Little Talks

by pollitt

Summary

Or, five times the Sheriff called Derek 'son,' and one time he didn’t (but he meant it)

Notes

Thanks to dogeared, who asked for "Derek getting Stilinski family love, and Sheriff Stilinski being awesome " and for giving me the thumbs up to post, and to my partner-in-crime, Data, for the cheerlead and for the idea for #3.

Title taken from the Of Monsters and Men song, which was on rotation for a portion of this writing.

Now with art by lolbatty

1.

Years later, John would still remember the defiant set of Derek’s shoulders. The obvious effort he made to keep the fear tamped down as they stood in the counselor’s office, the bite of smoke and ash
clinging to John’s uniform as he said the words, trying to lessen the impact as much as he could with a calm voice. It wasn’t something you could ever really learn from a book.

“Everyone?” Derek asked, looking toward the door and not meeting John’s eye.

“We don’t know yet,” John had answered, placing his hand on Derek’s shoulder, feeling the instinctual tense of fight or flight followed by a shaky exhale. As he squeezed the boy's shoulder, he said quietly, “I’m so sorry, son.”

2.

Although Stiles will no doubt read him the riot act later, it wasn't like he'd exactly planned to be cleaning his service weapon--and the shotgun--when Derek appears in his office doorway. It just so happened that his weekly equipment check was a time that was free on both of their schedules.

"Derek, have a seat," he says, pointing at an empty chair.

"About the other day. I haven't. We weren't -- I, we, respect your rules-- " Derek starts to say before John can continue.

"Whoa, son, just ... hold it," John lifts his hand and Derek's mouth shuts, his jaw tensing like he's preparing for the worst. "I'm not going to lie, I wasn't expecting to come home and find the two of you making out Stiles's bedroom. I didn't even know he was dating anyone... Are you dating my son?"

A look crosses Derek's face like he'd rather be anywhere else, but when he meets John's eyes he's as confident as John's ever seen anyone. Except for maybe Stiles last night when they'd had an almost identical conversation. "I'd like to date him."

"Good answer," he says. "Just remember, I have a gun."

He can't help it, the blush that reddens Derek's ears and neck makes him laugh in sympathy as he extends his hand across his desk.

3.

Despite the swiftly growing crowd before the game, it isn't difficult to find Derek--even without the leather jacket and dark shock of hair that is becoming a familiar sight in the Stilinski house.

"He looks like a lost puppy," Melissa says, bumping her shoulder against his. He can't disagree, although he'd probably put it in slightly different terms. "You should go invite him to join us."

She's right there, too, and for a brief moment he wonders what his wife would've said if she'd been here. Probably the same thing. She'd probably have been down there dragging Derek to the stands by his arm and ignoring any and all protests he could come up with.

He leaves his jacket on his seat and heads down to the grass, watching as Derek turns as he approaches.

"Why don't you come sit in the stands with me and Scott's mom. There's plenty of room." He can see Derek's about to make an excuse and so he continues, "and let's be honest, son, keeping Stiles's
focus on only one section of the stands is going to be good for everyone involved."

He knows the instant Derek decides he's going to join them. "Good point," Derek agrees and follows him into the stands.

4.

"Seriously, how long does it take to microwave popcorn? There's even a little button that says 'popcorn' on the number pad," Stiles calls out from living room.

"Is it just me, or is my kid questioning our intelligence?" John asks, opening a steaming bag of popcorn and dumping the contents into a large glass bowl.

"This is Stiles we're talking about so, probably," Derek grabs a second bowl filled with popcorn and with his free hand grabs the saltshaker from the table, saying "and he'll want to make sure --

"And don't forget the salt," Stiles adds.

"--Because you forget one time and he never let's you live it down. Why don't we make him do this, again?"

"I ask myself the same question all the time," John says, picking up his bowl and walking toward the living room. "Can you get the lights, son?"

He almost misses the way Derek stops and blinks before a small smile twitches at the corner of his mouth and he answers, "Sure."

5.

"Who is the man? Who is the man? The answer is I. Am. The. Man. And you both love me," Stiles announces as he hops off the examination table, raising his arms in a slanted V for victory. "You can admit it. We are all grown-ups here and in touch with our emotions."

"How long did Mrs. McCall say the pain meds would last?" Derek asks, keeping a protective eye on Stiles.

"She didn't. But going from previous experience, it's probably going to be a while." John picks up Stiles's helmet and lacrosse stick.

"Why are you guys leaving me hanging here?" Stiles asks, his arms still raised. "I suffered for my victory today." He moves to touch the bandage on his forehead, the bandage covering the goose egg lump and stitches that brought them to the ER in the first place, but Derek's moving before he can get far and Stiles uses the opportunity to wrap his arms around Derek's neck. "That's more like it. Let no one ever question the awesomeness of a Stilinski man hug. Right, dad?"

"Whatever you say, Stiles." John pats his jacket pocket to make sure he has Stiles's prescription.

"I say hugs are magic and Derek loves me. Them. Them and me."

"How are you even talking in complete sentences?" Derek asks, wrapping his arms around Stiles's waist, holding him steady. “If I have to carry you to the car, you will so be making that up to me for
a very long time."

"Oh son, you've got it bad. Don't you?" John says. It's not even a question.

"Magic," Stiles says, singsong.

"You win," Derek answers, pulling back and keeping one hand at Stiles's waist. He looks at John, and the kid he was ten years ago, two years ago, are nothing but shadows in the eye of the man standing and smiling in front of John now. "Very bad."

"Yes!" Stiles hisses, throwing his arms in the air again.

Derek catches him before he topples over.

+1

It isn't the first time—in fact, it probably isn't even the hundredth time—that he's walked into the house and found his couch occupied. But since Stiles has been at college, it's been far less frequent. He's kind of missed it.

"Don't tell me you're afraid of the big bad dad?" Stiles says, kicking with one socked foot into Derek's thigh.

"Okay, okay. Stop." Derek catches Stiles's foot and pins it to the couch cushion, and John can't miss the look that passes between them—part challenge, part easy familiarity that comes from years together. He remembers what that felt like.

"--John?" Derek says, probably not for the first time and John focuses back on the scene on the couch.

"What?" he starts to say before his cell phone rings and the caller ID reads OFFICE. "Sorry, I have to--" he says and hits answer. "Stilinski. Hi, no that's fine." As his deputy starts to apologize for the time, and how he knows the sheriff just got off shift but they can't remember the code, John sees Derek's fingers thread with Stiles's and something catches his eye. "Let me call you back. I think my boys have something they need to tell me."

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