to Cora. Cora allows herself to be lead to the bathroom.

Cora gets the shower going, nice and hot.

Zoë joins her after briefly returning to the bedroom for a waterproof vibrator she had stashed in her overnight bag. She gets in the shower with Cora and proceeds to tear her down all over again, starting with long, passionate kissing.

Cora winds up standing on her tipzy toes, trying—to no avail—to push Zoë away from her clit because it’s just too much, but feels so damn good.

She flicks the tip of her tongue at Cora’s swollen button while twirling the vibrator in and out of her pussy.

Cora grips the showerhead when her claws extend, so she doesn’t dig them into Zoë’s skin. Her fangs drop and beta eyes burn gold when Zoë replaces the vibrator with two fingers and closes her mouth around her clitoris.

Cora briefly catches the sight of Zoë’s milky breasts jiggle as she fingers her rough and fast under the spray of steamy water, before her eyes close, and she pictures her mate as a scandalized pixie; all perfect, smooth skin covered in rivets of hot water, as she does the most wicked things.

Zoë reaches that particular spot, curling her fingers there, and Cora loses all control. She’s comes with a howl than can be heard by every were in her apartment building, and feels a spritz of liquid shoot from her junction.

She’s a rag doll and slumps to the shower floor in Zoë’s arms. She’s the wolf. The predator. She shouldn’t be the one that keeps turning to Jell-O, wrecked and destroyed by the “meek, little human.” She wonders if Derek’s ever felt like Silly Putty with Stiles.

“Well. I’ve never had that happen before,” Zoë smiles, looking adorably smug.

“What,” Cora asks with a hoarse voice.

“You squirted. Right in my face.”

Cora’s eyes open immediately and look dead into her mate’s. “I have never squirted. Ever.”

“It’s nothing to be ashamed of. It’s just rare. Only 17% of females are capable of doing it, you know. And I made you do it, and you didn’t even know you could. I’m rather proud of myself.”

“Pfft! Bet I can make you do it.”

Zoë grins. “You can try.”

Cora manages to sit up completely. She turns off the water and yanks the curtain back. “Race you to the bed.”

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October 2018
Lydia dabbed the cut on Stiles’ cheek with a cotton ball dipped in rubbing alcohol. Stiles winced. Lydia muttered angrily to herself.

“Lyds, you can not tell Scottie. And you especially can’t tell Derek.”

“And why the hell not?! Look, at your goddamn face, Stiles! Look at the bruises all over your body! You were limping in here! He kicked you! You could have a cracked rib!”

“I’m fine, Lydia,” he grimaced.

“You are so not fine, and neither is that asshole. If he’s smart he is running scared right now.”

Stiles tried his best to sit up, but Lydia was forcing him back down by the sheer power of her icy glare. “Lydia. Listen to me. You can’t tell Derek. Please. Scott will go ape-shit, but Derek… Derek will go beyond murder, Lydia. You know that. He won’t just kill Matt; he’ll make sure his very existence has been wiped out. I can’t let him do that. We can’t let him do that.”

“He’s our Alpha. It’s his job to protect us, and to go after those that try to hurt us-- that do hurt us.”

“I will not under any circumstances let Derek go to jail. Especially not over me. He’s an Alpha. He’s a Hale, for God’s sake. What are we supposed to do if he’s gone?”

“No, Stiles. I don’t like this. I don’t like Matt getting away with this. He can’t just beat the crap out of you just because he’s jealous.”

“I was drunk and a goaded him. I taunted him.”

“So, it’s okay for him to put his hands on you like this?!”

“No! But I can’t deny a responsibility here! I didn’t like him! I treated him like shit and he didn’t deserve it! I was using him and he figured that out! And instead of being ashamed, I rubbed his face in it! I said such horrible, shitty things to him, Lydia. Just because I wanted to hurt Derek for dating Braeden.”

“How you’ve treated Matt is no doubt very scummy, and you deserve a comeuppance for that, but not this. Not being beaten like this. He could have been a real man and just walked away. It’s not like you hit him… Did you?”

“No,” Stiles shook his head.

“Well, all right then. ‘Pack justice’ it is.”

“No, Lydia. No ‘pack justice’. Please. I can’t hurt this family by taking Derek away.”

“We won’t get caught,” she said, carefully placing a splint on his broken index finger.

“Yes, we will. Derek will. He’ll be too full of rage. He’ll lose control and destroy Matt, no matter where he is, in front of whoever. You know that. Derek, unleashed, running on nothing but pure anger… That’s a disaster waiting to happen. I won’t be able to anchor him in a blind rage like that. Lydia. Please. This has to be our secret. I’ll do anything. I’ll even go to the hospital and get checked out, but please, keep this between us.”

She knew everything he was saying was the truth. Derek would go into a full-blown conniption at someone hurting his mate, his true love. Whether he and Stiles are together or not, they have a
bond that literally surpasses and transcends time and space. And the idea that someone chose to hurt one of them... Matt is very lucky Stiles is a smart as he is, because he could have gone straight to Derek.

“You are going to the hospital. Understand?”

Stiles nodded quickly.

“What the hell are we going to say about how you look? Weres can detect a lie, Stiles.”

“A complete lie, but not a half-truth, or misdirection, but just to be on the safe side, we’ll get our story straight, and tell Derek over the phone. Lying over telecommunication is impossible to detect.”

“Fine. But I want you to know that I am not happy about this. Matt deserves to be punished.”

“He’ll get his. It just can’t be Derek.”

“Oh, he will definitely get his. That I do know.”

She helped him up off the couch. There were smeared blood stains on the cushions. Lydia rolled her eyes at having to now get the piece of furniture professionally cleaned.

“We have to go to the next county. We can’t go to a hospital here, and we definitely can’t go to Marin; she’s bound to inform Derek of everything.”

“I know. Way ahead of you.”

Stiles wobbled, using Lydia as a crutch, toward the front door. “Lydia. Thanks.”

“I don’t think this is exactly a ‘You’re welcome’ type of situation.”

Stiles managed a chuckle, which made his ribs hurt. “You might be right.”

Lydia got the door open while holding Stiles upright. “Stiles.”

“Yeah?”

“Don’t you ever let some rebound guy put his hands on you again. Otherwise, I will tell Derek. And your father.”

They stepped onto the porch. Lydia closed the door and locked it with her keys.

Stiles nodded. He’s not planning on ever being a domestic abuse victim again, but he knows Lydia doesn’t make idle threats; they’re a waste of time, and Lydia Martin’s time is nothing short of precious.

But just for future reference, he knows this isn’t something that should ever happen twice. For any reason.

Which is why he’s on a mission to get his soulmate back.

Boyd wants to go camping, and do a little fishing. And maybe an early morning hike. A few days
in the woods with his pack is all he wanted for his 29th birthday, and although only the boys, Allison, Freya, and Malia were excited, they all dig out their camping gear and get to packing their backpacks.

Liam and Mason of course don’t have camping gear. The close they’ve ever come to it was sleeping outside a bus depot, panhandling until transit police forced them to “move along.” So, Derek and Jackson take them to the sporting goods store and buy them all the things they needed. Mason's crush on Jackson amuses the Alpha when the human insists he and Liam did need a big tent because he can just “share” with Jackson. Jackson, though flattered, breaks it to the human that he’ll be sharing a tent with Danny instead.

Stiles makes enough sandwiches and packs enough food to feed an army. Though all three ‘houses’ are going, and all the weres are known for their vicious appetites, Stiles just wants to make sure they get enough food and water.

Especially considering he isn't going with them.

Though Mt. Tamalpais State Park is sure enough safe (the Appalachian Trail it’s not), Stiles’ pregnancy would make it difficult on him “roughing it” for nearly four days. He was in his third trimester now which meant sometimes the simplest tasks became the most difficult, and thinking he could even do the most mundane things with no electricity, no heat, no water, and no indoor plumbing was not something Derek, nor Jordan, thought was a good idea.

With Stiles being left behind, Derek wants to make sure Stiles is well looked after by someone responsible and could protect him if something were to happen. Immediately, Lydia, Erica, and Valerie volunteer to “baby-sit” Stiles (not really in the mood for a camping trip, but honestly, just far too girly for the venture, Derek thought), but the Alpha shoots them all down when Theo says that he wasn’t planning on going.

With his bad leg, camping isn’t exactly a fun activity unless he is planning on being in his full lion form, and that he couldn’t do at all. So, he offered to stay with Stiles for the next few days while the others drove 2 hours out of San Francisco for some outdoor fun.

“Stiles, I have enough socks. We’re only going to be gone for a few days,” Boyd tells his Alpha-mate when he catches him stuffing yet another pair of wool socks into his backpack.

“You can never have too many socks when you go camping. Trust me.”

Stiles double-checks Boyd’s backpack and fishing gear.

“Stiles, you literally packed everyone’s bag for them.”

“I’m just making sure I didn’t forget anything. Where are the protein bars for your hike…?”

Boyd opens a zippered compartment of his pack and shows Stiles the 8 protein bars he shoved in there. “You’re going to make my pack too heavy to carry.”

“You’re a werewolf. I think a 60 lb. pack is fine for you to lug on your back for a few miles. You carried me for almost 3 miles once. Ran actually.”

“Who knew Griffons were real. And vicious,” Boyd shrugs, recalling the memory.

“Me! I did,” Stiles says pointing to himself. “And I tried to warn you and Derek before you went and pissed him off!”
“It wasn’t me and Derek so much as it was Jackson, who doesn’t understand the meaning of the word ‘tact’.”

“Well, I can’t argue with that.”

“My room is next door, you know,” Jackson shouts through the wall. “And that Griffon was an asshole!”

A small smile grows on Boyd’s face. Stiles returns the smile.

Though he’d never tell a single soul, out of all his betas, even Scott and Lydia, Boyd is the one he trusts the most. However, although he is the one he has to coddle the least, he still manages to be the one he worries about the most. His shy, reserved nature makes Stiles nervous at times when it comes to personal matters. Erica, for example. Stiles knows full well that though Boyd and Erica knew they weren’t mates, Boyd was nonetheless very much in love with her, and was too passive in expressing his disappointment in her wanting have an open relationship with him. Which eventually lead to them breaking up when Erica wanted to be in a serious relationship with a shape shifter she met at a bar. When that ended, Erica decided to flit from guy to guy (and the occasional girl) while maintaining a “friends-with-benefits” ordeal with Boyd.

And although Stiles has spent intimate time with Erica, openly discussing her “relationship,” or lack there of with Boyd, he’s always been honest with her about how she treats him. She knows Boyd still cares for her, and has a hard time saying no to her, given their history and his dormant behavior when it comes to the opposite sex.

Boyd’s been on only two dates since he and Erica officially ended, that Stiles knows of (which he heard from Derek). Obviously, neither of them worked out. For what reasons, Stiles doesn’t know, but he has his theories, and they mainly consist of a very quiet beta sitting awkwardly across a table from a beautiful woman that was probably wondering if her date was mute.

Boyd’s a serious kind of guy, who wants a serious kind of intimacy with another person, and though Erica can’t give that to him, he knows the best he can hope for is what she is willing to give him, because the alternative is trying to find comfort in someone else, and Boyd knows he’s no good with strangers. And it breaks Stiles’ heart.

“I’m sorry I can’t go with you, pup.”


“You, me, and the 49ers when you get back. Already got tickets.”

“Stiles, you hate football, and the next 49ers game is the NFC championship game.”

“And?”

“You got NFC championship game tickets?”

Actually, Lydia got them for him, having used a bit of her feminine wiles on a friend of a friend who had box seats. “Is it not your birthday?”

Boyd manages an impressed look about his face that makes Stiles beam with pride.

He leans in and hugs Stiles, who pecks his cheek. He oddly never kisses any of his other male betas, not even Isaac, or Danny, but Boyd always lets him and tries to hide a bashful smile when he does.
"Must have something to do with Boyd reminding me a lot of Derek... And if that’s the case then I better stop... Whatever. Boyd likes it and he’s comfortable with it. He’s my beta. I’ll kiss my beta if I want to kiss my beta. I’m an Alpha; I can do whatever I want.

"Can we get going," Jackson asks, appearing in the doorway. “It’s four in the goddamn morning.”

“Do you have extra socks?”

“Stiles, I swear to God, you already checked my bag three times. Yes, I have extra socks!”

And with that, Jackson’s disappears snarling.

“What was that about,” Boyd asks.

“A French boy he thinks I know nothing about. Come on. Let’s get your stuff loaded in Laura’s RV.”

Catcalls and whistles abound as Boyd holds a bouquet of three dozen, long-stem roses in his hands.

“Ha ha. Very funny,” he says with an unimpressed look on his face, but Derek, Scott, Jackson, Isaac, and Aiden can’t stop snickering.

“It’s not funny. I think it’s very sweet,” Stiles says.

“Me, too,” Zoë adds.

“And I wonder how he knew it was my birthday,” Boyd says, sending an accusatory glare at Stiles.

“He helped us kill a federal agent! The least I could do was tell Edmund it’s your birthday!”

“But flowers though…”

“It’s a nice gesture, and they’re beautiful.”

“I guess…”

“Make sure you send a ‘Thank you’ card,” Scott teases. Stiles smacks his arm.

Boyd rolls his eyes and heads back to his old room to put the flowers there.

They can’t hold it in anymore, and burst out laughing.

“I am shocked at all of you! You jealous, hyenas,” Stiles scolds, but it doesn’t do any good; they can’t stop laughing. “That’s it! Scott and Jackson you have kitchen duty for a month! Isaac, you’re on laundry! Derek is cleaning every bathroom in this house, and Aiden…you…you… You have to switch houses with your brother for the whole month!”

“Crashing at Peter’s for 30 days is so worth that look on Boyd’s face,” Aiden giggles.

Stiles throws his hands in the air with a groan and exits the foyer to go and help Lydia and Talia.

The pack is nearly 20 minutes past schedule (according to Lydia) because Derek is having a hard time leaving Stiles behind, contemplating whether or not he should even go. Theo assures his son
that Stiles is in good hands and will be fine. He promises to call if anything at all happens.

Theo will of course look out for him, and Jordan is still in town, so anything baby-related would be properly handled.

And as far as pack-related, the only major thing they had working was Braeden having left just a few days ago to Quantico for FBI training. She couldn’t really correspond with direct members of the pack (despite Malia really missing her best friend and wanting to know how she was doing), but the mercenary did promise to write, sending (coded) letters to a P.O. box in Fresno, in order to communicate. Which meant Peter was mainly in charge of the ‘mole’ operation, seeing as how he’d have the most contact with Braeden until she graduated the academy.

Everything is handled on the business end of things, so the only situation that mattered to anyone again was Stiles’ pregnancy. Especially to Derek.

“I’ll be fine, Big Bad. I promise. Don’t you trust your father?”

“I sure hope so,” Theo says.

“Of course I do, dad. It’s just…”

“You’re not going to miss anything. I’m nowhere near my due date, and we’ve been taking very good care of me since the beginning. Everything will be okay. Please go and enjoy your beta’s birthday. I know how much you’ve wanted to go camping lately.”

“Twenty-two minutes,” Lydia shouts from her car.

Derek growls in her direction.

“Hey. Kiss me.”

Derek gives Stiles a slow, chaste kiss.

“What did I tell you about kissing me like that,” Stiles says, a bit breathless.

“Do not eat cookies for breakfast, and listen to my dad please.”

“He’s the only one I listen to.”

“Twenty-four minutes,” Lydia interrupts.

“I love you.”

“I love you, too, sourwolf.”

Stiles watches as Derek climbs aboard Laura’s RV. He and Theo wave everyone off as the “caravan” pulls away from the house and down the curved road, away from the hill…

“So, what would you like to do,” Theo asks.

“It’s 5am. I want to go back to sleep.”

“Oh, thank God. Me, too.”

Stiles and Theo head back into the house.
“Okay. Say it one more time,” Theo says with a slight chuckle in his voice.

Stiles doesn’t mind at all. He likes seeing Theo smile. It looks so much like Derek’s, and the werelion’s regal, earnest reserve rarely allows most to see it. “Przemysław Jonatan Grzegorz Stilinski.”

“Przemysław Jonatan Grzegorz Stilinski,” Theo repeats in perfect diction.

“Yes, and you said it a lot better than Derek did the first time.”

Theo chuckles. “And John is polish, but your mother was not.”

“Dad’s 100% Polish, and my mom was half Irish and half Italian. The last 5 generations of Stilinski men all have the same middle name: Grzegorz. So dad’s full name is Jonatan Grzegorz Stilinski.”

“And you have his given name as your first middle as well?”

“Yeah. He said he at least wanted me to have one ‘normal’ sounding name people could pronounce. I think he was hoping I’d liked to be called ‘Little John’ or something, but then I decided to go by ‘Stiles’ so that kind of flew out the window.”

“And what does Przemysław mean in Polish?”

“‘One who is clever or ingenious.’”

“If ever there were a name that suited someone.”

Stiles blushes.

Theo puts a plate and bowl of unrecognizable food in front of Stiles, and the same dish before the empty chair beside him. “Now, it’s a little spicy, but nothing you can’t handle, and nothing that will cause premature labor.” Theo turns off the stove and sits beside Stiles.

“What is it?”

“Ogi and Akara. It’s a traditional Nigerian breakfast of the Yoruba tribe there.”

Stiles can see why Derek is always in such awe of his father. The life he must have lived seems nothing but fascinating. He’s like some weird mix of Indiana Jones, Benjamin Button, and Forrest Gump. He’s lived over a hundred years in secret as the most mysterious and respected of all supernatural creatures, but it doesn’t mean he hasn’t lived at all. And that’s the part of Theo Hale that fascinates Stiles the most.

