Avoidance Is Not The Answer

by MusicLover19

Summary

Stiles had heard the stories. Everybody had. Soulmates were a gift. They were the perfect match for you. To separate them was a fate worse than death. When Stiles' mother died, his father had a hard time coping. Stiles hated it. He hated the stories. He hated how obsessed people were. So he came up with a plan. Of course, that is when Peter says the words that were branded on him. Then, not too long later a hunter says another line which is hidden elsewhere on Stiles' body.

Notes

So how bad is it that I'm starting so many new stories lately? Granted, this one shouldn't be too long in the end.
It's the only way I'll hit the 50,000 word goal at the end of the month.
I've not written a soulmate story before and it was interesting, especially since I can see Stiles hating it so easily. Plus he would be stubborn enough not to talk to either of them just on the principle.
Also, the rating might change, but I shouldn't see it happening.
**Edit:** shouldn’t be too long I said, and I believed myself, whelp, I am a mess when it comes to estimating story lengths!
Soulmates

Stiles had grown up hearing the same stories as every other child. The day you meet your other half would be magical. You would feel the world around you change and everything will feel so much lighter. The words that were branded on your skin were a gift.

Not every soulmate is a romantic match, some are better as friendships and whilst it is discouraged to not live with your soulmate, there are laws in place to protect those that aren’t a romantic match. However, it was deemed a crime against the fates if you were to separate soulmates, the pain of losing a soulmate tended to drive the person left to the brink of insanity.

His mother would talk fondly of his soulmates, because Stiles would be special enough to have two. One of his marks were on his left side, it read ‘You must be Stiles’, the other laid across the back of his shoulders and read ‘Let me ask you a question, Stiles’.

These two sentences were the reason his mother didn’t protest his want to be called by Stiles. She had smiled and thought it was a great idea since his soulmates would clearly use it to address him.

The only reason Stiles still went by that name after his mother had passed away, was because the name that she chose for him was too painful to hear from anyone but her. It was also this event that made Stiles distrust how perfect soulmates were for each other.

Stiles had watched how little life his father seemed to have after his mother’s death. How the man had taken to drinking to cover his pain and to working to stop his mind from having a second to focus on the loss of his perfect match.

Stiles grew bitter, he began to see more evidence of the truth surround soulmates. Scott’s mother and her perfect match separated, he had left with no single problem and left Mellissa in agony much like his dad. Thankfully, they were able to band together and stay sane enough to live their lives for themselves and not fall into an empty disappear from the loss.

Stiles hoped beyond hope that he would never run into his soulmates, that none of them would complete the bond by speaking the words that were etched into his skin.

“You must be Stiles,” Derek’s uncle had said, drawing Stiles’ attention away from the phone. His heart had momentarily stopped as his side pulsed. Stiles had the urge to speak, one that was thankfully stopped by Peter’s nurse speaking. Stiles made sure he spoke to the woman, not once looking back at Peter.

*It was better this way*, he had told himself, ignoring the slight pain that had erupted in his chest. He knew one of his soulmates but they were still unaware. They would continue to be unaware until Stiles spoke directly to them. He could do this. There were already plans in place on Derek’s part to handle the psychotic Alpha that was his soulmate.

Stiles kept what he had discovered to himself. He knew that everyone would urge him to talk to his soulmate, to let his world be complete because of the person he had found. Yet Stiles could not even think of the possibility, he didn’t want to be tied to a person. He would rather not have the pain of losing them because soulmates did not mean anything more than pain in his experience. He could handle an ache, one that shouldn’t grow unless he encountered Peter once again, which was something he would not do.

Therefore, as his luck had it, it was prom night. Stiles hadn’t been thinking clearly, he had yelled at
Jackson and ran on instinct.

“Lydia! Run! Don’t kill her! Please!” he had shouted, running across the pitch. He didn’t know who he was shouting at, Lydia or whoever had her.

“Of course not,” Peter had purred, making Stiles’ chest ache even more as his voice swirled around him. “Just tell me how to find Derek.”

Stiles hoped that the fact he was still in pain meant that he hadn’t spoken directly to Peter. Determination filled him, he knew that Lydia was hurt, Peter did not seem like he was going to kill her – maybe turn her but not kill. With that thought, Stiles shook his head.

“You know Stiles,” Peter said calmly. “Deception has a particularly acrid scent. You’re supposed to be the clever one, so do as I say or I will rip her apart.”

Stiles took a sharp breath, he looked down at Lydia, debating the likelihood that Peter had been bluffing. He took a step back, knowing that he had no chance if he ran. He kept eye contact with Peter as he continued to move, aware that the older man was watching him curiously.

“You would leave her to die?” he asked, almost amused as much as he was honestly shocked.

Stiles shook his head.

“Then what?”

Stiles bit his lip, everything in him was begging him to speak. He knew that if he did, the chance of Peter letting him leave would be non-existent. He closed his eyes tightly and prayed that the idea he had would work. He looked down at Lydia, trying to ignore Peter completely.

“I –” he said shakily, bracing himself for Peter to know. “I think he knew-”

“Knew what?” Peter asked.

“That – that he was going to be caught. He – he took Scott’s phone,” Stiles said, his voice still shaking, even as he spoke to Lydia’s body.

“Why?” Peter asked, drawing closer.

“They all have GPS – if – if he still has it, you can find him,” Stiles never once looked away from Lydia, even as Peter hummed thoughtfully.

“You can contact one person to collect her,” Peter said. He smirked when Stiles finally looked away from the girl on the ground to stare open mouthed. It took a second before the boy was fumbling with his phone.

As Stiles sent a message to Jackson, he was thanking every single deity that he could think of that it had worked. He couldn’t believe it. As soon as the message had sent, Peter had hold of him by the neck and was leading him off the field.

As he was pulled away and taken to a garage to hack into Scott’s account, Stiles stayed silent. He was still worried about what Peter would do if he found out they were soulmates. Plus, there was no almost dead body to pretend to talk to.

Stiles was finally able to breathe easier when Peter had left him alone. He had made his way to the hospital, hoping that the news he would hear was positive.
However, Stiles had found himself pressed against the wall by Allison’s father.

“Let me ask you a question, Stiles –”

The pain in his chest flared once again as the words on his back pulsed, causing him to gasp as he impacted the wall. When the reality of it all sunk in, Stiles shook his head in denial. He was the perfect match for not one, but two angry murders.

He continued to shake his head, not listening to the words coming out of Chris’ mouth.

Scott was going to kill him. Hell, Derek was going to kill him. Peter was bad enough but there was a plan to get rid of him. A hunter – one that had helped destroy Derek’s family… Stiles was beyond dead.
So... there is implied sexual assault in this one. I have added a tag but it's nothing in depth and it's not outrightly stated so hopefully it isn't anything too bad. Just a heads up though.

I also know this one is slightly depressing, the next one has a newly brought back to life Peter though, so look forward to that.

The pain that consumed him when Peter died was unbearable. It felt as though his heart had froze and time had stood still. There was pain overtaking Stiles’ whole body, which he knew was only a faint phantom trace of what Peter had felt before Derek had given the final blow.

Stiles had been thankful that no one paid him any notice as he fell to his knees and gasped through the lingering burns. The fact that he felt so much from half of a bond forming between the two of them made Stiles pity what everyone really felt when they lost their soulmate. He wanted the pain to stop. He wanted Peter to take another breath and make it stop. He wanted to say something to Peter.

The tears fell slowly. The grief for a man he did not know was suffocating. Stiles could not imagine how it could be worse. How had people survived the one they were fated to dying? How could someone walk away and let this feeling consume them and not want to turn back.