“How long did you live in Africa?”

“Was born there. Most werelions are, at least those of us that are left were. Moved to America during the 20s. Yasmin came with me. We headed straight to New York City.”

“Did you two used to date,” Stiles asks waggling his eyebrows at his father-in-law.

“No,” Theo smiles. “Yasmin prefers her companions to be female.”

“She’s not mated?”
No. And I suspect she’s in no rush to be. Yasmin likes her space, and commitment isn’t something she’s very good at unfortunately.

“I never heard of a were being unmated for so long, or not really wanting to be.”

“I believe Yasmin’s desire for independence is the chief reason why she may not have been mated as yet. The ’weregods’ know she’s not ready, and hasn’t been for a long time. The desire for a mate, or children, isn’t as prevalent with werelions as it is with other were. We seek companionship, and family, a pride, but marriage and kids doesn’t really drive us as it does, say werewolves. At least not until we find our mate.”

“Is that what happened when you met Talia? You were a total player until you locked eyes on her.”

Theo laughs. “I wouldn’t have called myself a player, but I was open to any and all possibilities.”

“And then you met Talia.”

“And then I met Talia, yes.”

“Derek said she was 15 years old when you met,” Stiles says with a sly grin.

“She was. We married a year later; took me that long to convince her father I was good enough for her and should be her legal guardian, since she was underage.”

“Why didn’t he think you were good enough?”

“Well, by then I had moved to California, after the War, and already built up quite a reputation as a bit of a ’gangster’. Our pride decided it would be best if we were to split the world in sections, to guard and protect, and to rule over. Yasmin and I were already in the States, so we decided to split the country: I got the entire west, Hawaii, and Alaska, and she got the east coast and the south. We left everything in the middle to the Native American tribes there to run unofficially, but we occasionally make our way to the Midwest if we hear rumblings of anything.”

“What made Talia’s father change his mind about you?”

Theo flashes his eyes at Stiles.

“You told him?! Did he freak out?!”

“Fainted. Right in front of me.”

Stiles laughs heartily.

“From then on he treated me like…well, like royalty; used to really piss Peter off.”

“I bet.”

Theo smiles. “How is it,” he asks, nodding to the food.

“Delicious.”

“Good.”

Theo smells citrus; bitter but tangy, and a little sweet… Nerves. Stiles. “You can ask me anything, you know?”
Stiles gives a small smile that doesn’t reach his eyes. “I know… It’s not really a question, it’s… I’m sorry you’re alone.”

“I’m not alone, Stiles. Far from it. I have Talia, my children, this pack, and other lions. I even have two new grandchildren on the way. Lions may not be as great in number as we once were, like wolves, but I am far from alone. It’s the hiding that grows very tiresome, and very old though…”

“You know Derek kind of kicks himself not being born a lion. He loves being a wolf, but…”

“That’s my fault. I’m afraid my son has unfortunately inherited by martyr complex; ‘the world and all it’s problems is his and his alone, and only he shall suffer for them’.”

“How am I in love with that?!”

Theo laughs. “I don’t know. You’ll have to ask Talia how she’s put up with it all these years.”

They spend the next couple days just talking and Stiles enjoying all the worldly food Theo makes, like: smoked aubergine puree from Turkey, jerk pulled pork with banana salsa from the Caribbean, Thai chicken and sweet potato soup from Thailand, and Moussaka from Greece.

Stiles has never had such amazingly delicious food in his life. And he’s been to New Orleans a few times.

They play chess and watch classic film noir movies, like Double Indemnity and The Maltese Falcon in between Stiles resting and Theo seizing the opportunity to shift into his lion form, given the secluded and expansive piece of property his son and son-in-law’s house rests on.

Stiles nearly jumps out of his skin when Theo trots up the steps and goes into the bathroom as though it were a completely normal occurrence to see a lion wandering around the house.

On there last night together, Stiles returns the favor and decides to cook for Theo. He learned how to make Beef Wellington while in London, and bakes a St. Clement’s pie for dessert, in keeping with their “international dinners” theme.

They watch the movie Laura afterward and Stiles begins to drift off.

“We should get you to bed.”

“No,” Stiles protests. “I’m good. Let’s watch Gilda. I love Rita Hayworth.”

“You really should rest, Stiles.”

“Not sleepy. Swear.” He sits up, blinking his eyes rapidly, trying to wake up and look more alert.

Theo’s not buying it, but if Stiles wants to spend more time with him, he won’t argue. He enjoys the company as well. “And what other Rita Hayworth movies do you like?”

“Derek made me watch The Lady from Shanghai with him, and then I was hooked. I watched Pal Joey, Cover Girl, and Affair in Trinidad.”

“Well, alright then. Let’s watch Gilda,” Theo smiles.

They turn their attention to Robert Osborne intro-ing the film before it starts.
“Talia looks a little like her. You know, minus the red hair.”

“If you tell her that, she’ll love you forever,” Theo says.

“Pfft! She already adores me.”

Theo laughs.

Stiles cuddles closer to Theo as the movie starts.

They’re just at the part where ‘Gilda’ flips her hair, in that well-known scene, when Stiles says, “I hope the boys are werelions.” He leans his head on Theo’s shoulder.

“That would be nice. And so would human grandchildren, or werewolf grandchildren. I’m happy either way.”

Stiles yawns big and wide. “Me, too.”

“Only hope for them to be happy, and healthy.”

Stiles nods, looking tired.

Theo’s arm comes around his shoulders. Stiles leans into the touch and is out like a light the second his eyes close.

“Derek!”

Derek jolts awake! He turns on the light on the nightstand. “What? What’s wrong?”

“I think I’m having contractions.” Stiles looks like he’s in pain and holding the lower half of his belly.

“Are you serious?”

Stiles nods. “Very. Call Jordan. We need to go to the hospital now.”

“You’re only seven months, Stiles!”

“Tell that to the two cubs trying to break free! Call Jordan now!” Derek grabs his cell and calls Jordan. “Scott! Scott!”

Scott comes barreling into the room with Allison! “What’s going on?”

“Go pull Derek’s car out of the garage. We’re going to the hospital,” Stiles winces in pain. “Allison. Help me downstairs.”

Scott does as told when Isaac and Freya appear in the room. “What’s going on,” Isaac asks.

“I’m going into labor.”

“You’re only 7 months!”

“Yes, Isaac! Thank you! I know that,” Stiles barks at him.
Allison slips Stiles shoes on. She grabs his cellphone and keys, then helps him to his feet.

“Oh, shit. This is so not a drill,” Isaac says.

The entire house stirs into a panic as Derek and Allison put Stiles into the camaro. Derek climbs into the driver’s seat. Scott and Allison take up space in the back. Scott holds a trash bag of Stiles' stuff on his lap while Allison calls John and Derek’s parents, letting them know what hospital they’re going to.

Derek tries to keep his eyes on the road, to concentrate, but Stiles is wincing in pain with the occasional “Ow!” as he squeezes the grab handle.

“Your parents are on their way,” Allison says, hanging up her cellphone.

“What about Jordan?”

“He and Lydia are on their way, too,” Derek tells him.

“Did he say anything about me going into labor? Anything bad?”

“No.” Derek takes Stiles hand into his. “It’s going to be fine. I promise you, Stiles.”

“Derek…”

“I promise you, Stiles. Okay?” Derek knows the last thing he should be doing is making promises he can’t keep, guarantees he can’t live up to, but he needs Stiles to be calm. The last thing that should happen is for Stiles to have a panic attack while also going into premature labor. And a steady Stiles always makes for an anchored Derek.

Lydia won’t stop pacing. Scott keeps making wounded puppy noises. Isaac grips the chair so hard he leaves crawl marks. Zoë recites a sanctity and protection spell under her breath on a loop. John leans his elbows on his knees, head hanging low, hoping for the best but fearing the worst.

“Lydia. I swear to God with the pacing…” Jackson says, flashing his beta eyes at her.

She regards him with an evil glare…and continues pacing.

Everyone’s still in their nightclothes. Scott, Erica, and Cora aren’t even wearing shoes, having jumped in their cars barefoot. Freya’s only wearing a babydoll nightie and a pair of flip flops.

The wolves perk up a minute before Stiles is wheeled into the waiting room by Derek. Jordan is with them.

“Sorry, guys. False alarm,” Stiles says, looking very apologetic.

The entire room gives a loud, collective sigh of relief.

“Stiles, if you freaked us all out because you had bad gas or something, I swear after you really do give birth, I’ll drop kick you.”

“No, I didn’t have bad gas, Scottie! Jeez!”

“It’s okay everyone. Stiles just went into prodormal labor,” Jordan says in a clam, easy voice.
“What the fuck is that,” Jackson says, patience worn thin and nerves shot, worrying about his Alpha.


“We just need to be grateful that’s all it was. Having twins, or multiple births, is a cause of premature labor, so let’s just be thankful it was just false labor instead,” Jordan says. He turns to Stiles, “And you should use this experience to better prepare yourself for when you really do go into labor.”

“What do you mean,” Lydia ask. “I wrote everything down. All my notes, my checklist, my calendar, your dos and don’ts— I left it all for you, Stiles. I even packed you a hospital bag and left it by the door!”

“That’s what that bag is,” Stiles recalls excitedly, oblivious to the rage burning through the banshee.

“Are you telling me that’s why McCall has that garbage bag in his hand? I move out and leave you my ‘Stiles pregnancy guide’ and you ignore everything?!”

And now she has Stiles’ attention…along with a few hospital personnel within earshot.

“That’s it! We’re going back to square one!”

“Oh, shit,” Derek mumbles.

“Let’s go, people! We are doing drills all night until we get it right!” Lydia shoves Derek aside and wheels Stiles out of the hospital!

And no one dares to object as they follow her out with heads hung low.

Chapter End Notes

I'm back!!! And had a great time with the in-laws! Hope your holidays was good, too, and you tied a yellow ribbon around a tree and places flowers on the graves of the fallen.

On a lighter note, I failed to mention in my notes last chapter, that Stiles leaves Beacon Hills is also a favorite tag of mine.

Also, one of my new favorite shows is UNBREAKABLE KIMMY SCHMIDT, and Kimmy x Dong might be added to my list of OTPs...if Dong wasn't such an obviously racist caricature. Tina Fey really needs to fix that somehow, otherwise, the show is pretty damn funny.

Let's see, what else... Oh! If you haven't already, please read Little Wild Animal by DiscontintedWinter; it's fucking great. And let me just say, it is very hard to create OCs in fanfic and have them be enjoyable to readers, whether they love to hate them, or simply love them, and DiscontintedWinter created what may by my favorite OC in fanfic within the story Little Wild Animal. Her character Alex is so wonderfully written and sweet, and the interaction she creates between he and Derek, he and Stiles, and Alex with his boyfriend (another OC) is simply endearing, and I hope to see more
of him in her work.

And, there's probably 3 more chapters left of this fic before it ends, seeing as how Stiles' due date is in April, and that's where I plan on ending PART TWO. Good news is that when I'm done, I'll be taking prompts for the rest of the summer, then moving on to my next long fic :)
February

Chapter Summary

Valentine's Day, a baby shower, and a certain werewolf changes his mind about something important.

Chapter Notes

TWO CHAPTERS LEFT!

“Why are we being kicked out,” Liam asks.

“You’re more than welcomed to stay if you would like to watch me and Derek fuck on every flat surface of this house. We don’t mind an audience,” Stiles smirks at the baby-wolf.

“Ain’t that the truth,” Erica grumbles under her breath.

“Ugh! No, I’ll just go to Peter’s house,” Liam responds with a disgusted frown.

Valentine’s Day is tomorrow. Scott and Allison are spending the holiday in Maui this year, having left two days ago. Lydia and Jordan are going to a snowy, mountain lodge in Vermont for a few days and left late last night. Cora and Zoë left for the Hale beach house this morning, and Isaac and Freya went to the airport and hour before them to Bethesda, Maryland, so Isaac could finally meet Freya’s parents.

Stiles could tell by the queasy look on Isaac’s face before their departure that the beta wolf was seriously nervous about meeting Freya’s strict, conservative family. Freya had tried numerous times to calm her mate’s nerves by assuring him that “meeting my mom and dad is just bureaucratic. I don’t give a shit about their opinions of you, or us. We’re only going out of respect for them being the people responsible for my existence.”

Freya has never hid that she was a rebellious child, bumping up against her father’s strict rules for her, and her mother’s “Mamie Eisenhower” ideals of womanhood. It’s why she was sent to military school when she was only 10 years old. She oddly grew to like the school, and became close friends with Jordan who attended a nearby, all-boys military academy that allowed their cadets to participate with the cadets at the all-girls school Freya attended in social events, like school dances, sporting events, and social clubs. When either Freya or Jordan would get a free pass for the day, or during the weekend, they always spent it with one another, or with the collected group of friends they shared.

Stiles recalls Freya saying they dated for a bit during their high school years, but quickly realized they were better off as friends than anything, and decided to attend West Point together.

Stiles knows Isaac is going to be nervous and edgy regardless of how routine but necessary Freya tries to make their visit seem, so he tells her the best thing to do is to “sweeten the pot” for Isaac.
So, she promises to only spend a day and a half with her parents before they head to Washington, D.C., which admittedly is probably the least romantic city on the east coast, but she figures locking themselves in the royal suite of Four Seasons, fucking each other’s brains out and eating room service is a good enough compensation. Plus, Isaac has never been to the US capital before.

Laura and Thomas were saddled with their own girls and Valerie’s daughters last year, so it was now Valerie and Jason’s turn to baby-sit while Laura and Thomas went to Las Vegas for Valentine’s Day.

Talia and Theo left for Venice, Italy for two weeks days ago, but John and Melissa decide to stay in San Francisco, promising to stay out of Stiles and Derek’s way, especially considering they have romantic plans of their own.

So that left all the single people. Who are forced to impart themselves on Peter.

Peter throws an anti-Valentine’s Day party on his goat farm in Fresno every year; (coincidentally?) since Stiles and Derek got married. It’s a large affair that has sort of become the place to be for singles in the area. And though he’d never admit it, Peter loves doing it. He gets to thumb his nose up at romance, mating, and the like, while being Mr. Popular with an epic party that keeps people talking the entire month.

It also helps business. With him seen as a beloved figure of the community, it makes for fewer enemies, more cooperative allies, and less hassle from local law enforcement that don’t want to be seen “harassing a significant resident of the city.”

The last two Valentine’s Days, Stiles and Derek were out of the country, and the pack had already moved out way before then, so they didn’t have to kick anyone out of the house. But Stiles is pregnant this year and is prohibited by Jordan to travel by plane, especially at 8 months pregnant. Which made for a very long train ride from California to Colorado at Christmas.

Suffice it to say, they intend to stay home and enjoy their romantic holiday. Therefore, said single betas have to fucking go. With the exception of Danny who is having a romantic Valentine’s Day with the architect he met online. Whom Stiles has had yet to meet, and is fuming that Danny is keeping him in the dark about his clearly active love life.

“You’re all going to Peter’s house. We don’t want you here, and trust me when I say, you don’t want to be here,” Stiles says.

“Calm down, kid,” Boyd tells Liam. “Peter throws this sick anti-Valentine’s Day party every year, and the whole thing is just out of hand.”

“Please don’t say anything like that in front of me,” Derek tells his number two.” Because then I get nervous and start acting like a ‘dad’; worrying what the hell you’re all doing and what kind of trouble has Peter gotten you into.”

“We don’t let Peter drag us into anything we don’t want him to,” Jackson tries to reassure his Alpha.

“Except that time we smoked peyote with him during that naked drum circle,” Erica says.

Stiles sighs, while Derek literally face-palms.

“Go,” Stiles groans.

Erica shrugs when Jackson and Boyd’s glare falls on her for spilling what is clearly a secret. She
pecks Stiles’ cheek. She and Derek scent mark each other before she bounces out the door. Boyd, Jackson, Liam, and Mason follow, pilling into Boyd’s car.

Stiles and Derek wave them off as they pull away from the house and head to Fresno.

“So… What do you want to do now…” Derek asks not-so-coyly.

It’s adorable, and makes Stiles smile that Derek seizes any and all opportunities he can to have sex with Stiles, especially while he’s been pregnant and feeling unattractive.

He kisses Derek, slow and sexy like he likes. “I want you to take me upstairs, get on the bed with me, put me on all fours and fuck me until I’m crying. Then I want you to come on my back.”

Derek’s eyes faded red and his fangs dropped. With a hungry growl he easily lifted Stiles off his feet and into the house.

New Year’s Eve 2019

Screw fireworks. Derek was pretty sure they’ve made a few of their own, in this room, in this bed. They’ve been at it since the moment they walked through the doors, and only stopped to pee, eat, or sleep.

The whole cabin reeked of hardcore, animalistic sex. Especially the kitchen and the master bedroom. The hot, sweaty air filled with both their scents smells nothing but sweet to the Alpha and made his wolf preen with pride and roll around happily.

They’ve fucked like they were possessed for 72 hours, but only minutes ago something else had happened. Something measured and romantic. Deep and loving, as Stiles rocked up and down Derek’s cock leisurely. Derek held tight to his hips and met him with the same torturous pace as his eyes wandered around every inch of skin of his mate. Derek’s eyes filled with tears that fell from the corners in droplets onto his pillow when he came. Stiles bent down to kiss them away before giving way to his own pleasure and collapsing onto the wolf’s bare chest in a haze.

It’s always been amazing, but never that indescribable, Derek thought as he ran his fingers through Stiles’ sweat-soaked hair.

He has Stiles. He has his mate. Three years of fights and hatesex and running away from problems, creating new ones, rebound relationships, jealousy, and a slew of other things Derek hated, finally, finally, they stopped hurting each other and decided to just be.

It was nothing short of a hard road getting here, and Derek would never want to do it again, but they’re here, in each other’s arms now, and it’s all he’s wanted since meeting the whiskey-eyed boy.

The fire in the fireplace has dwindled and the cold, snowy air outside whispered into the room through cracks from the scenic window. They were far up in the mountains from the center of town, but Derek could hear the pop of fireworks in the distance.

He glanced at the clock on the nightstand. It’s midnight.
“Stiles. Stiles, baby.”

Stiles made a small groaning noise Derek interpreted as a “Huh?”

“Are you awake? I want to ask you something.”

“Okay,” Stiles said a little more coherently.

“Stiles, I love you. With everything in me. I’m not good with words when I have to talk, but just know that… I can’t live without you. I don’t want to live without you. Marry me, Stiles.”

After 10 long, seconds, Stiles’ head flew up from Derek’s chest. He looked wide-eyed in shock at Derek.

“W-What did you just say?”

“I said ‘marry me, Stiles’.”

“…I knew you’d ask me one day, I just… It’s still surreal regardless.”

“Is that a ‘no’,” Derek asked, running his knuckles gently down Stiles’ cheek. He knew it wasn’t. He knew what Stiles was trying to say and what his answer would be, but he still wanted to hear it. He still needed Stiles to say it and make his wolf howl.

“It’s a ‘yes’. It’s a hell-yes!”

Derek surged up and kissed the absolute fuck out his boy; hurried, all teeth and tongue.

Stiles took over the kiss, turning it slow and passionate instead; deep and devoted, pouring everything he felt into it.

Derek twisted them around, Stiles on his back and Derek hovered over him.

“I want a big house. With lots of kids and lots of noise,” Stiles said.

“I want to grow old with you. I want grandchildren, and I want to leave this world with you when the time comes, because I can’t go on if you’re not in it with me,” Derek told him.

Tears filled Stiles’ eyes. “You’re wrong, Mr. Hale. So wrong. You’re great with words.”

Derek smiled, cheeks turning pink in the dim glow of the firelight and blue tint of the darkness bouncing off sheets of snow from the open window.

It was just the truth. Just the simple truth.

Pregnant sex is hard. Pregnant sex during while 8 months pregnant is even harder.

Derek’s pacing up and down the length of the room, completely naked, with a sheen of sweat still covering his whole body. There’s snarling under his breath as his feet shuffle along the carpet.

Stiles sits on the bed, naked, under the bedsheets, following Derek with his eyes. “Sourwolf. It’s not a big deal.”

“Just because you’ve said that 3 times already doesn’t make it true,” Derek growls, all red eyes and
fangs.

“I’m saying it because it is true!”

“No. Not for us. This type of thing happens to other couples. Shitty couples. We’re mates, Stiles.”

“Really? I was unaware.” Derek shoots him a glare. “And maybe sarcasm will not make this situation better.”

“This has never happened to us before. Never. Not once.”

“Can’t we count that as a win?”

Derek stops pacing to stare at his husband. “Are you being sarcastic again?”

“Sadly, no. Look, Derek we’ve been married for almost 6 years, that’s a great track record for this being the first time. It happens to everyone. It’s not a reflection on you, on us. It’s me, actually! I mean, I’m big and fat and pregnant and pregnant sex can be, you know, stressful, and hard, especially now, during the third trimester—”

“You’re rambling. You ramble when you don’t know what to say.”

“Ugh! Fine, Derek. What do you want me to say? You want me to say you’re the worst husband, the worst Alpha ever, just because I couldn’t come when we were having sex?”

There has not been a single time that Stiles and Derek have had sex when neither of them hasn’t gotten off. Not. One. They could always get each other to the brink. Always.

However, they had been at it for two hours, in five different positions before Stiles was feeling beyond exhausted and called it quits to their love making, never having climaxed.

Derek is obviously devastated.

Stiles…just…couldn’t…get there. Either is legs hurt, or his back, he had to pee for the millionth time, or his belly was in the way; he wasn’t comfortable, couldn’t get comfortable and Derek’s insatiable need to bring Stiles to orgasm was wearing him out. So, he patted Derek on the shoulder with a “I think it’s time we tap this one out,” and yawned. Which apparently is the worst thing he could have done, because after looking completely crushed, Derek decides to panic about the future of their sex life.

“Derek, I am pregnant. Like 8 fucking months pregnant. And as much as I wanted you to destroy me in this bed, I also know that being 8 months pregnant is going to make that challenging, like being as turned on as I am tired…and hungry… Will you make me a bacon sandwich? Real bacon. None of that vegan shit Lydia bought.”

If Derek’s eyes were any wider in disbelief, they’d have fallen out of his head.

“What?”

“I’m trying to address a crisis, and you want me to make you a sandwich?!”

“It’s not a crisis! Ugh! I said it like five times now!”

It’s Valentine’s Day. Derek woke Stiles up at midnight, kissing his entire body, from his head to his toes, before jerking him off until he came. He then made them breakfast which they ate on the patio.
Stiles was feeling sleepy afterward, so Derek let him nap while he took care of the dishes from breakfast.

When Stiles woke up and hour later, he suggested they go for a drive.

Stiles directed them to Lark Theater in Marin County, an old moviehouse that showed classic films, and just so happen to be featuring Derek’s favorite film, Out of Africa. Derek smiled at the surprise.

After the film, they headed back into the city, get ice cream at Bi-Rite Creamery, and go over their list of baby names again.

Stiles mentioned them having not visited the aquarium in years, so they went, but snuck out quickly after having spotted John and Melissa kissing at the jellyfish exhibit. Stiles, slyly took a picture with his cameraphone and sent it to Scott before Derek snatched him up.

They then went to the top of Coit Tower to watch the sunset. Derek kissed Stiles, which quickly turned into a scandalous make-out session, and Stiles whispering, “take me home and fuck me now,” into Derek’s ear.

Which has lead them to their current situation now.

Derek takes a seat beside Stiles on the bed, trying to be calm, yet serious. “I love you, and I love—love, Stiles—having sex with you.”

Stiles can’t help the rose-color pink his cheeks turn.

“And the best part of it is when I can feel your entire being crack and split open with moans and screams and tears because I did something that made you feel that fucking good. I want to always make you feel like that. I want to always give you what you give me in return. And yes, some of it is complete and utter ‘Alpha-ego’, but most of it is me, loving the way my husband sounds when he’s on the business end of my cock. For the last, technically, 9 years, I’ve been able to do that without incident, so can you see why I wouldn’t take it so well the first—and I swear to you, the fucking last—time that hasn’t happened?”

“…Grab that chair and put it in the shower. I got an idea.”

Derek’s brow furrowed, but Stiles simply gives him an expected look.

Reluctantly, Derek slides off the bed and grabs the armless chair in the corner, bringing it into the master bathroom.

Stiles joins Derek in the bathroom. He positions the chair how he wants, then turns the shower on, test the water temp, and adjust it to his liking while Derek watches. The water sprays directly onto the seat of the chair.

“Sit,” Stiles says with a grin.

Derek opens the shower door and takes a seat on the chair. Stiles comes in. He straddles Derek, facing him.

Oh.

Stiles kisses Derek the way he likes: slow, wet, and salacious. It doesn’t take long for Derek’s cock to harden. It never takes long when it comes to Stiles.
Stiles is still wet, and open, from Derek trying his damndest minutes ago to get his boy to come. Derek lifts him a bit to line his dick with Stiles’ entrance. He takes his time, gliding into him with such a stretched, deliberate ease that already has Stiles moaning.

Stiles’ hands grip the top of the chair. Derek’s hands travel down Stiles’ back, holding his waist. His hair is soaking wet, body awash, splashed by the cascading water from the showerhead, with droplets of water falling down his face from his long lashes circled around those wide Bambi eyes.

He’s beautiful. And Derek wants nothing more than to watch him fall helpless in the most beautiful of ways.

The shower fills with steam and hot water continues to beat against their skin.

His hands at Stiles’ waist tighten, digging into the clay of his pale skin, right at the base of the smooth curve of his belly. Derek plants his feet firm on the stone floor, and maneuvers him to rock his hips back and forth.

Stiles matches Derek’s rhythm, slow and steady. He leans forward, not breaking stride, to lick into Derek’s mouth. Derek’s fangs fall and Stiles runs his tongue along the pointed incisors.

Derek bites down on Stiles’ bottom lip, drawing blood, then searches for Stiles’ tongue to nip at it, too.

Stiles’ head falls back as he moans around a mouth full of blood, and speeds up his rhythm, faster, riding Derek’s cock.

Derek’s clawed hand wraps around the base of Stiles’ throat.

The blood spills from the younger man’s lips and Derek laps at it.

Stiles’ moans grow louder and longer, causing Derek to growl.

Derek’s hand moves to card through wet, chestnut-colored hair, the other wraps around the small of Stiles’ back, holding him in place. The soothing fingers turn to a hard hold, causing Stiles to expel a squeaky moan as Derek yanks. Stiles’ long, white neck is exposed, begging to be marked. Derek growls again, eyes fading to rubies. He works into Stiles, harder and faster.

Stiles loses his grip on the chair, hands burying into tan skin at the shoulder, and in hair the color of ink.

Derek pounds up into Stiles, deep and rapaciously.

Stiles is all loud moans an wanton whimpers, head tilted back and eyes closed. He fits so perfectly around Derek’s erection; swollen just for him, his mate.

The chair creaks and scrapes against the floor, with every thrust Derek gives his boy.

Stiles’ moans come in quick secession of loud songs of praise that bounce off the shower wall into Derek’s ears. Stiles is close, so close…

Derek doesn’t stop, giving it to him like the beast he can be; he’s right where he needs to be: pushing hard on Stiles’ prostate.

Stiles comes, painting Derek’s lap with white cords of his arousal. But Derek keeps at it, just as unhinged.
Stiles squirms and whimpers. “Too much! Derek, too much,” he cries at the overstimulation.

Derek’s not listening, ignoring rather, and bites down on Stiles’ throat.

The emissary wails as he comes a second time with Derek’s name on his lips. Derek keeps his eyes on Stiles when he does, seeing that oh, so wonderful moment when his husband loses complete control, with glossy eyes and ragged breath.

And Stiles is right: it is too much. Derek roars, surging up into Stiles, as what feels like a river of cum shoots into Stiles’ pulsing hole.

Derek falls back against the chair, out-of-breath and more than satisfied. Stiles leans his head on his shoulder, just as spent. Derek manages to lift his arms around Stiles, holding him close.

Stiles spreads soft kisses on Derek’s shoulder, his neck, his jawline, then his mouth. He kisses his Alpha. His husband. His man. His wolf.

The easy kiss turns vicious, and owning.

Derek moans into Stiles mouth, then whines when the human pulls back to look into a kaleidoscope of emerald/gold eyes. “I don’t think you ever have to worry about me being satisfied by you, Alpha.”

The corner of Derek’s mouth turns up with an arrogant smirk, “Seems so,” then returns his lips back where they belong.

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“What do you mean you two are mates,” John said, pointing his fork across the table at Stiles and Derek.

“Exactly what we said. We’re mates. Like how you and mom were soulmates, and how Talia and Theo are mates. Derek and I…are…mates,” Stiles said, trying to sound confident.

Under the table, Derek took his hand, entwining their fingers.

“Did it happen like it’s supposed to? Were you both lovestruck,” Talia asked.

Stiles and Derek nodded.

“Oh,” she said, with tears filling her eyes, heart swelling with so much happiness.

“Pardon, but I have to ask: when exactly did you two find out you were mates,” Theo interjected.

Stiles and Derek turned a bit sheepish under their parents’ scrutiny.

“Mates, soulmates, recognize each other at first sight. You two have been pack for three years now,” Theo said with a harsh eye.

“I—We know. It’s—”
“My fault.”

“Stiles.”

“It is,” he told them, squeezing Derek’s hand. “It did happen 3 years ago, and Derek knew immediately what we were, and tried every day since to convince me, to get me to be with him, like a mate should be, but I held back. That’s why it’s been 3 years. And I’m sorry we never said anything, to any of you.”

“Why didn’t you,” John asked.

“I was embarrassed. I had a mate...that didn’t want me, or at least, that’s what I thought,” Derek said.

“I always wanted you, Derek. I just...couldn’t get my shit together. Do you know how wrecked I’d be if something were to ever happen to you? If you were to ever leave me?”

“Stiles, I am not going anywhere. I love you.”

“...My mom told me the same thing...”

“Hey, kiddo,” John barks at his son, gaining his attention. “She didn’t leave on purpose, and you can’t go around afraid to get close to people because something tragic might happen. She wouldn’t want that. She’d hate for you to live like that.”

The last thing Stiles wanted to do was cry in front of everyone, but he couldn’t help the tear that rolled down his cheek... Derek brought his hand up, to wipe it away.

“I love you,” Stiles told him.

They leaned into each other and kissed.

“Well, it seems we have a lot to talk about...and a mating ceremony to plan, I assume,” Talia said.

Derek smiled bashfully at the thought of marrying Stiles. He nodded at his mother.

John shook his head. “To think we’ve been friends all these years, and the whole time our kids were mates. Could you imagine them meeting when they were younger?”

“I must say I am grateful for that missed opportunity,” Theo said. “Derek went through a bit of a Goth phase his first two years of high school, before joining the basketball team.”

“Please tell there’s pictures of you wearing dark, ‘dude-liner’ with black nail polish and a spiked dog collar somewhere in this house,” Stiles said with a bright, hopeful smile.

“No! I burned all those.”

“I think if you ask Laura nicely, she might have a picture tucked away somewhere of that particular chapter during Derek’s childhood,” Talia smirked.

“Mom,” Derek whined.

“I wouldn’t be so quick to get excited, kiddo. I do recall someone had a very prominent ‘naked phase’ when they were in the 4th grade. Even at school,” John said.

“Well, that’s just adorable, whereas Derek’s thing is just hilarious,” Stiles said. “How do you go
“Can we let our parents interrogate us then plan our mating ceremony instead of this please,” Derek said, all pointed eyebrows and furrowed brow.

“Fine, sourwolf, but I will acquire those pictures from Laura, one way or another.”

Derek kissed his mate. “You can try,” he grinned against Stiles’ pink lips.

“Watch me,” Stiles kissed back.

“Before you two get hot and heavy, can we discuss how you’ve been hiding things from us for 3 years,” John interrupted.

“Oh, let them kiss. My baby boy has found his one,” Talia remarked, her eyes flooding with tears as she smiles.

Stiles is fucking exhausted. He rightfully assumed being mated to an Alpha would have some drawbacks, but being mated to an Alpha with so much territory, and such a large pack— forget it.

Baby showers are supposed to be fun.

He lets Lydia, Cora, Talia, and Melissa handle all the planning (as if he had choice), and just sits back to eat cute finger foods and play silly games…or so he thought.

First, he is non-too happy that they have to have it at Red Grove, given the enormous number of people coming. Stiles wants to be comfortable at the main house, the ‘pack house’, but that unfortunately isn’t going to happen.

It’s apparently going to be like having the Hale Pack Halloween party all over again. Derek has even beefed up security just the same.

Second, he is woken at 7am for breakfast in bed by Lydia, which was nice, but she stays while he eats, going over in detail an itinerary she has planned for the event, in between screeching at caterers and deliverypersons on a walkie-talkie she somehow got her hands on.

Derek, however, has snuck off with their fathers, Boyd and Jackson to play a round of golf at a nearby resort. Stiles would have liked to have braved the hurricane that is Lydia Ashley Martin in planning mode with his husband there.

Next, after he takes a long, hot bath, he and Lydia get into a bit of a tiff when she demands he wear dress slacks and a nice shirt she picks out for him. Stiles refuses. He wanted to slip on his corduroy pants, a plain, white tee, and a wool cardigan Marin bought him for Christmas.

Neither of them will back down, so Stiles has to pull the ‘I’m-pregnant-and-it’s-my-baby-shower’ card. Lydia fums and huffs, but finally relents, leaving the room to no doubt take her frustration out on some poor soul who’s only job is to set up chairs or something. She can be a bitch like that.

Stiles thinks he can fix that, or at least remedy it a bit by calling Jordan and asking him to attend the shower, and reign in his out-of-control fiancée. Jordan initially refuses, but Stiles begs and pleads, and the doctor finds it hard to say no. Jordan promises to be there within the next hour.

Stiles then text Derek, demanding he and the rest get there soon because he doesn’t know if he can
emotionally deal with Lydia and all her crazy alone.

But Lydia must have found a small puppy to kick, or a elementary school to burn down because when Stiles finally comes downstairs her entire attitude changes. She even gives him a slight nod in regards to his outfit, surprisingly finding it very suitable.

Stiles tries to find Scott, but Allison informs him that Lydia sent him and Isaac out on errands. Allison herself is putting together what looks like an endless amount of gift bags with Freya. Stiles cringes when she tells him that she and Freya have been at it since five this morning and still clearly still aren’t done. Lydia wouldn’t let them stop so they had to eat their breakfast standing up in between them filling bags with posh looking goodies and favors.

Jordan needs to get here fast.

Stiles tries to help, but Lydia comes out of nowhere demanding he go have a lie down before guests arrive.