Later, Stiles would be thankful for Scott’s naive nature. He would lean into his friend when he had noticed the state Stiles was in. He would let Scott help him stand. He would sit in silence as Scott drove him home. He would nod when Scott said it was for the best, how he hated that they had to kill someone, but it was for the best. Stiles would thank the world when Scott just assumed he was so distraught over being involved in a murder.

Truthfully, Stiles had concluded when he laid in his bed, Stiles didn’t have a second thought about his involvement in killing someone for his own safety. He knew that if he hadn’t have had any connection to Peter, he wouldn’t have grieved a single second.

As days turned to weeks, the phantom pain faded, turning into an emptiness that lingered in his chest. Part of him debated talking to his dad about how he felt after his mother had died, if the emptiness of losing your soulmate ever fades, but he knew that would only cause questions.

Stiles tried his best to continue with his own life, he forced himself to smile and laugh. He made sure to tell jokes and make comments where people would expect him to. Stiles tried his best to not let the emptiness take control. He used it to further his own belief on why soulmates were better off without each other.

Luckily, Stiles did not have the chance to talk to Allison’s father. On the very rare occasion, Stiles had seen the man sit in his car when he drove his daughter to and from school. Each sighting made Stiles ache just a bit more for any real contact between them, he knew that it would ease the emptiness inside of him. Yet, Stiles could not let himself, there was no way that he would be able to even act friendly to the man that had almost killed his friend.

So, on some level, Stiles was glad that the circumstances surrounding his soulmates made it
impossible to consider a relationship, despite the fact it pained him with every thought of them.

Weeks turned to months.

Derek had turned more werewolves, Allison and Scott were hiding their relationship, Allison’s grandfather had come to town, and Stiles was able to lose himself in the mystery surrounding Jackson. Stiles’ behaviours had become less fake and he was starting to feel like himself again. If, every so often, Stiles had taken time to brush his fingers against Peter’s mark, then it was only to ease the loneliness that still lingered.

When Stiles was taken from the lacrosse game, he felt numb. He didn’t fight when Gerard Argent had hit him repeatedly. Nor when he was taken from the basement where Erica and Boyd were tied up. It wasn’t until he was dragged up the stairs and pushed into a room where several other men waited. They had approached him instantly and started to pull at his clothes. In a panic, Stiles had begun to struggle, his breath quickening and his chest tightening as the men around him laughed.

“He’s just a kid,” he heard Chris’ disapproving voice, easing some of the anxiety in him.

“He runs with monsters,” Gerard had replied, stepping forward when they had managed to take Stiles’ top off, leaving his chest and back exposed. “Have you met your soulmate yet?” Gerard asked Stiles, his eyes fixing onto the mark on his side.

When Stiles moved to cover it, rough hands grabbed his arms, restricting his movements. He flinched backwards, colliding with the hard chest behind him when the old man’s fingers brushed against Peter’s words. Stiles had closed his eyes tightly, wanting to block out everything that was happening.

“He’s human,” Chris pointed out.

“He’s a traitor,” Gerard said.

“There was another one on his back,” one of the other hunters that had helped strip Stiles said.

“Another one?” Gerard asked, shocked. “You have more than one,” he directed to Stiles, holding the boys chin to force him to look. Stiles said nothing and only closed his eyes tighter, not wanting to give any of them the satisfaction.

He felt Gerard move backwards and before he could even take a breath of relief, Stiles felt himself be spun around, so his chest was against the man who was holding him. Stiles opened his eyes in shock, struggling once again.

Unable to help the shiver that left him as fingers brushed against Chris’ words, Stiles took a shaky breath. He could feel Chris’ eyes on his back and it only made it feel all the more sensitive.

“You’ve met this one,” Gerard said in an amused tone. “Is it one of the monsters? Is that why you are so loyal to them?”

Stiles didn’t answer.

“You’ve made your point, now let him go,” Chris had said.

“I think we have one more message to pass on,” Gerard said sinisterly.