“I’m pregnant, Lyds. I don’t have Alzheimer’s.”

“I don’t think you’re getting the magnitude of all this: you’re going to need rest.”

“I’m fine. I’m going to help Ally and Frey for a bit, then I’m going to rescue Danny and Zoë from whatever personal hell you’ve bestowed upon them, Red Queen of the Underworld. Okay?”

“Fine, but don’t say you weren’t warned.” Lydia flicks her hair and saunters off with her heels clacking on the floor.

Derek gets home with their fathers, Boyd, and Jackson when Stiles and his two betas just finish the gift bags. He sends Allison and Freya to go and take a quick nap, then freshen their make-up before things really get underway.

Stiles is putting the rest of the gift bags in the office when he feels a hard smack on his ass! Derek. Sun-kissed, smiling wide, and reeking of alcohol.

“You are not fucking drunk.”

“No!”

“How many aconitum beers did you have,” Stiles says crossing his arms over his chest.

“You don’t drink beer on a golf course, Stiles. You have Mint Juleps.”

“Was their aconitum in them?”

“…Maybe.”

“I might kill you. Seriously.”

“I will drink nothing but disgusting sparkling water for the rest of the day. I promise.”

“This our baby shower, and already I’m predicting a nightmare.”

“Come on, baby. Stiles, don’t say that.” He pulls the human to him and kisses him chastely on the lips…then under his chin…and neck…and collarbone…

“Oh, shit, Derek, no! We can’t.” He pushes the werewolf away.
“We can do whatever the hell we want. Come here.”

“Not with an assload of people coming here in almost 20 minutes. Take a piss, shower, change, and sober up.”

Stiles shifts away from Derek’s grabby, horny hands and slips out the room, leaving the Alpha and his hard on.

Talia and Theo greet every guest for Stiles and Derek, who wait on the patio to miz and mingle with everyone that arrives. Laura, Thomas, their girls and “betas” are with them, in addition, to Peter, Malia, Kira, Ethan, Valerie, Jason, their daughters, “betas,” and Aiden.

Derek and Peter wander off to a corner to talk about Braeden’s progress within the FBI while Stiles jokes around with Laura, and Kira takes pictures of everyone.

As the party gets started, Lydia explains that actually only 145 people will be there solely for the whole baby shower. The rest were “bottom-rung pack members” that just want to pay their respects.

The thought of 145 people being main attendees (Alphas and their top-tier betas within Hale territories up and down the west coast), and the rest just stopping by to say ‘congrats’ has Stiles feeling a bit overwhelmed.

Derek senses it, and quickly finds Stiles in the crowd, then glues himself to his hip, putting light kisses on his neck, calming him.

Jordan finally shows up, with his parents and siblings. They were a part of the Grissom Pack, a small pack of fifteen based in Palo Alto. They weren’t in the Hale Pack, operating as their own family, but their Alpha and his two best betas came to pay their respects, seeing as how their pack is within Hale territory. The Allendale Pack’s Alpha and two best betas came as well. They, too, were a small pack with no Hale ties, but within Hale territory (San Jose), and came to congratulate the Alpha on expecting his first born.

Jordan must not have told Lydia he was coming, or bringing his family along, because the banshee’s face lights up like a firework, and her ‘Miranda Priestly’ impression seems to wane a bit. She proudly introduces them to Stiles and Derek, then the rest of the pack.

It makes Stiles tear up a bit at how happy the redhead is to be a part of Jordan’s family, and how proud she is of her own pack. He only wishes Jordan could be included in the same way.

After a couple hours of socializing, when all 145 main guests arrive, including Derek’s godmother, Adelaide, from New Orleans, Lydia thought it a good idea to start the party games.

Stiles sees Jackson and Scott attempting to slink off, but Lydia’s stink-eye is worse than her screams sometimes, and the two of them return back to the crowd. As punishment, Lydia makes the two of them partner in the games. Especially the baby food game, in which two parties faced one another blindfolded, each wearing a bib, and tried to feed actual baby food to the other.

Stiles makes sure Kira gets plenty of pictures of that particular game, which has he and Derek both in stitches.

But nothing cracks Stiles up more than watching Peter, Thomas, and two betas from Juno participate in the ‘Bobbing for Nipples’ game.

Stiles laughs so hard tears run down his face, particularly when Lydia declares Peter the winner.
Stiles gets to play ‘judge’ of a few games, and happily doles out prizes to the winners. Valerie and Jason win the ‘Diaper Derby’, and Jordan’s sister, Myra, wins a prize for guessing the correct measurements of Stiles’ belly.

Stiles’ favorite part comes when the games are all over and cake and champagne are served.

Theo gives a wonderful speech, as expected. As does Scott, Lydia, Melissa, Laura, and Talia, but the house was brought down by Stiles’ father, John, who brings everyone to tears:

“I have hundreds of proud moments of my son, Przemysław, and I have twice as many ‘Oh, my god. I can’t even with this kid sometimes’ moments.”

A light laugh wafts over the crowd.

“But when he told me he was going to be a father, and that I was going to be ‘grandpa’, I have never been so happy…and yet, so disappointed…because Claudia, Stiles’ mother, she… She would have been over the moon about her ‘little guy’ becoming such a man. No doubt the kind of man she had always hoped he be. She raised him to be smart, caring, loyal, honest, and loving. I’d like to say I had a hand in all that, but Claudia herself was all those things, tenfold and more. So I know it was her, and her love and her teaching, that made Stiles who he is now. She gave him all the makings of a good man, a good father. And I see all those wonderful things in my son-in-law, Derek, as well. Those two kids are going to be so lucky, so very lucky, to have the both of you as fathers. This is my proudest moment, and I know it would have been Claudia’s too.”

Stiles hugs his father so tight it hurts. Both their faces are damp and soft.

“I meant every word,” John tells him.

“Why the hell do you think I’m crying?”

They manage a chuckle through their tears.

John pulls Derek into their embrace and tells him how much Claudia would have loved him, and just how blissful she would have been knowing Derek makes Stiles so happy.

Following such a sentimental moment, came gifts, which Stiles loves, but because there are so many, Stiles only opens the ones from their parents, blood-related family, their betas from all three houses, and nieces. Yet, even after all that, there are still so many freaking gifts.

Lydia and Cora’s gift to Stiles and Derek is the nursery they were decorating, which no one, not even the Alpha pair, has seen yet! Lydia had put an honest-to-God electronic lock box on the door! Stiles would be insulted if he weren’t so flattered by Lydia’s obvious acknowledgement of his lock picking skills.

The party dissolves back into a nice gathering, with all the baby-related stuff out of the way. Stiles is just about to sneak off for a nap when Lydia grabs his arm and directs he and Derek to Derek’s office.

Now, it was time for them to address the “bottom-run pack members” as Lydia keeps referring to them, that are starting to arrive.

They line up by the office, winding all they way out the front door, and every single one of them has a token of affection for the Alpha pair, whether it be fruit baskets, wine, baby stuff, homecooked meals, flowers, or even envelopes of cash.
One by one they come in, present their gift, congratulate them and then leave after a few words. It’s more than nice enough, but Stiles is quickly reminded of the opening scene from *The Godfather* when Vito is accepting request for favors on his daughter’s wedding day.

*Jesus. I really am a mob wife…*

They’re not even halfway through the line when Stiles can’t take it anymore. He’s fucking exhausted! He woefully admits he should have listened to Lydia and had a lie down earlier, but there’s a hundred people left and he’s about to crumble. Not to mention, it somehow turns into open season on ‘touch the Alpha-mate’s belly’. Which. He. Can’t. Stand.

Derek sees Stiles’ resolve about to crack and decides it’s time for a break.

Boyd makes apologies and tells everybody still waiting to see the Alpha, that he and the Alpha-mate will be back soon enough.

Stiles collapses on the bed and is snoring by the time Derek takes his shoes off.

When he wakes up with a stretch and loud yawn, it’s dark out.

He scrambles out of bed, hurrying on his shoes.

“Derek! Derek,” he shouts coming down the staircase.

He comes into the kitchen to see catering staff cleaning up and deliverypersons breaking things down and heading out front with their equipment. The house is quiet. He hears familiar voices, but it doesn’t sound crowded, like a house full of people.

He makes to go outside and look for Derek—

“I wouldn’t if I were you. I think Cora and Zoë are fooling around in the hot tub,” Derek says.

“Derek, you let me miss the rest of the party, and all those lovely people who wanted to congratulate us! How could you let me sleep through that,” he whines.

“First, apparently a nap does wonders because before you crashed into bed you were 10 seconds away from your eyes fading orange and going berserk. You were breaking down and getting beyond crabby. We had to put you to bed. So I, nor anyone else, was going to disturb you until you were ready to wake up…which unfortunately is now.”

“What did you say to people?”

“The truth. Stiles, no one is going to be angry at someone that’s pregnant for needing a rest.”

“Who finished with you?”

“Our dads finished greetings with me, Lydia kept up her hostess duties, and Danny helped me say ‘goodbye’ to everyone. Your dad came in and said ‘goodbye’ to you, but you were out cold. Stiles. Relax, baby. It’s okay. You didn’t commit some big, werewolf faux-pas. No one thinks less of you.”

Derek pulls Stiles close, wrapping his arms around him.

“I’m personally writing every ‘thank you’ note.”
“If you want, but judging by all the gifts we got, you’ll be writing them until December.”

Stiles laughs.

“Um, Derek.”

They turn to Jordan standing behind them.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to interrupt. I just…”

He looks torn, hesitant. Whatever it is is important, but he doesn’t know what, or how to go about discussing it.

“One of us, or the both of us,” Stiles asks, trying to help him out.

“…Derek,” Jordan says.

“Is this about Lydia,” Stiles asks, because if it concerns his best friend, no matter how Type A she can be, he wants to know. Especially if it’s what he fears it’s about.

“No. Not directly.”

Stiles exchanges a look with Derek. Derek nods toward the dining room. Hesitantly, Stiles exits the room, leaving them to talk. He can’t be too upset. He knows whatever it is, Derek will tell him later.

“Do we need to go somewhere more private?”

“No. No, here’s good,” Jordan tells him. “…Um, I had no intention of coming here today. Stiles begged me to because I guess Lydia was a little too on his case or something. He sounded really desperate, and to be honest I thought it might be a good idea to formally congratulate you both, so I agreed to come. And without realizing it, I asked my family to join me… For some reason, I just felt like they should have been here today, and I’m glad they came. They had a great time. Especially Myra. I think she’s taking a liking to Liam.”

“I saw. And heard the rapid beat of his heart when he was talking to her, too,” Derek smiles.

“Yeah. They weren’t the only ones who had a good time. I, uh… I did, too. Thank you for allowing me to come.”

“Stiles asked you. Not me.”

“I know, but… It was nice to be welcomed to enjoy such a big day for the both of you… Which is kind of what I wanted to talk to you about.”

Derek nods.

“You’re Lydia’s family. All of you. She loves you more than she does her biological family. I’ve known that, and that she would do anything for any of you, and vice versa. So, seeing you with her, and everyone else… They respect you, and love you because they know you feel the same way, and would do anything to keep them safe, to protect them.”

“I would. It’s my pack. My family.”

“What I mean is, they see goodness in you. And greatness. Being here today and listening to all those people show you and Stiles praise and respect, it made me think.”
“Okay,” Derek said patiently.

“I don’t want to kept pulling Lydia in two different directions. I love her far too much to keep chipping away at her, because that’s what I’m doing when she misses out on something with you guys, or she’s not there for trouble, or when she’s needed. That’s what I’m doing when I don’t come to more stuff like this… That’s what I’m doing by not being pack.”

Derek stands a bit straighter at Jordan gaining his full and immediate attention.

“…I’d like to be made pack, when Lydia and I get married in the summer.”

A smooth warmth of pride swells in Derek’s chest. His last and final beta is coming home. He wants to be pack. Jordan wants to be an ‘honorary Hale’.

“But we should talk first. Like a lot. There’s still some stuff we have to work out. Some things that would make us both a bit more comfortable and get to where we need to be with each other.”

“Of course. We have the whole summer,” Derek says, trying to not sound giddy.

“Really? I thought… I thought you’d make this harder for me.”

“I know we’ve lashed out, and some things were done that hurt us both, and our mates, but I told you that when you were ready to talk, I’ll be here. That’s all I’m doing.”

“You’re a good guy, Derek. I see that now. I may be confused as to what type if good guy you are, but nonetheless, you’re…you’re not as bad as I thought. Trusting you though—”

“It going to take time,” Derek finishes for him. “I get it. I understand.”

Jordan nods. “Well… Okay.”

“Okay.”

They stand in awkward silence for a bit, not knowing if they should hug, shake hands, kiss, do a little dance…

“Oh, for fuck’s sake just shake hands,” Stiles calls from the other room, eavesdropping.

Derek snorts. Jordan laughs.

Derek extends his hand.

Jordan takes it.

“Being a part of this family will be good for you, Jordan.”

“I hope so.”

“I know so,” Derek says.

Chapter End Notes

First, you know that job I was always bitching about…? Well, I was a server at a sports
bar not even 20 minutes from my house, and I quit a little over a month ago, but guess who decided to have lunch there yesterday...? TYLER FUCKING HOECHLIN! I'm friends with one of my old managers there on Facebook and she posted a picture of the current staff there with TH himself. My. Fucking. Luck. I'd post the pic but it's on her page and I don't want to violate her personal, social media space like that, but trust me when I tell you it is 100% TH in the pic! UGGHHH!!

Second, the link for MYRA is over plus-size teen model Georgina Burke, and the link for ADELAIDE is of Angela Bassett's character during season 4 of American Horror Story.

Lastly, after this fic is done (in two weeks), I'll be taking prompts until mid-September before starting my next long fic, but as it stands I'm having a hard time deciding what to write. So, I need some help from you guys. I've boiled it down to three AUs I like:

Canon-Divergent/Future Fic about Derek leaving Beacon Hills, but before he leaves he confesses to Stiles that he loves him despite being too damaged and too old for him to be in a serious relationship with, but they have sex anyway and Derek leaves the next morning. Only to return 6 years later to find out Stiles has a daughter and she's his.

Jealous!Derek/Future Fic AU where Derek might have waited too long to finally make a move on Stiles, who is starting a budding romance with another werewolf from a pack they're trying to strike an alliance with.

Military Academy/Human/Teacher-Student Relationship/Slow Build AU about the entire gang attending an Annapolis-inspired school, and the secret, inappropriate relationship Stiles develops with his American Lit instructor, Lt. Derek Hale.
Liam and Mason walk into Derek’s office. Stiles and Derek are already there, waiting. Liam shuts the door.

“Are we in trouble,” Mason asks.

“No, pup,” Stiles answers with a reassuring smile. “Sit.”

Liam and Mason take a seat.

Stiles sighs, taking a deep breath. Clearly, whatever needs to be said is pretty heavy. “Okay. So, the two of you have been missing for over a year, almost two, and the good news about that is local authorities in Rexburg stopped making you a priority case for about 13 months. Danny found out a couple nights ago though, that you’re both deemed a ‘cold case’. Why that’s good is because it means we don’t have to worry about police or FBI looking for you and finding you here.”

“What’s the bad news,” Liam asks, picking up on the foreshadowing.

“The bad news is that Mason’s foster mother contacted C.A.I.M. when the police decided to no longer make you priority cases. I’m guessing in her mind since the cops gave up, she’d find someone, or someones who won’t,” Stiles responds.

“A couple months after she contacted C.A.I.M. members asking for help, she stopped all communication with them,” Derek interrupts.

“We’re thinking whatever they were doing to try and find you Mason, spooked the hell out of her, and she backed off, because let me tell you: they are seriously fucked up people.”

Mason gulps, terrified.

“Don’t panic, or get nervous. We just wanted to tell you. To be honest, and let you both know that we’ll do everything we can to protect you,” Derek says affirmatively.

Liam and Mason nod. They trust their Alpha, and know whatever he says is nothing short of truth. If he says he’ll watch over them, protect them, he means it.

“I’m actually surprised you’ve been undetected by them for as long as you have been,” Stiles tells
them. “They’re not as sophisticated as say, a hacker like Danny, or even a well-funded hunting clan with their technology, but they are resourceful.”

“And sometimes it’s annoying,” Derek adds, scowling.

“Very,” Stiles confirms.

“You guys have dealt with them before,” Mason asks.

“Oh, yeah. I mean, their whole thing is rallying against supes and humans coexisting together. You can’t get anymore coexisting than being married to one,” he winks at Derek. “Especially a Hale.”

“What did you guys do when you were up against them,” Mason asks.

Stiles and Derek exchange looks. They don’t really talk about it, at least out loud and with each other. It’s become this unspoken thing between them that mentioning it causes more harm than good. Yet, they’re stronger now. Closer, if even possible. They’re about to be fathers, and pretending the hard times don’t exist is good for no one. It’s especially not good for their marriage or their pack.

“…They kidnapped Derek,” Stiles says.

Liam and Mason lean forward, hungry for the details.

“They kidnapped him and forced a witch they kept prisoner to perform a spell on him.”

“What kind of spell,” Liam asks.

“A memory spell. They pulled Stiles from my memories,” Derek tells him as he squeezes Stiles’ hand.

“They made you forget Stiles? Like, completely?”

“Completely.”

“It was like we never met,” Stiles says, fighting back tears. Derek squeezes his hand again. “We had already been married for 3 years by then, and… It was like we never were.”

“How’d you get your memories back? Another witch,” Mason asks.

“No. Magic’s biggest source is belief. The belief in it as a paranormal, natural force, and belief that you hold the power, the capability, to use it to your advantage. That’s what makes the spell work, but it’s not what makes it pure. And you need your magic to be pure in order for the spell to work at it’s best, so there are no loopholes,” Stiles informs them.

“And there were loopholes in the spell the witch performed on Derek,” Mason understands.

“From the moment she started it. Magic under duress, when there’s fear or a lack of confidence, is ‘false magic’. It leaves too much to be interpreted, thus creating loopholes. She took Derek’s memories of me, but our bond was left. The thing that makes us mates, that connects us, and has for eons, was still there.”

“I didn’t know who Stiles was, but I was still pulled toward him. It was a small, speck of something, but it was something. It was enough for Stiles, Deaton, and Marin to draw it out of me, make it bigger, and make me remember my mate.”
“Wow,” Mason reacts.

“Exactly,” Stiles smiles. Derek brings Stiles’ hand to his mouth and places a kiss on the back of it.


“Killing me would cause such epic consequences they’d end up eviscerated,” Derek tells the young wolf.

“And that’s just Talia alone,” Stiles jokes…sort of.

“Killing me wouldn’t hurt our pack as much.”


“They’ll always be someone who could step up as Alpha if need be. It’s like the presidential line of succession.”

“And Boyd is VP,” Stiles affirms.

“That’s why there’s rank within packs. And if you kill the Alpha, a new one will be named, and fight even more fiercely for vengeance, but if you ‘corrupt’ an Alpha in some way, like a spell, it cripples a pack.”

“Because he’s still Alpha, just now with a big problem,” Mason figures out. “You can’t attack the perpetrators until the problem is fixed, because you need the Alpha for retaliation.”

“Right,” Stiles says.

“And everyone knows, if you really want to hurt a werewolf, you take away what means the most to him: his family, and if the Alpha is mated, or mated and has cubs… If you hurt that dynamic it spreads a cancer through the whole pack. It renders them immobile,” Derek tells them. “That’s why Haigh wanted me in jail; the pack would be too focused on getting me out, leaving us too vulnerable to deal with Edmund if he took Haigh up on his intended offer and came after us.”

“Crafty motherfuckers,” Mason scoffs. Liam nods in agreement. “How’d you get back at them?”

Derek shoots Stiles a side glare.

“What? I thought we were moving on and growing, learning from our past mistakes to build a stronger future,” Stiles exclaims.

Derek simply rolls his eyes at Stiles’ overdramatic assessment.

“What happened,” Liam asks curiously.

“I found out who in C.A.I.M. orchestrated Derek’s kidnapping, and taking his memories…and I nearly killed him with a baseball bat.”

“‘Nearly’,” Mason asks.

“Jackson told Derek where I was and what I was doing so he could stop me from killing him. Scott, Lydia and Cora were with me. Derek got there before I could end him.”

Stiles remembers raising the bat high above his head, staring down at the middle-aged man, bruised and bleeding all over. He begged, and pleaded, asking for mercy, and spewing apologies
like a skipping record. He was just about to bring down his favorite wooden bat, like the hammer of God, right at the base of his skull, when a clawed hand wrapped around the barrel, and he met hard, red eyes that growled for him to stop.

“Holy fuck! Is that why you went to jail, Stiles,” Liam asks.

Stiles nods. “Derek didn’t just forget he knew me, as a person, he forgot he loved me. They made him forget, and made him doubt that he even should, and other than my mom dying, it’s the cruellest thing I’ve ever had to deal with.” He turns to Derek, tears brimming the surface of his eyes. “They took you from me. I couldn’t let them get away with that.”

Derek pulls him close. He kisses his temple and moves his lips to Stiles’ ear, “I love you, and that will never happen again,” he whispers.

Stiles nods. He knows it won’t. They’d burn the world to ash before they let it happen again.

“I don’t get it. How’d you even get caught,” Liam asks.

“His wife and daughter reported him missing. Home security footage outside his house showed Scott and Cora in disguise snatching him in the driveway and putting him in a van. We ditched the van and set it on fire, but ultimately it was my DNA they found on him when Derek left him at the abandoned hospital. Supe DNA is hard to pinpoint sometimes,” Stiles tells him. “Laura worked her ass off trying to avoid a trial, but I got charged with attempted murder, and that asshole fingered me in court. That’s the worst part about C.A.I.M.— they’re not afraid. Threats and violence just empowers them.”

“We’re letting you two know all this because we want to make it clear to you who they are and how far they’ll go for their species-ist ‘causes’,” Derek says.

“And to let you know how far we’ll go to keep you safe,” Stiles adds. “We want you two to be made pack.”

Liam and Mason turn wide-eyed and surprised.

“Really? Like, seriously,” Liam asks. “You’re not fucking with us?”

“No. We’re not,” Derek says with a slight smile.

Stiles and Derek are rushed, finding themselves in a joined embrace with arms wrapped tightly around them. Mason squeezes as hard as he can.

Derek pats Liam’s shoulder. “Alright, pup. That’s good.”

Liam and Mason reluctantly let go of their Alphas.

“The full moon is in a couple days, so we’re going to do it then. Afterward, Liam, you’ll go on your first run with the pack.”

“And Mason, you get to be inducted into the ‘Squishy Human Circle’.”

“What does the ‘Squishy Human Circle’ get to do,” Mason asks, sounding excited.

“Eat, drink, gossip, and wait for their Alpha to return home at dawn,” Derek interrupts. He places a kiss on Stiles’ neck and nips at the skin there.

“Not in front of the new pups. You’ll traumatize them,” Stiles blushes.
“You’re room is surprisingly not soundproof. We’re already traumatized,” Liam smart-mouths.

“I think you two are sweet,” Mason smiles.


“Anything? Even if it’s braised beef short ribs…? My foster dad used to make it sometimes. He was a chef.”

“If you want braised beef short ribs for dinner, then the pack will eat braised short ribs,” Stiles says.

“Dammit! Can I at least pick dessert,” Liam begs.

“Tell me Derek and I are the cutest mates ever.”

Derek can’t help but smile.

“You and Derek are the cutest mates ever,” Liam concedes.

“Good. What do you want?”

“Do you know how to make strawberry napoleon? I saw a picture of it once and it looked really good.”

“Pfft. I thought you had a challenge,” Stiles says. He opens the door. “I’ll have to send Boyd and Isaac to the supermarket, because Christ knows if I send anyone else we’ll end up eating beef jerky and Pop-Tarts for dinner instead.”

They giggle as Stiles leaves the office, mumbling to himself about “incompetent betas who can’t follow a simple grocery list.”

“You two have been through a lot. You fought hard for each other. To stay together, too,” Mason tells Derek.

“It’s not always that chaotic, Mason. Trust me. But having a mate to go through it all with you…? It makes it easier.”

“You guys really are gross and in love, aren’t you,” Liam asks.

Derek laughs. “Yeah. And sometimes the word ‘love’ seems like an understatement.”

“Thanks, Derek. Thanks for letting us join the pack. I know we don’t deserve it.”

“If you didn’t, you wouldn’t be allowed to join.” Derek pats his shoulder, scent marking him. He turns to exit— “Oh, and by the way, Stiles and I think it might be a good idea for you two to go to school. We’ll talk about enrolling you in the morning.” He leaves the office.

“Do you think he dropped that bomb last like that on purpose,” Mason asks.

“It’s the only way I know how you make an explosion,” Liam shrugs.

The wolf and human grimace as they walk out the office at the future occurrence of them having to attend school.
The moon is full. Big, bright and heavy. It’s closer to the Earth. A supermoon.

“Supermoon. We got married during a supermoon,” Stiles says placing a light kiss on Derek’s neck.

“I know,” the Alpha says, pulling his mate closer.

Erica tosses another log of wood into the bonfire. A dustup of fire floats up into the air then dissipates into nothingness. They’re at the edge of their property, close to the woods.

“We should start now,” Derek says, feeling a familiar itch under his skin that’s getting harder to control.

Stiles nods and gives him a quick kiss. He takes a seat on a log beside Allison. She unfolds a blanket and wraps it around Stiles’ shoulders. It’s a chilly night, but the weres can’t tell. The moon, big and so close, makes their blood warmer than usual and their desire to shift and run wild through the trees, under the moonlight, fervent and mystical.

Certain types of moons have certain types of affects on were wolves. Supermoons make wolves feel more connected to nature. They feel spiritual; a peaceful oneness with the animal within them. New moons make werewolves playful, open, and more free, like children set loose into the summer on the last day of school, and a Blue Moon is romantic, bringing about a wolves desire to mate, or breed.

It’s a federal law that unmated werewolves be kept indoors during a Blue Moon, given the unfortunate outcome of ‘innocents’ being attacked and sexually assaulted by wolves who’ve lost control due to the moon’s pull on them. The result being a high increase in blue-eyed wolves nearly 60 years ago, and the creation of mental facilities for supes, like B.A.H.D.W.

Humans and other supes are also supposed to stay indoors during a Blood Moon, which makes werewolves primal and violent. Having wild, untamed weres unhinged on uncontrollable anger is never good for the interior of a home, or business.

The Harvest Moon makes werewolves lethargic and wistful. Stiles always found it funny that during the Harvest Moon how serene and easygoing Derek tended to be throughout the day, just lounging around the house naked and blissful. Like a fae lying on a low tree branch, idly brushing her fingers through the sparkling pond water beneath her. He remembers Derek during such a moon, lying naked in the sun all day by the pool, doing nothing but letting time tick forward and watching the sunset on the horizon.

Stiles didn’t like the Black Moon, and was grateful it only happened once a year. It made the wolves sad, and miserable. Derek would hardly speak all day, and never ate. He’d hide in bed from Stiles and the rest of the world, then disappear into the darkness when the moon was in full view. Stiles could hear him and others do nothing but howl all night long.

But the worst were lunar eclipses. It only lasts about 3, sometimes 4 hours, but it was torturous to watch Derek and other wolves go virtually insane while it occurred. Stiles always likened it to the scene in One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest when ‘Nurse Ratchet’ purposefully causes all the patients in the mental hospital to go nuts as a powerplay against Jack Nicholson’s character.

He hated it. And he hated trying to anchor Derek from it. Once, he had to try and stop Derek from tearing his arm to shreds with his own claws. He was bleeding everywhere and nipping at tendons and muscles deep within his flesh. He’d try and cut harder, further, when his cuts and wounds
would heal.

Stiles had to drag him into the shower and stay there with him. He tied Derek’s hands together with rope infused with wolfsbane to keep him from hurting himself.

One other lunar eclipse, Erica tried to slit her own throat with broken glass, and Scott kept banging his head against the wall until there was blood seeping into his hair.

Lydia wouldn’t stop screaming.

It was too much for Stiles. It reminded him of the 2 months he spent at Eichen House after his mother died. Allison used to be just as wrecked as Stiles with having to try and anchor Scott from breaking down.

Werewolves are sent alerts over public access TV, radio, email, and text message, like tornado warnings, when there is to be a lunar eclipse, and instructed by federal officials to stay in a “safe, quiet place,” or check into their “local mental facility” during the event. Mental hospitals became so full over the years that school gymnasiums were used for the overcrowding until ‘Lunar Shelters’ were built around the city.

Stiles stopped trying to handle Derek and the rest of the pack during the eclipses and sent them to the shelters that had “better people more equip to deal with it” than him.

It’s how the ‘Squishy Human Circle’ is formed. Stiles, Lydia, Allison, and Danny would nervously sit around and wait for the werewolves to get home when the eclipse was over, so they'd entertain themselves by getting drunk and playing games and eating whatever Stiles cooked.

Derek howls, long and loud before the fire. Stiles smiles. He loves hearing Derek’s call.

The rest of the werewolves gather around the fire, too, and howl in response.

Lydia brings forth Liam and Mason to stand before Derek. “Kneel,” she tells them.

They do.

Allison helps Stiles up, and he waddles over to the boys, standing behind them.

Derek turns to them. “Liam Dunbar. You were brought into this pack, not by choice, by blood, by love, or by bite, but by accident, and yet, you have proven yourself in my eyes of your worthiness to stay. I have bared witness to your bravery, your skill, and your strength as a wolf. Though you still have much to learn, I believe doing so here, in this pack, will make you the best wolf you can be. Do you believe that?”

“Yes, Alpha I do,” he answers.

“Trust and loyalty are a pack’s core. Can you swear complete allegiance to this pack, to me, as your Alpha, and trust in my leadership?”

“I can, Alpha Hale.”

“I don’t detect a lie in your answer.”

“I would never lie to my Alpha.”

Derek nods to Liam. Liam nods back. Derek’s eyes shift to Mason. “Mason Hewitt. You, too, were brought into this pack, not by choice, by blood, by love, or by bite, but by accident, and yet, have
proven yourself in my eyes of your worthiness to stay. I have bared witness to your selflessness, your kindness, and your respect. Being human within a pack is very special, and only a particular type of person can remain so, with their humanity in tact, while running with wolves. It takes a good person, for which I believe you are. I believe this pack will only strengthen us both with your presence. Do you believe that, too?”

“Yes, Alpha Hale. I do,” Mason responds.

“Trust and loyalty are a pack’s core. Can you swear complete allegiance to this pack, to me, as your Alpha, and trust in my leadership?”

“Yes, I can, Alpha Hale.”

“I don’t detect a lie in your answer.”

“Lying to my Alpha would be disrespectful of the honesty he deserves.”

Derek smiles at his response. “Stiles Stilinski-Hale is Alpha-mate, and shall be shown the same reverence and obedience as you shall show me. Can this need be met?”

“Yes, Alpha Hale,” they answer in unison.

“Stiles, do you object to Liam Dunbar being admitted as a member of our pack?”

“No. I don’t.”

“Do you object to Mason Hewitt?”

“No. I do not.”

“Mom? Dad?”

“We have no objections,” Talia answers for herself and Theo.

“John?”

“No objections.”

“Boyd.”

“None.”

“Lydia.”

“I have no objection.”

“Cora?”

“I do not object.”

“Isaac.”

“Don’t have a single one.”

“Allison.”

“I don’t object.”
“Scott.”
“Nope.”
“Jackson.”
“None.”
“Erica?”
“The cuties can stay.”
“Danny?”
“Fine by me.”
“Freya?”
“I have no objections.”
“Zoë.”
“I welcome them into the pack.”
“Marin?”
“They are embraced wholeheartedly.”
“Melissa.”
“They’re sweet boys who we’d love to have as family.”

“There has been no objection to you joining our pack. You are welcomed. We are now your family, and wherever we may be is now your home. The offer of family is extended to you both. You may take it and submit, or refuse.”

“We submit,” they answer together.

Stiles places a hand on each of their heads, tilting them downward in a bow.

Derek snaps his claws out. He drags them in one bloody swipe along the back of Liam’s neck, then Mason’s neck. Stiles puts that smelly ointment on the cuts along Mason’s neck.

Liam and Mason thank Derek, addressing him as ‘Alpha’. Derek nods and they stand.

Derek howls. The rest of the wolves follow. Liam joins in.

“Now, we run.”

Derek and the rest of the werewolves strip out of their clothes. He shifts into his full wolf and takes off into the dark trees. The rest follow behind him.

Mason watches with amazement.

“Aren’t you two going to run, too,” Zoë asks Talia and Theo.

“Yes,” Talia answers. “But we’re going to go our own route.” She takes Theo’s arm as he leads
east into the woods.

Lydia raises a skeptical eye in Stiles’ direction. He ignores her. Answering questions about Theo, not even from Lydia, is something he’d ever do. He’d never betray that trust.

“What do we do now,” Mason asks.

Allison produces a bag of marshmallows and opens a small cooler with hot dogs and beer inside. “Now, we have s’mores, and roast weenies, while those suckers roll around in dirt until dawn.”

March 30, 2019

The moon was looming, so close it looked as though he could reach out and touch it.

Supermoon.

The lull of that particular moon always felt like gentle fingertips grazing his skin. The air was sweet, and light with a soft breeze rustling through the tops of the trees. He felt centered and sentient, connected to it all: the earth, the wind, the tide pulled by the moon’s presence, and the heat, the fire of the lit candles around them. He was in the moment. More than he’d ever been.

Thanks to the moon. And the man standing before him, holding his hands, and smiling at him with so much pride.

“I, Derek Stephan Hale, declare and wed, Przemyslaw Jonatan Grzegorz Stilinski as my one and only mate, and my husband. He is bound to my wolf, just as I am bound to his soul.”

“Przem—” Theo butchered.

“’Stiles’ is cool,” Stiles told him.

“Stiles, is this true?”

“Yes. I love him. I am his and he is mine.”

“Talia. Do you object to our son’s union to this man,” Theo asked his wife.

“I do not,” Talia answered with happy tears falling from her eyes.

“Jonatan Stilinski, do you object to union of our sons joined in matrimony?”

“No. Not at all,” John responded, his crystal blue eyes turned to glass as he fought back tears.

"Is there anyone here that knows why these two should not be mated?” Speak now, or forever remain silent." Theo looked out into the crowd of 200 guests in attendance, seated under a canopy of lights within the darkness of the preserve. Silence. No objections.

“It is quite an honorable, and considerable thing for an Alpha to find himself mated to a human. Humans are thought to be weak, vulnerable, and anxious. Therefore, an Alpha that is mated to one is expected to be strong, protective, and caring; recognizing the frailty of their mate, and shielding them from dangers. You are those things, but your mate is not frail and weak, by any means. He
shares your strength, your need to protect, and your proclivity to care for those you love. He is your equal, your match. And I suspect it is the principal reason you love him as much as you do.”