Stiles heard the door slam, he felt his chest ache as Chris put more distance between the two of them. Something that Stiles was grateful for, even as the upset sound left his body.
“Just one last message to whichever monster it is that you are unlucky to have as a soulmate. Don’t worry, we won’t kill you just yet,” Gerard had told Stiles, as though his words were comforting rather than horrifying.

Stiles was glad that Chris had left. He wanted to hate him. He wanted to hate the fact that he had left and not fought harder for Stiles to be let go. He couldn’t though.

When he was finally released, he had been thrown into a car and dropped off not too far away from his house. Stiles had carefully and slowly made his way home, he could feel the pain from everything he had been through, yet it was consumed by the numbness he felt from being so close to Chris and not having the bond completed.

Stiles wasn’t sure just how he had managed to stop the tears when his dad had demanded answers on who had hurt him. Nor when he was pulled into an embrace that caused the pain in his back to double.

Somehow, Stiles managed to wait until he was alone in his room. He held his pillow close to his chest as he let himself just feel. He cried for what had happened to him. He cried for the fact he would never have his soulmates to comfort him. He cried because he was lying to everyone. Mostly, he cried because of how much he hated the fact he had decided to stubbornly ignore fate.
Just found out I'm going to be busy most of tomorrow, so I'll need to be awake and alive enough to handle a full day in less than 5 hours and that is not a pleasant thought. So you get the chapter I had planned to post when I woke a tiny bit earlier because I will probably be in zombie mode for most of the morning.

**What does it mean when your soul mark burns?**

*Sounds bad, talk to a specialist.*

*My friend's did that, her partner died of cancer soon after.*

*Send them to a doctor ASAP! That's not a good sign.*

Stiles felt like banging his head against the wall. He pressed his hand against his side, sighing as the pain lessened. It made no sense. The mark should not hurt, the only references to marks hurting were when a person’s soulmate was close to death. Peter was dead though. Stiles had seen him die, he had felt him die. There was no reason for the burning sensation to be there.

When it had first started, Stiles had entertained the idea that since Peter had been a werewolf, his mark had reacted to the full moon, but that had been days ago. Stiles had then blamed Gerard and his men, it was easier to blame them for when he felt so bad, the pain in his dead soulmate’s mark could have been an effect of what they had done, it could have been an after effect of their promises of returning and making sure that his mate would know that he wasn’t a traitor.

Just the thought of those words makes Stiles shiver in disgust, he could still feel the remains of their semen against his skin. The itch that made him want to scrub until his skin was raw and tender. He could still hear the laughter and the taunts that were made when he was pushed to the floor and held still for them to stand around, gleefully looking down at him.

The comments had even followed him to his dreams, sinister threats of repeat experiences that would leave him smelling satisfied and eager for actual humans rather than whatever monster he was made for. He had taken to waking up and standing under the hot water as he fought back his chaotic emotions, just hoping that the faint traces of what they had done disappeared down the drain.

It had taken Stiles longer than he would like to admit to realise the pain that he felt. He had thought the scolding water he had been using that had made the skin tender. It was an easier thought than lingering on just what other possibilities could be. It took a while for Stiles to realise that the burning sensation was focused on exactly where Peter’s mark was.

There was not much information around on the exact thing, most stated that any pain that originated in a soul mark required urgent medical care of both parties. He couldn’t afford anyone close to him learning that he knew of his soulmates, which meant that going to the hospital was out of the question.

It was a relief when Stiles heard from Scott, finally managing to pull him away from the internet on
the quest for information that seemed useless beyond urging him to go to a doctor. Scott’s request was to meet at Derek’s hideaway. The whole journey saw Stiles with a hand pressed firmly to his side, the only thing that would ease the pain. The relief did not last long.