“It is. I love him for challenging me, and always understanding what I need, as I understand what he needs,” Derek confirms.

“It is also an honorable thing to be mated to an Alpha. It takes a person of great strength and temperament to find themselves bound to such leader. It is a testament to you, Stiles Stilinski, of the significance you have to not only my son, but to his pack as its second Alpha.”

“I know. And I make it my providence to be worthy of my character,” Stiles said. “And of my Alpha.”

“Have you submitted to your Alpha yet, Stiles?”

“No, I have not.”

“Do you wish to submit? Do you wish to make yourself the true mate of Alpha Hale, and claim yourself as the Alpha-mate of his pack?”

With wet eyes and a shaky breath, filled with love, happiness and pride, Stiles answered, “Yes.”

Tears rolled down Derek’s cheeks at Stiles finally, officially, becoming his; submitting as he had asked him to so many times.

Stiles gets to his knees and bows his head. Derek’s hand ran through Stiles’ hair with a soft touch. Stiles couldn’t help but catch the werewolves wrist, and brought his hand down to caress his face, turning his cheek into the large palm. He whispered into it, just so Derek could hear: “I love you, Derek Hale. Always.”

Derek’s thumb grazed Stiles’ mouth before returning to the top of his head. “Przemysław Jonatan Grzegorz Stilinski, you are hereby recognized as my ally, my friend, my lover, my husband, my pack, my family, and my mate. Your submission means that I will always protect you, love you, and never stray from the bonds of our marriage and our pack. You, are Alpha-mate. Always and forever. If bad luck should befall us, may we meet in another lifetime, stronger than before.”

Derek drew his claws slowly from the base of Stiles’ neck to the nape. Blood rises from his skin. Talia quickly wrapped a cotton cloth around the wounds to stop the bleeding. Deaton approached with a pungent cream that he dabbed onto the claw marks. They helped Stiles to his feet.

Derek’s face was wet with tears and an easy, happy smile plagued his lips.

“Talia. Anything you’d like to add, my love,” Theo asked.

“Take care of each other,” she said simply and true.

“Never give up on one another. Always fight for each other. Until your very last breath,” John added, his voice cracked and raw. He wiped away a tear.

Stiles and Derek turned to face Theo completely.

“I, Theodoric Leander Hale, Alpha of Beacon Hills, father to True Alpha of Northern California, Derek Stephan Hale, give my blessing for this mating.”

Theo scent marked Stiles, then Derek. “I am overjoyed for you, my son.”
“Thank you, Dad.”

“Mr. and Mr. Derek Hale,” Talia gladly announced.

Stiles and Derek kissed amid loud cheers and howls from their pack.

March 30, 2026, 12:07am

“I don’t know how you convinced me this was a good idea,” Derek says.

“It’s not like it takes much convincing with you when the prospect is me being naked,” Stiles winks at him.

Derek shakes his head at the goofiness that is his husband.

“Don’t be like that, sourwolf. You know you like when I’m in the nude,” Stiles smirks. He kisses Derek, hard and quick.

Derek can’t help the bright smile that forms on his face. The wide one, that shows teeth, making his cheeks flush, and reaches all the way up to his gold/green eyes. Stiles’ favorite smile. The one Derek only gives to him.

“I will admit to loving you in absolutely nothing.”

“And I will admit to loving you just the same.”

Derek holds tighter to Stiles as they float naked in the pool. Treading water gently in each other’s arms.

“It’s a really nice night.”

“Yeah,” Derek agrees. “You’re not cold?”

“No. We’re in a heated pool and your holding me. I’m good.”

Derek bends down to capture Stiles’ lips in a slow, wet kiss.

They kiss like that, sexy and deliberate, for a while. Stiles’ hand rakes through Derek’s wet, soot-colored hair as Derek holds them up, drifting in the cool, chlorine water under the stars.

Stiles pulls back and winces.

“What’s the matter?”

“Cramp.”

“In your leg?”

“No. My stomach. Shit that was sharp.”

“You want to get out?”
“No. No. It’s just a short one. I’m fine. Kiss me again.”

Derek leans forward to press their lips together—

“Ow! Fuck!” Stiles hunches in the water at the sharp pain in his abdomen.

“We’re getting out,” Derek says definitively.

“No. Derek. We’re skinning dipping on a nice night with the house all to ourselves. Come on,” Stiles whines.

“Nope. You’re not fighting me on this.”

“I fight you on everything. It’s why you love me.”

“Oddly enough. Come on. Out of the pool. We can have sex in our bed, when your cramps simmer down.”

Stiles huffs. “Such a spoil-sport,” he grumbles under his breath.

“You know I heard that right.”

Stiles sticks his tongue out at Derek and lets him paddle them to the pool steps.

“I’m perfectly fine,” he says, trying to fight back the pain of a cramp.

“Yeah. I can tell.”

“I’d flip you off if I weren’t holding onto you right now.”

“I’m sure.”

Derek helps Stiles up the three steps. He grabs a towel off the lounge chair and drapes it over Stiles’ shoulders, then takes the other towel and wraps it around his waist. “Alright. Let’s put clothes on you so you can walk around.”

Stiles rolls his eyes. “Fine.” He lets himself be lead into the house through the backdoor. Their clothes are still scattered on the kitchen floor.

Derek picks up Stiles’ clothes.

For all his complaining, he actually likes being pampered and fawned over sometimes. Especially by Derek. Which is why he allows the Alpha to dress him back in his giant underwear, maternity jeans, toad T-shirt, and cardigan he insisted Derek buy him since he liked the one Marin got him for Christmas so much.

“Walk.”

Stiles waddles leisurely in circles around the kitchen/family room area while Derek picks up his own clothes and dresses. Jordan told them that to help alleviate some of the pain from cramps that just walking around should help.

“That feel better?”

“I don’t know. The pains feel sharper, and fucking longer.”
“Do you want something? Like juice, or hot tea?”

“Hot tea, I think.”

Derek grabs the tea kettle and fills it with water.

“Ow! Son-of-a-bitch!”

Derek puts the kettle down. Stiles is hunched over the counter, holding his lower abdomen. His face is buried in the crook of his arm as he groans in pain.

“Stiles.”

He lifts his head. His eyes are that familiar burnt orange as they meet Derek’s own. “I really don’t think these are normal cramps, sourwolf.”

“…Holy shit,” Derek barely whispers. He’s frozen, staring wide-eyed and still at Stiles who’s snapping his fingers centimeters from his face.

“Derek!”

The Alpha finally comes to when Stiles hits him across the face with an oven mitt as hard as he can.

“What?”

“Call Jordan now!”

“Why?”

“Are you kidding me?! I’m in labor!”

“You’re not due for two more weeks.”

**Stiles growls.** Actually growls. Like a werewolf, at Derek.

Derek’s feet scramble as he races upstairs for his cellphone.

Stiles manages to waddle himself to the family room. He grabs his own cell off the coffee table. He sends out a mass text: **Real fucking deal. On our way to hospital now.** He drops it when a hard contraction hits him. His nails dig into the fabric of the sofa, tearing at it with **claw-like** marks that puff out cotton.

Derek careens into the room. “I can’t find my phone,” he says, looking panicked and pulling at his hair. He searches his person. “It’s not—” He pulls his phone from his back pocket.

Stiles would laugh if he weren’t in so much fucking agony.

“You going to keep looking at it, or are you going to call Jordan?”

“Right! Fuck! Jordan!” Derek calls him. “…Jordan. It’s Derek. Stiles is going into labor! What do I do?”

“How were you better at this last time, when it wasn’t even real,” Stiles wonders about his husband who seems to be doing his best impersonation of Scott in a crisis. Stiles reaches over and snatches the phone from Derek’s hand. “We’re on our way to the hospital,” he shouts into it before hanging
up. “Come here.”

Derek steps closer. Stiles slaps him across the face!

“I need you to get it together, because I am freaking out, and we both can’t lose our shit at the same time. Just remember the drills Lydia made us run through. What do we need to do now?”

“I…”

Stiles doubles-over groaning and tears new slashes into the furniture!

“Our cellphones.” Derek grabs his and Stiles’ phones and puts them in his back pockets. “Keys, are by the door, so is your bag. The car is out front. We haven’t parked it in the garage since you went to the hospital last time. We called Jordan. I have to text the rest of the pack.”

“I already did that,” Stiles tells him. Happy his husband has finally gotten a clue.

“Our parents. I’ll call them on the way to the hospital.”

“Sounds like a plan.”

“I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

Derek lifts Stiles into a ‘bridal carry’ and heads toward the front door.

1:39am

Lydia catches Jordan in the corridor, dressed in his scrubs. “Jordan!” she flies down the hall toward him. “What’s going on? What’s happening? I got to get in there.”

“Whoa!” He holds her back. “Lydia. Calm down.”

“He is two weeks early and probably freaking out! I have to go in there with him!”

“Derek is in there with him.”

“It’s not the same!”

“Lydia. Sweetheart, please.” He wipes the panicked tears from her face with his hand. “It’s okay. He’s fine. Everything is fine. I promise you. We’re prepping him for his C-section now. Don’t you trust me?”

She nods. She does. She truly does, but… Stiles and Scott are her oldest, closest friends. They’re her family. And right now her “brother” is about to have major surgery and she’s scared for him, and her “nephews.”

“Then know when I say ‘everything is fine’ it is. In a couple of hours you’ll get to see him, and the babies. Okay?”

She takes a deep breath, trying to bring down her anxiety.

“I’m a pretty damn good doctor, if I don’t say so myself, and I know how much Stiles means to
“you, and this pack. I will not let a single thing happen to him or those children.”

“Yeah. I know. I know…”

“Good. You should probably get back to the waiting area. Somebody needs to keep the rest of the pack in line. Scott and Liam are probably racing wheelchairs down the hall,” he laughs.

Lydia scoffs. *Yeah. They probably are. Idiots.* She pecks his cheek. “I am the first to know if anything happens.”

“It won’t. Swear to you.”

She gives him a curt nod and heads back toward the waiting area.

2:01am

A nurse holds up Stiles’ IV bag while Derek holds his hand. Stiles in wearing the standard hospital gown, feeling a bit exposed. He tries to hold perfectly still as the anesthesiologist administers the anesthetic into his spine.

“Good thing I’m not afraid of needles,” he quips.

“You’re doing good, baby,” Derek reassures him. He’s dressed in scrubs with footies on his feet and a hairnet.

Jordan approaches, hands up and away from touching anything. A nurse dries his hands and arms, then slips long, latex gloves on them. She then ties his surgical mask on. “How are you feeling, Stiles?”

“It’s hard to describe.”

“Are you in any pain?”

“No. Whatever she gave me though borders on magical,” he says pointing to the anesthesiologist. She winks at him as she disposes the needle. “I just meant… I’ve never been so stupidly happy and so terrified in my life.”

Derek smiles. “Me, too.”

“Says you. You don’t have the hard part.”

Derek rolls his eyes with a faint smile on his lips.

“How about I tell you what we’re going to be doing,” Jordan offers. “You’re going to lay down on that gurney. You’ll be conscious the whole time, but you won’t feel anything. I going to give you a small horizontal cut above your pubic area. It’s called a ‘bikini cut’. Then I’m going to make another cut on the lower part of your abdomen. At that time it’ll take only 5 minutes to delivery the babies.”

“Really?”

“Yup. After that, I’m going to rupture the sac and Derek will cut the umbilical cords.”

Stiles can practically feel Derek swell with pride at the task given to him.
“Then I’m going to remove the placenta, and then we’ll suture the incision which will take about 45 minutes. You wouldn't see a single thing. We’ll have a curtain up that will block your view.”

“Thank God for small mercies.”

3:34am

“You are not going to be made godfather, McCall,” Jackson snaps.

“What? And you are?”

“No, but I doubt Derek would let Stiles have that one. I don’t care how amazing his blowjobs are.”

“Oh, God…” John groans at the childishness before him.

“You can barely tie your own shoes,” Jackson snarks at the beta.

“Hey,” Allison objects. “Scott is very capable of taking care of himself…with some adult supervision.” Scott looks crushed. “Sorry. It was right there,” she pats him on the shoulder.

“You’re spending too much time with Stiles lately.”

“I’m just saying, that if they had to pick, I’d say they’re going to go with Boyd.”

“No way! He’s already No. 2 beta! He can’t have two things,” Scott literally whines. “Plus, Stiles and I promised each other in 4th grade that when we have kids we’re going to be godfathers to each other’s.”

“And where was I when this occurred,” Lydia asked.

“Um… Ugh… You were…” Scott stumbles.

“God, Scott! You and Stiles always do this! You always make these super-secret-blood-brothers pacts and never include me! You always leave me out!”

“Because you’d think they were dumb! Like the last time.”

“That was dumb! I’m not going to pledge to enter a three-way marriage with you and Stiles if we don’t meet our mates by the time we’re forty.”

“You and Stilinski made a pact to do that,” Jackson asks, snickering. Boyd, Isaac, and Cora can’t help but to laugh, too.

“See? Dumb.” She huffs then flops down in one of the many uncomfortable hospital chairs. “Whatever I don’t care.” It’s apparent she does. “Because I am going to be the most boss aunt on the planet, and outshine all of you jerks so hard you’ll go blind, and those little boys will love me more than any of you.”

Scott rolls his eyes at the banshee.

“…So, are you even attracted to Stiles, McCall,” Jackson goads. “I mean, you got to be a little bit if you were going to marry each other.”

“Ew! Gross! Stiles is brother. And the pact was if we didn’t find our mates by the time we’re forty.
We weren’t just going to get married at forty. There would have to be a legit reason.”

“Can we change the subject please. My head hurts listening to this,” John says.

“I second that motion,” Talia says.

Melissa laughs.

Jordan walks into the waiting room. Everyone jumps to their feet.

“Two boys. In perfectly good health, each weighing 7lbs. 10oz. and Stiles is doing fine.”

The waiting room is an eruption of cheers and hugs. Backslaps and excited word-vomit. Tears of joy and quiet howls for their Alphas.

4:22am

Stiles’ eyes flutter open. He doesn’t remember passing out. Must have been all the excitement. And the drugs. **Damn good drugs.**

Last thing he remembers was a nurse sitting his first born on his chest and him crying like a…well, like a baby at the gooey little face wailing right along with him. And he was the most beautiful thing Stiles has ever laid eyes on.

“Hey,” a soft voice says, drawing his attention. Derek. Stiles had no idea he could talk that low. He’s holding their son. Their other child rest swaddled in the *medical bassinet*. They’re both clean, and wrapped in hospitals blankets with tiny beanies on their heads.

“Hey. Who you got there?”

“I got Jake.” Derek stands and gently passes the baby into Stiles’ arms.

“Hi, there, buddy. I’m your daddy. Your other daddy. Sorry for the waterworks earlier. I was just really excited to meet you, even though we’ve already kind of been hanging out for the last 9 months.”

The newborn yawns and Stiles thinks he’s about to tear up again.

A soft knock at the door grabs their attention. Jordan comes in. “Lydia literally pulled a tiny blow torch out of her purse and said she’d burn the hospital to the ground, and your father, Stiles, a sheriff, just threatened to clothesline a nurse. I don’t think I can hold them off any longer.”

Stiles and Derek laugh. Yeah, that sounds about right.

“Who do we let in first?”

“Fuck it. Can’t we let them all in at the same time? Get it over with?”

Derek shrugs. “Why not?”

Stiles tries to sit up a little better, but his stitches hurt. Derek adjusts the bed for him instead.

He leans down into the bassinet to scoop up their second born and sits comfortable back into the chair beside Stiles’ bed.
“You’re brave souls, my friends. Brave souls” Jordan jokes. He opens the door and waves, signaling them to file into the room.

The door burst open wide and vibrating, and of course the first in is Lydia, followed by John, then Scott who crowd around Stiles so closely he has to hold out a hand, silently asking them to back the fuck up a bit.

Jordan is practically ran over as Liam and Mason shuffle their way in last.

Luckily, they have a private room.

Lydia can’t stop staring at the babies like they’re precious jewels she’s searched all her life for. Allison is already crying, Erica is squealing and trying her hardest not to make ‘grabby hands’, and Scott looks like he just got two new puppies to play with.

“So, you going to introduce me to my grandchildren,” John says, his voice just as heartbreaking and raw as it was on Stiles’ wedding day.

“Yes,” Stiles beams. “Grandparents first.”

Scott’s facial expression changes. He looks like he just got told there isn’t any dessert after dinner.

John leans down for Stiles to transfer the baby to him.

“This is Jacob Grzegorz Stilinski-Hale. Your very first grandchild, dad.”

“Jacob. After Grandpa Jake?”

Stiles nods.

“Good name. Always did like Claudia’s father. He was a good man.”

“So are you,” Stiles tells his father.

And with that, John can’t fight it back anymore. He breaks the dam; the tears start flowing down his face. And why not? He’s holding his grandson. He’s holding the next generation of Stilinski in his arms. No shame in being proud of that.

“And this is Leander Adam Stilinski-Hale,” Derek says, passing their other son to Theo.

“You named him after me,” Theo asks, looking both shocked and honored.

“Of course I did, dad. I couldn’t think of a better man to name him after. You and Grandpa Adam.”

Talia is equally touched at Derek honoring her own father by naming his son after him. His parents pull him close, scent-marking him, while being mindful of the baby between them.

“So, are they wolves or humans,” Liam asks.

“We won’t know until they’re a year old,” Stiles tells him. “That’s when werewolves usually have their first shift.”

“Cool.”