As soon as Stiles had gotten there, Scott had put an arm on his back, right over Chris’ mark. He knew Scott meant the action to be comforting but it only made Stiles feel sick. He could remember Gerard doing the same thing as though it was seconds ago. He had yet to tell anyone the truth of what happened when he was taken, the wolves knew who had done it and had seen the still fading marks that were visible on his face. They did not know the full extent, nor why he was targeted.

Just before Stiles was about to ask why they were there, he saw the figure stood next to Derek. There was no mistaking just who it was. He looked different, he had lost the air of insanity that had clung to him previously.

Stiles stared at Peter for a long second before he was brought back by Scott’s fingers twitching on his back.

“He’s supposed to be dead!” he hissed, turning to Scott. He turned back to Peter, his eyes roaming the man. He opened his mouth to ask him just how he was alive again when the mark on his side stopped burning, reminding Stiles just who the man was and why he didn’t talk to him.

“Why isn’t he dead?” Stiles asked Derek, making a point to keep his eyes off Peter.

“I wasn’t aware you cared,” Stiles heard Peter drawl.

Biting his lip to stop himself responding, Stiles kept looking at Derek.

“He used a ritual,” Scott explained. “Lydia brought him –”

“Lydia?” Stiles asked, turning back to his friend. “How did Lydia –”

“We don’t know. She must have been affected by the bite,” Derek said stiffly.

“I – I can’t,” Stiles said, shaking his head. He needed to leave. The urge to say something – anything, to Peter was growing stronger.

“Stiles!” Scott called. “Calm down,” he added softer.

Stiles saw the worried look his friend gave him, the one that he used to get a lot after his mum had passed.

“Why are we here?” Stiles asked, closing his eyes and forcing his breathing to slow.

“Now the threat is gone –”

“Jackson,” Stiles pointed out, opening his eyes and looking at Derek. “Jackson is no longer a threat but he wasn’t the only one.”

“Stiles –”

“No!” Stiles said, cutting Scott off. “Ge - Gerard is not going to just back away.”

“He’s dying,” Derek said.

“Not soon enough,” Stiles spat out. He ignored Scott’s horrified intake, as well as Peter’s chuckle as he stared Derek in the eyes. “As long as he is alive, he will find a way to kill everyone.”
Derek said nothing.

“Stiles, we can’t kill him –” Scott tried.

“It would be for the best,” Stiles said, repeating the words Scott had offered as comfort when Peter had died.

“Did he tell you that?” Derek finally asked, stopping Scott from responding.

Stiles shook his head, forcing the nausea he felt down that had appeared at the thought of his encounter with the man. He stopped himself giving into the urge to scratch at his skin, just to prove to himself that he wasn’t still covered in anything.

“He didn’t need to,” Stiles offered, his body stiff.

Derek nodded.

“He spoke to you?” Peter asked curiously.

Stiles ignored him, fighting the urge to look at the man.

“He doesn’t want to hurt anyone,” Scott tried.

“He doesn’t want to hurt anyone?” Stiles repeated slightly hysterically as he turned to his friend. “If he didn’t want to hurt anyone he would have taken me. He wouldn’t have had Erica and Boyd tied up in his basement. He wouldn’t have beaten me and –” Stiles cut himself off, horrified.

“And?” Peter growled, Stiles could see the blue in his eyes glowing from his peripheral vision.

“What else did he do?” Scott asked, he was pale as he looked at how scared Stiles was. He had asked him what had happened before but got no answer.

Stiles wanted to close his eyes. He wanted to run. He berated himself on how foolish he was for speaking before he thought about what he was saying.

“Nothing,” Stiles said, whilst he knew that it wasn’t nothing. Stiles still told himself over and over again that what happened was nothing, that it could have been so much worse. They were kind in only doing what they did. They had laughed and joked about ways to make the scent last, making sure that Stiles couldn’t just wash away the most of it.

Swallowing around the lump in his throat, Stiles forced out, “It doesn’t –”

“That’s a lie,” Peter said.