“They are totally werewolves. Remember all that red meat Stiles was eating in the beginning. Those are definitely werecubs,” Cora suspects.
“I don’t know. They look pretty human to me,” Mason proclaims.

“I look pretty human, too, and I’m a wolf,” Isaac reminds.

“I’m sorry, but is no one going to ask me how I feel? I just gave birth,” Stiles complains.

“You had a C-section. Let me know the next time you do it and it’s natural, kid,” Melissa chides.

“Amen to that,” Talia adds.

“Still hurt a little,” Stiles grumbles.


“When do I get my turn,” Scott whines…again. And the room erupts into a loud banter of complaints about who gets to go next and for how long.

In the end, Lydia (of course) decides who goes next and for how long. It’s the same order she created during Stiles’ first ultrasound, except this time Freya, Liam, Mason, Zoë, and Jordan are here and go last.

Scott is not too pleased that he has to wait until Cora is done holding both babies for 5 minutes each until gets his chance next, simply because she was the last of blood-related family in the room.

Isaac’s eyes wander to Freya expectantly the second “Jake” is placed in his arms. Jackson, honest to God, cries when holding them. Danny recites a sweet lullaby in Hawaiian to them. And Zoë blesses them with a protection spell that she whispers in Gaelic.

Jordan holds Leander, or “Lee,” for all of 30 seconds before the head RN in maternity comes in and kicks everyone out. They all leave reluctantly at a snail’s pace, bestowing words of wisdom or simple, sweet words of love to Stiles and Derek as they go.

Lydia is all tears and happy smiles when Jordan escorts her out.

“I hate to do this, but we have to take the babies, too,” a nurse tells them.

“Oh, no. please,” Stiles begs.

“The moment you wake up in the morning, I will bring them right back. I promise,” she assures Stiles. She reminds him a lot of Tara, his father’s deputy. She was always good to him, and never had an unkind word to say about anyone.

“Okay,” he says. He watches with some sadness as his sons are wheeled out of the room.

“And to think we have to go through that all over again tomorrow with Laura and Valerie,” Derek reminds.

Stiles laughs.

“And Peter the day after.”

“Ugh. You just killed it. The ‘babies are wounderous magic’ vibe is now dead with the mention of brooding, self-centered Peter Hale.”

“You know he’s secretly happy for us, right?”
“Yeah. Somewhere in his cold, dead heart.”

Derek takes a seat on the bed beside Stiles. “You okay?”

“…I wish my mom was here.”

Derek takes Stiles’ hand into his. “I know. I wish she was here for you, too… Did I ever tell you that I met her once?”

“No. I would have remembered you telling me that. When did you meet her?”

“I met your dad plenty of times, from him dropping by the house to talk to my mom and dad, but one time she came with him. I was outside playing. She was sitting in the car, waiting for the sheriff, listening to the radio and singing along.”

“What was she singing?”

“I don’t remember. I was really young at the time, almost six, I think. Something catchy, like a pop song. I came up to the window and she said ‘Hi’. And I said, looking at her stomach, ‘You’re going to have a baby’. And she said, ‘Yup. Any day now.’ And I told her how my mom just had a baby, my sister, Cora. And she said, ‘I know. It’s nice she has a big brother.’ And I think I shrugged my shoulders or something and she laughed. Then your dad came out of the house, said ‘hi’ to me, then left.”

“You met my mom when she was pregnant with me? …That’s so fucking cute it’s disgusting.”

Derek laughs. “I just remembered that a couple weeks ago. I never really put it together that that’s who she was until now. I can’t even remember if I ever saw her around town. I mean, Beacon Hills is not a metropolis, but for some reason that’s the thing I remembered.”

“She would have loved you, you know. She would have thought you were so good for me.”

“I am good for you. And you’re good for me.” Derek leans in close and presses his lips against Stiles’ mouth. “Thank you, Stiles,” he whispers at Stiles’ lips.

“Sort of couldn’t do it without you, sourwolf. You’re stuck with me now. In it for the long hull.”

“I’ve always been in it for the long hull, Stiles.”

“No turning back?”

“On you? Never.”

Stiles smiles. “Happy anniversary, Derek.”

”Happy anniversary.”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry that the first section of the chapter is just pure exposition. I'll show, not tell when I write the flashback fic of how Sterek got together in the series.

And am I the only one that didn't know TPTB at TW finally gave Mason a surname
(Hewitt)? Or did he always have one...? Because I could have sworn he didn't, for the longest...
One Year Later...

Chapter Summary

Epilogue for PART TWO! :)

Chapter Notes

Well, kids, it's been a LONG journey, but we're at the end of this part of the series. Don't fret though. The series isn't over, just this meaty part of Stiles x Derek's life together. There will be 7 more fics, 6 of which will be just one shots, and the last chaptered, that will complete the series entirely. If you haven't already, please check out the one shot focused on Jackson that I already posted as part of GOOD WOLVES DOING BAG THINGS. It needs a thorough edit, which will be coming soon, but nothing drastic will change about what's already on AO3.

I just want to say 'THANK YOU' to all of you; to those that gave 'Kudos', left comments, or just continued to read happily every time I posted a new chapter. It's been so much fun writing this fic and exploring these characters with you. I don't do it for anyone but you, so 'THANK YOU' for being terrific, funny, giving readers. Every day I write is made better by all of you. xxx

*And thank you McDannoIsaNagron for sending me that pic!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Lydia, it’s a kid’s birthday party, with only five kids and two infants. Why is there a catered staff passing around shrimp appetizers?”

Lydia stares at him like she can’t fathom him asking such a moronic question, but given the dumbfounded look on Stiles’ face, she sees he’s being serious. “It’s for the ‘tall people’ that can properly handle utensils and bringing food into that hole in their face so they can eat,” she says with a bright, fake smile. “Hmm. Yum-yum.”

Stiles rolls his eyes at her. “This is supposed to be an intimate little gathering with ‘immediate pack’ only.”

“Only immediate pack is here, Stiles,” she says, again in that tone.

“Caterers. A mixologist. A DJ. Party suppliers. A florist. Gold dust invitations. And a carousel that only Liam and Mason seem to be enjoying—”

“I told those two ass clowns it was for the kids only,” she spits between her perfectly white teeth, eyes scanning the party, looking for the “culprits.”

“Lydia! You even got a popcorn bar— Okay, no wait, that’s total cool, but there’s even a photographer here, and you know we do not let people take intimate photos of us,” Stiles snaps in a
“He’s a friend of Jordan’s, and Danny vetted him, remember? It’s the same guy that took the newborn pictures of the twins.”

“It’s too much. What part of ‘small gathering’ did you not understand in the E-vite?”

“I can not believe you think E-vites are plausible invitations to your sons’ first birthday party.”

“They’re one. They are not even going to remember a damn thing about today.”

“And what exactly did you want to do? Skype everyone and tell them to come over while Derek and your dad throw hunks of meat on the grill, have Boyd and Isaac order a couple kegs, and you cook all the rest of the food?”

“Yes! Yes, that’s exactly it! That’s the definition of a barbecue!”

“But this isn’t a barbecue. It’s a **kids’ birthday party**,” she throws back at him.

Stiles groans. “It’s my baby shower all over again.”

“I wish. Then maybe I’d get some cooperation around here.” She snaps her fingers at Mason who’s just about ready to jump on a ‘white stallion’ mid-gallop on the carousel, when— “Hey! That’s not for you!” She takes a few steps in Mason’s direction.

“Jordan deserves a medal,” Stiles grumbles.

“I heard that,” Lydia bites back at him as she struts over toward the carnival ride.

Soft lips and scruffy hair touch Stiles’ cheek. He can’t help the smile that cracks over his lips. Derek.

“You talk to her?”

“Is there any ‘talking to’ when Lydia is concerned,” Stiles asks.

Derek chuckles. “No, I don’t think so.” He wraps strong arms around Stiles’ waist and kisses his neck softly. “Your dad volunteered to watch the boys tonight.”

“Did he,” Stiles asked coyly.

“He did. You feeling okay enough to let them out of your sight for an entire night?”

“Me? You growled at anyone that came with 25 feet of them the moment we left the hospital. Family included. You made Liam cry.”

“That was a year ago. They were newborns, not even a week old yet. And Liam wanted to hold Jake, but I know for a fact he doesn’t wash his hands after he takes a piss.”

“I broke that disgusting habit of his months ago, by the way. You’re welcome.”

“You hit him on the knuckles with a ruler after he’d use the bathroom.”

“Nevermind the method. Just praise the progress.”

“Is that a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on the babysitting tonight?”
“Scott can do it. It’s as much his day as it is Jake and Lee’s.”

“Okay. But you have to tell your dad that…and Jackson.”

“They’re making McCall godfather. I can not comprehend that level of ridiculousness,” Jackson groans before taking a long pull of his beer.

“He and Stiles did make a pact when they were kids,” Cora reminds him.

“Pact or no pact, Cora, you know Derek would not approve of this.”

“If he doesn’t then why is he making Scott and Allison godparents,” Jordan says.

“Oh, come on. You know Stiles used a damn good blowjob as leverage. And I’m assume Derek made sure Allison was included as a part of the deal, too.”

“Don’t be such a hater, Jackie,” Danny tells his best friend.

“I’m not. I’m just—”

“Jealous,” Boyd suggests.

“No. ‘Surprised’ is what I was going to say. I mean, be honest, in the event of a tragedy, would you entrust the care of your kids to McCall?”

Their silence and avoiding all contact answers for them.

“I rest my case,” Jackson brags.

Scott comes rushing up just then, a dopey, excited look on his puppy-dog face. “I get to twin-sit tonight!” And just like that, he’s running up to Peter and Kira to tell them, too. Peter makes a looping motion with his index finger, “Whoop-Dee-Doo.”

Scott could care less as he moves on to Ethan, Aiden, and Erica huddled together at the lounge chairs.

“Well, it seems Scott is excited,” Stiles says holding Lee in his arms as he approaches.

Jackson’s face immediately brightens at the sight of the little one. He makes overeager grabby hands at Stiles.

Stiles rolls his eyes, with the corner of his mouth turned up in a smirk, and hands the baby over to Jackson.

Jackson is already smothering him in kisses.

“Where was this guy when we were in high school? Who knew all I had to do was fork over a baby and he’d leave me alone,” Stiles jokes.

Jackson is in his own world cooing and fawning over Lee, who giggles happily at him, to pay any attention to Stiles at the moment. He takes a deep breath, inhaling the infants scent, as he smiles and babbles at the beta.

“That’s a good look on you, Jackson,” Boyd says sincerely. He can smell the perfumed,
moonflower scent wafting off the other werewolf’s skin. *Happiness.*

Jackson’s attention wanes from the child in his arms to give Boyd a small, tentative smile he hopes no one else sees, but he manages to catch the agreeing smile Stiles shoots in his direction.

“One day. Maybe,” Jackson says softly, eyes on Lee.

Theo comes over. “My grandsons have been monopolized long enough by everyone else at this party. Now, it’s my turn. Give me my namesake.”

Jackson reluctantly hands Lee over to Theo with a frown. Cora pats his shoulder patronizingly as he pouts.

Boyd grabs Theo’s cane so he can hold Lee properly.

“Can’t believe they’re a year old already,” Theo says, smiling fondly at his grandson.

“I know. I cried this morning when I got them out of their cribs for breakfast,” Stiles tells him.

“I always cry at the first steps. When they’re young like this, they take them toward you. When they get older… It’s like they’re walking away from you.”

Stiles eyes turn a bit misty at Theo’s comment, but it’s Jackson that breaks out into a sob and runs off into the house in full-blown tears.

“Wow. That is one serious man-period he’s on,” Cora says. Jordan nearly spits up his beer trying (and failing) not to laugh. Danny gives her a strong *Really, Cora?* look. While Theo glares at her for her lack of sensitivity in regards to her pack-brother.

“What **is** up with him today,” Boyd asks.

“He’ll be fine,” Stiles says. “…when he stops angst-ing all over the place and gets his ass on a plane to France.”

Lee begins to cry in Theo’s hold. Theo tries shushing him softly, but the young one only seems to cry harder. "Come now, Grandpa can't be that rusty at this. I have 5 more than came before you, you know," he jokes. Lee's sobs calm a bit, just enough for him to open his eyes a bit... “Stiles.”

Stiles hears Jake crying, too. His eyes instinctively search for his “missing” son, finding him in Derek’s arms as he chats with Isaac, Freya, and Laura.

“Stiles.”

Stiles finally turns his attention to Theo.

“I think you might want to hold your son.” Theo hands Lee off to Stiles.

Stiles’ eyes widen at the **beta yellow** ones staring back at him amidst the tearful face. “Oh, my God… Derek!”

Boyd, Cora, Danny, and Jordan crowd around Stiles, staring at Lee who seems even more agitated with his personal space being violated at the moment.

Cora gasps. “He’s a wolf… I knew it! Damn. We should have bet money.”

“My little boy… I have a cub. A werecub.”
“You got two actually.”

Stiles turns to Derek standing beside him, smiling proudly at Jake in the crook of his arm, who’s sporting the same bright, gold eyes. “I’ve been waiting all day for this. They’re werewolves,” Stiles says excitedly. “…I am so outnumbered.” He looks up, and the whole pack is circled around them.

“You may be outnumbered, but we both know you’ll keep us all in line,” Derek says. He leans close to him and kisses Stiles’ temple.

“Somebody’s got to.”

The twins gradually begin to quiet down, feeling the connected, shared bond of the pack encircling them. It’s comforting. Soothing, to the newly discovered betas.

“I swear I thought they were going to be human,” Mason says, sounding disappointed.

“Hey. Don’t worry. The ‘Squishy Human Circle’ has other chances to grow,” Stiles reassures Mason with a wink.

“I don’t care what they are: werewolf, human, fae, daemon spawn… I just know they are the most amazing little boys I’ve ever seen,” John states.

“But you could be a little biased,” Melissa says with a smirk.

“Maybe a little,” he teases back at her.

“Yay. They’re werewolves’,” Peter mocks in a flat tone. “Wake me when they’re not crapping in their shorts and are old enough to buy a round at the titty bar.”

“Dear God, Peter! Really,” Stiles snaps.

“What? They’re infants. All they do is cry, eat, shit, and sleep. They’re not going to be the least bit interesting until they’re probably teenagers.”

“Well, that’s a long way off, so until then, can you do us all a solid and feign just some interest in your great-nephews, please,” Stiles barks at him.

“I’m here, aren’t I,” Peter scoffs.

“Just zip it. I know you’re only trying to irritate me so I can tell you to literally ‘fuck off’, allowing you the opportunity to disappear with a bottle of whiskey and your man-pain. So, just shush, and let the rest of us bask.”

Peter’s got no retort, because it’s the simple truth, and lying while huddled in a cluster of weres would be fruitless.

“So, what happens now,” Stiles asks, eyes on the elder, wiser werewolves.

“Nothing. Not until their 5th birthday. That’s usually about the age betas formally recognize their Alpha, and submit to them,” Talia informs her son-in-law.

Stiles can already see the ceremony/party planning wheels in Lydia’s head beginning to turn. He has no idea why money laundering and grand larceny is her chosen profession. He believes she’d make such a great event planner instead…

"Then Derrek will teach them how to be a wolf," Talia adds. She runs an affectionate hand through
Derek’s hair, like the proud mother she is.

Stiles’ attention lands on Derek, who’s got a mile-wide smile on his handsome face, looking down at the child in his arms.

“How you doing, big bad?”

“Incredible.”

“What’s going on,” Cee, Valerie’s youngest, asks.

“You cousins are werewolves, love,” her father, Jason, answers.

“The babies are werewolves, Uncle Derek,” she asks.

Derek nods at his youngest niece.

“Then we should howl.” The little human child tilts her head upward toward the sky and lets out her best “howl.”

Derek is moved by her sweet, innocent desire to celebrate with a signal of pack unity. He can’t think of anything better, to signify the pride blossoming in his chest right now. He joins her, head back, eyes closed, mouth open in bellowing out a long, loud, satisfying howl.

His ears fill the harmonious sound of the rest of his pack joining in. Everyone. Even sullen Peter and the humans.

He can hear Stiles “howling” beside him. He can hear the love, appreciation, the joy, and the bond in the noise Stiles bays into the air. He hears Stiles’ gratitude under it all, and smells the seep from his skin, scenting the air with vanilla.

He’s thankful.

And Derek’s thankful, too.

November 2015

“It’s daylight and there’s a good amount of people here.”

“I know, but…still creeps me out.”

“I would assume so, Scottie, considering you got bit by a werewolf last night.”

Scott shushed him, looking around nervously for anyone who’s heard. “That’s not what happened,” he whispered sharply to his best friend.

“It is what happened, Scott.”

“No, it wasn’t. It was a rabid dog.”

“How in the name of fuck is that better? What’s with the sudden denial?”
“Nothing! I just… I don’t want to be a werewolf, okay?”

“So telling people that giant bite on your shoulder is rabies is better? What’s wrong with being a werewolf?”

“They’re…kind of…scary. I mean…they’re monsters, Stiles.”

“Whoa! When did you become a species-ist?!”

“I am not a species-ist! I just don’t want to be one of them!”

“There’s nothing wrong with being a werewolf, or any other supe. I am perfectly happy with being human, but if I got made one, or someone I loved got made one, I wouldn’t feel any different about them, as I hope they wouldn’t feel any different about me.”

Scott gave a little smile at Stiles; his best friend always knowing, reading into him, what exactly he needs to hear.

“Werewolves are just humans that get a little wild during full moons…and other types of moons sometimes. Malia is a werecoyote, moons don’t really affect her, but she is a supe. Do you think she’s a ‘monster’?”

“Well…no.”

“What about Katie Jones?”

Scott looked dreamy-eyed and fond at the name. “Katie Jones. My first kiss. Her lips tasted like watermelon chapstick.”

“And was she a ‘monster’?”

“No. Far from it,” he smiled like a dope.

“Well, there you go! Stop freaking out that somehow now people aren’t going to like you, or see you differently. I mean, they will; you’re a werewolf now, but you’re still the same old Scott. You just have superpowers now.”

“That’s right! I have superpowers now! I wonder if I can do that ‘lie detector’ thing they can do…”

“Maybe,” Stiles shrugs. “I promise we will run the gamut of werewolf cons and pros immediately, but first I’d like to hurry up and find your inhaler.” He looked up at the cloudy, grey sky. “I think it’s going to rain soon.”

“Right.”

“Now, I know we were drunk, but where the hell were we before all the running and screaming…?”

“The Botanical Garden.”

“We’re in the Botanical Garden, Scottie.”

Scott snaps his fingers. “A trail! We were on a trail.”

“The Redwood Trail!”
Stiles was about to take off when Scott grabbed his arm. “Stiles, wait... I’m... I’m kind of freaked out again. What if he’s still in there?”

“I doubt it, but it doesn’t matter because we’re going in together. No getting separated this time. And no fucking around either,” he said in a serious tone, brandishing a wooden baseball bat.

“I don’t think your baseball bat is going to be much of a match against a werewolf, Stiles.”

“Maybe, but it doesn’t mean we need to be entirely defenseless.” He held the bat upward, the barrel resting on his shoulder. “Come on. Let’s get your inhaler and get the fuck out of here.”

They cut out of the Halloween party early, after Jackson humiliated Stiles in front of everyone there, and Stiles fought hard not to breakdown into tears over it. Instead, they hit up a liquor store and found themselves drunkenly wandering into Golden Gate Park a couple of hours later with 1/4 a bottle of Jack Daniels.

They found a bench and flopped down on it. Stiles drunk-dialed Malia back home, going off on a rant about Jackson, and then practically proposing marriage to the werecoyote in between telling her how much he loved her handjobs, while Scott ignored calls/text from Lydia wondering where they were.

In Scott’s attempt to climb a redwood, thereby desecrating the majestic tree, he lost his inhaler. When he climbed back down to look for it with Stiles, they were met with a pair of blood red eyes and a growl, tucked into the shadows...

They walked toward the trail. Scott’s hands were balled into fist. He took a deep breath. He was nervous obviously, but also a little surprised at Stiles’ bravado with the whole ordeal. For whatever reason, Stiles seemed determined to go back to the park and get Scott’s inhaler instead of letting him just order a new one at the pharmacy. The was almost something greedy, possessive, about the way Stiles wanted to go back to the park. And like always, Scott found himself on the other side of a convincing argument with Stiles. He had no idea how his friend talked him into the things he does, but he was never bored, or left wondering when he did.

“It was somewhere around here, I think...”

Stiles put his bat down to help Scott look through a blanket of leaves.

“I hope there’s no poison ivy in here,” Scott said.

Stiles merely rolled his eyes at his sometimes dim-witted friend. Oh, Scottie...

“Why would there be poison ivy at a national park?”

The two young men bolted upright and turned to—

Stiles was on the ground suddenly. And so was the dark-haired man in the black, leather jacket. They were shaking, convulsing, in the dirt as they stared right into each other’s eyes.

Stiles’ heart felt like it was being squeezed tighter and tighter in a big, powerful fist. He couldn’t breathe, or sway his limbs to do anything but quiver and leave him immobile.

The man—the beautiful man—in front of him looked just as hopeless, but bold.

Stiles saw the long, pointed fingernails and the sharp teeth. He couldn’t stop staring at the crimson red that turned, what was a second ago hues of gold and green, into steely, primal rubies
that bore right into the deepest parts of him.

Where Stiles couldn’t breathe, the mysterious man seemed capable in emitting angry growls that rattled Stiles’ insides.

Scott was talking. He was bend down into the dirt with Stiles, holding him, no doubt panicking in between making vague assurances he couldn’t keep, because of said panic.

Stiles, however, didn’t panic. For a change. He was, however, scared, but not horrified. He was… curious. Curious of this thing that had taken over his body and collapsed him to the ground. He was curious of the man. He was curious of this thing that seemed to be transpiring between them, and only them.

And just like that, it was over.

“Stiles. You okay, buddy? What happened? What was that? Did you have a heart attack?”

“I-I don’t know…”

The sky opened up and a loud thunderclap broke the silence.

The man got to his knees. Fist pounded into the earth. His head snapped up and Stiles met red eyes and fangs. “Come here,” he growled.

“We need to get out of here now,” Scott whispered. He helped Stiles to his feet, ready to take off… somewhere, but Stiles drifted away from his friend toward the man. The werewolf.

Scott grabbed hold of Stiles’ arm. “Are you crazy?! Let’s go! He’ll eat you!”

The werewolf smoothly got to his feet, standing, waiting for Stiles to follow his demand.

Rain fell hard from the sky, soaking everything.

Scott tugged harder on Stiles’ arm as he tried to take a step closer toward the man in leather.

“Let’s get the hell out of here! What are you doing?! He’s a werewolf!”

“Be quiet,” the man barked at Scott.

Stiles turned his head to see his friend’s eyes burn yellow and his mouth close shut. “How’d you do that,” he asked the wolf.

He didn’t answer. Instead, he yanked Stiles close to him, chest to chest, and kissed him!

Stiles lost all thought and ran on instinct as he gave in, opening his mouth, inviting the man’s tongue inside to deepen the kiss. To convert it wild and crazed, as though they haven’t seen each other in decades. Centuries. A millennia. As though survival, need, and every ounce of want created, depended on their lips touching.

Stiles head spun when the man turned them around, pushing Stiles’ back against a tree. Stiles voluntarily lifted his legs and found them wrapped around the man’s waist.

Nothing mattered but the man mouthing at his neck; kissing and biting and sucking. He couldn’t help the lewd moan that escaped him when the man rutted his erection against the one growing in Stiles’ own pants.

He pulled at raven-colored hair when a wet tongue trailed from his collarbone to his jawline, then
nipped lightly at his chin. “Fuck… Fuck! Oh, fuck!” Stiles pushed away at the man when Scott’s wide, horrified eyes found his own; his best friend, his buddy, his “bro,” watched, paralyzed with shock, as Stiles was being dry humped against a tree by a stranger.

The man reached out to grab at Stiles as the human put distance between them.

“I’m-I’m so sorry. I-I-I don’t know what happened. I don’t know why I did that.”

“I think I do,” the man said, breathless from their kissing.

“You want to enlighten me then?”

“Stiles…” Scott was jittery, tense, and scared. Why shouldn’t he be? Stiles was just molested by a werewolf in the middle of a park. And vice versa.

The man’s eyes shift to Scott, then back to Stiles. “Soon. I have to take care of something first. I’ll find you two again.”


The man grabbed Stiles’ face and planted a hard, quick kiss on his lips. “Derek.”

Stiles and Scott watched as he took off in a flash out of the park.


“I… I think I just got Spiderman-ed. A mysterious, sexy man just kissed the ever-loving shit out of me, then took off to… I don’t know. Fight crime, or something? Oh, my God! I’m Mary Jane!”

“Better than being Gwen Stacey.”

God bless Scott, Stiles thought. Even in the face of the unexplainable and random, he manages to comment on what really matters.

“And he wasn’t that mysterious. He said his name was Derek.”

“Yeah. He did tell me his name,” Stiles said, biting his lip, still tasting Derek there.

“What did he mean when he said, ‘I’ll find you two again’?”

“I don’t know.” Stiles hands Scott his inhaler.

“Where’d you find it?”

“I didn’t. He slipped it into my hand when he kissed me then ran off.”

“I take it back. Mysterious. He was definitely mysterious, and scary… So…you…kind of…made out…with…a…guy…just now.”


“Pfft! I’m not the one that can’t keep secrets from The Almighty Red Queen of the Underworld.”

“It’s so weird she approves of that nickname. But regardless, don’t breathe a word to anyone. I mean, I know people are aware that I have homosexual tendencies—”

Scott snorts at Stiles really underselling his gayness.
“—but I don’t exactly want everyone to know I was grinding against a strange, hot werewolf in the park at one o’clock in the afternoon.”

“…What about Malia? You going to tell her?”

“…I… I don’t know. I don’t think so.”

“It’s not like you to keep secrets. Especially from her.”

“I know,” Stiles said, sounding disappointed in his own self. “I’ll tell her. Soon.”

“Why’d you even kiss him?”

_He tried to find the words. Tried to explain it in a way that hopefully Scott could get. But all he could think to say was, “Because he felt like he was mine.”_

“I, Scott Roberto McCall…”

“And I, Allison Jennifer McCall, swear on my life to always protect, love, and cherish Jacob Grzegorz Stilinski-Hale and Leander Adam Stilinski-Hale, as their guardian if death should ever befall my Alpha, and Alpha-mate,” the pair say in unison. “Their joy will be my joy. Their heartache will be my heartache. And their pain will be my pain.”

Scott pricks his own finger with his fang. He smears a droplet of blood on Jake’s forehead and kisses his cheek, then does the same to Lee. Allison follows suit, but uses her switchblade knife instead.

Theo nods to Derek.

“We thank you for accepting our choice in making you the guardians of our children. It’s not a simple ask, nor one that is lighthearted, but you’ve agreed to it, with open hearts, and we are appreciative,” Derek says.

“We’re honored,” Scott and Allison answer.

“As are we,” Stiles says.

The four of them scent mark one another. Stiles and Derek then pass the boys over to their new godparents.

“Okay. Now, the boring legal stuff,” Laura interrupts for bureaucracy. “Scott and Allison, you sign Stiles and Derek’s Last Will &Testament. I’ll sign as the attorney obviously, and Dad you sign as a witness.”

They do as Laura instructs.

“Congrats, McCalls, you are now the legal guardians to your Alphas’ cubs!”

Scott is all goofy grins as he fist pumps the air. “Ha! Suck it, Jackson.”

Derek tries with all his might to not roll his eyes, and instead glares in Stiles’ direction.

Stiles shrugs, because really, “What do you want me to do?”
“Scott. Jesus. You don’t need all that stuff. It’s only for a night. You’re bringing them back tomorrow afternoon.”

“I know, but what if they get sick, or cold, or too hot, or get bored and won’t stop crying!”

“Ugh! Allison,” Stiles groans while gently bouncing a fussy Lee in his hold.

Allison pecks Scott’s cheek. “Scott. Relax. It’s okay. The boys love you and it’s just for a day. Nothing horrible is going to happen. It’ll be fun. I promise.”

“Okay,” Scott relents, seeming a little bit better, reeled in by his anchor.

Stiles mouths ‘Thank you’ to the former huntress. She nods and takes the diaper bag from Stiles as Scott puts back all the stuff he was planning to take with him...like the bookshelf. The whole bookshelf.

Stiles catches the forlorn look on Allison’s face as she glances at the photo on the dresser.

He wraps an arm around her shoulder. “Don’t do that,” he whispers into her ear. “It’ll happen. I promise.”

She nods and puts on her brightest smile.

“Stiles, are you sure they don’t need this,” Scott interrupts.

“Their changing table? No, Scott. They don’t need a massive piece of furniture for an overnight stay at their godfather’s house.” He turns to Allison. “Take him away now. He’s cutting into my sexy time.”

“Oh, ew. I never need to know about you and Derek having sex,” Scott grimaces.

“You’ve lived here. You know what happens within these walls. And if you don’t fucking leave soon so I can suck off my husband, I’m going to make you watch.”

Allison’s face brightens genuinely this time.

“The women in this pack... I swear,” Stiles says, shaking his head.

“What? Dude-on-dude is hot,” she shrugs.

“We are so leaving now.” Scott grabs Allison’s hand and drags her from the room. Stiles follows them out of the nursery, down the stares, and to the front door.

Derek walks in from outside, holding Jake. “Alright. I put the stroller in your car.”

“Why? Where are we supposed to take them,” Scott asks fretfully.

“Calm down, Scott. I asked for the stroller for my morning jog. This way I can take Jake and Lee with me while you make us breakfast.”

“Oh.”

“Scott, you’re cooking more now,” Derek asks, sounding surprised. Stiles suppresses a laugh.
“Just Mexican food my mom taught me to make when I was young, like *chilaquiles* and *huevos rancheros*.”

“Still. It’s an improvement. Awesome.”

Scott smiles. Praise from your Alpha is always reaffirming to one’s self-esteem. Especially to Scott at the moment, who knows Derek wasn’t so keen on him being named godfather to the twins.

“Alright, well, get the hell out of here please, so Derek can fuck me blind.”

“Ugh. Gladly,” Scott says. He turns to exit—

“Scott. The babies.”

The beta swears under his breath and laughs nervously as he takes Jake from Derek while Stiles hands off Lee to Allison.

“It’ll be fine. I promise,” she whispers to Derek who looks a bit weary. “Have fun!” She kisses his cheek and walks out the door.

Stiles and Derek watch as they get the boys into their *car seats*, climb in the car, and pull away from the house.

“They’re next you know.”

“I hope so. Allison is worried. The *in vitro* is taking a lot out of her, and Scott’s overwhelming optimism can be a bit much sometimes,” Stiles tells him.

“Then she needs this. Watching the boys will be good for them.”

“Yeah. Maybe. She’s just not as good at distracting herself the way Lydia is. And Lydia—”

“Hey. It’s 8PM, and we have the house to ourselves right now. We can solve everyone’s problems in the morning. Come here.”

Stiles leans in close. Derek wraps his arms around him.

“So, we’re alone.” Stiles kisses Derek. “What do you want to do about that?” He places a soft kiss on Derek’s neck.

“I want to go upstairs. Take off all my clothes. Take off all your clothes. Climb into bed with you…and go to sleep.”

“Oh, thank God! I’m exhausted, too!”

Derek laughs before sweeping Stiles over his shoulder in a *fireman’s carry*. He closes the door and walks toward the steps with a giggling Stiles over him, who seizes the opportunity to smack Derek on the ass.

He ascends just two steps before Stiles starts trying to wiggle out of his hold. “Hey, big bad.”

Derek pulls Stiles off his shoulder, but holds him up with his legs wrapped around his waist. “What?”

Stiles smiles and runs a gentle hand down Derek’s bearded face, cupping his cheek. “I’m really proud of us.”
“Me, too.”

“I really love us, too,” he says, thumb running smoothly along Derek’s bottom lip.

“I love us.”

“This is all I ever wanted. I don’t need anything else.”

“I know. But I’d give you anything you wanted. You and the boys. You know that, right?”

Derek would move mountains, walk through fire, cross oceans, gift wrap the moon, and travel through time and space for Stiles and their boys. He knows that. It’s the one truth he’s never doubted, because he’d do the same.

“I know.” Stiles leans down to kiss Derek. It’s patient, soft and aching. Like a promise. A reaffirmed promise. To always be this happy and this gracious. To always know they’re nothing without the other. “Derek. Do we have to go to sleep? I’m suddenly not as tired as I thought.”

“Me neither,” Derek smiles against Stiles’ lips. He hitches Stiles back over his shoulder and hurries up the stairs with Stiles’ laughter trailing behind them.

It’s Derek’s favorite kind of laugh, because it’s the one that tells him everything is more than okay.

It’s the one that feels like home.

Chapter End Notes

Okay, so I am officially taking prompts!!! From now until late-September of this year. And will start my next long fic in early October. Feel free to send me prompts through my tumblr (http://littlefrog1025.tumblr.com/). YOU DO NOT HAVE TO FOLLOW ME!!! I feel like everyone and their mother has a Tumblr and is always trying to get people to follow them-- YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DO THAT TO SEND ME PROMPTS! Besides, I’m pretty shitty on Tumblr. I just reblog other people's shit and add reaction gifs to it. Meh. You can also send me prompts via the comments section here on AO3, that way when I write it, it’ll be tagged as a gift to you. But if you’d like to remain anonymous, hit me up on Tumblr.

Secondly, I just want to lay out a guideline for the prompt fill: (1) Only Teen Wolf-inspired prompts please *(fusions are okay, like a Sterek/Modern Family episode fic), (2) I'll do any pairing except Stalia. Sorry. Very anti-Malia over here, and Derek and the sheriff, (3) I can't do Xeno/bestiality, Incest/twincest, watersports, cum eating (which to me, is different from cum swallowing), or zombies (they bore me) fics. I am NOT trying to kink shame, it's just very hard to write something you're not that enticed by, (4) and finally, prompts will be posted on both Tumblr and AO3.

Also, I'm starting another Sterek series during this time, as well. Each fic will be short, like a drabble, and there will be 50 of them. Every fic will take place in a different state of the US. If I get something wrong about a state you live in, or if I should include something that you feel is necessary about your state, please let me know :)

On a side note: has anyone read a Sterek fic where Derek is a snooty film critic, and
Stiles is this up and coming actor he interviews, and they end up with this hardcore attraction to each other by the end of the interview? I read it ages ago and forgot to bookmark it and now I can't find it...

And lastly, PLEASE tell me you've seen the animated short DIRTY PAWS!!! It's so freaking cute, and all a Sterek shipper has ever wanted. If not, here's the link: http://dilfosaur.tumblr.com/post/119224724243

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!