Stiles gave in and closed his eyes, he hated how vulnerable he felt but between not seeing the three men around him or giving in and talking to Peter, he would rather take his chances, even though his skin crawled.

“He threatened me,” Stiles said slowly, thoroughly thinking through what he was saying. He knew that if he were to lie again, Derek or Peter would call him out on it. “He said I was a – a traitor,” he forced out, trying to ignore the way his voice hitched, “because I associated with monsters,” Stiles pushed on, ignoring how both born wolves growled.

“Stiles,” Scott said softly, his tone broken. “Why didn’t you –”

“It wasn’t a big deal,” Stiles said firmly. “It didn’t impact you so I kept it to myself.”
“You shouldn’t have been targeted,” Peter said, throwing a glare at Derek.

“You should have told me,” Scott said.

“It didn’t matter!” Stiles argued, he would rather never think of the whole thing again. Once the evidence faded, once the bruises had disappeared, he was going to do just that so there was no point in telling anyone anything.

“We could talk to him —”

“If you think that will work, you’re an idiot,” Stiles said harshly, cutting Scott off. There was no hope for Gerard. The man was pure evil.

“Stiles —”

“No,” he said, cutting Scott off again. He turned to leave. “If you are going to brainstorm how to make Satan nice then I would rather have nothing to do with it. Do everyone a favour and rip his throat out.”

Stiles stormed out. He ignored Scott’s pleas to stop and just listen to reason. Stiles would sleep better at night when the old man was dead. He knew that much.

Stiles didn’t stop to breathe until he reached his jeep. He had rested his head against the metal and closed his eyes for a moment, trying to stop the memories from consuming him.

“That wasn’t very nice,” Peter said, making Stiles freeze. He had not noticed that the other man had followed him outside. “You left without discussing the murder plan.”

Stiles let out a surprised huff of laughter.

Silence overcame them as Peter observed the younger man.

“I just realised something,” Peter said. “You have never spoken to me. Not one single word. You’ve spoken to everyone else but me. Now, I am curious why that is,” Peter mused.

Stiles offered a shrug.

“That’s exactly what I mean, but don’t worry, I will find out,” Peter said in a cheerful tone, almost as though he would enjoy figuring out the current mystery.
Stiles found himself outside the Argent house against his better judgement. He had listened to Scott whine for too long. He knew that Allison wouldn’t listen to Scott, but maybe, just maybe she would listen to Stiles.

He had sat further down the road for most of the day, waiting until the right time. He had ducked down in his jeep when Gerard had passed in his own car. He did not want the man to see him. He did not want to be anywhere near the house but he owed it to Scott. He wanted his friend to be happy.

Plus, if Allison were to listen, then it would be easier with one more person on their side. She would be able to help them again.

When the door opened, Stiles almost cursed. He had forgotten that Chris would probably be home. Biting his lip hard, Stiles refused to look at the man.

Chris stood in silence for a moment, he knew that Stiles had a reputation for talking a mile a minute, so the stillness from the younger boy was unsettling.

“You want to talk to Allison?” he finally asked, relieved that Stiles nodded at the very least. “Come on in,” Chris offered, frowning when Stiles shook his head.

“Ok,” he said. “I’ll just… get Allison.”

Stiles sighed in relief when Chris left, he left the door open partly and Stiles could hear the man call for his daughter. Stiles felt stupid, he had spent so long focusing on Gerard that he had forgotten the possibility of Chris.

Stiles was half way through his mental belittlement when Allison appeared, her face hard as she looked at him.

“Allison,” Stiles said, making sure to keep his tone neutral.

“Allison,” Stiles sighed, “I don’t want to talk.”

“I – I know,” Stiles said. “I know how much you don’t want to talk,” he said with a somewhat bitter laugh. “I know how it feels when you’re forced to talk about it,” he added. “I was younger when I lost my mum –”

“This is different,” Allison argued. “They –”

“Have their own version of events,” Stiles said. “I don’t know what you know and to be honest, I know it feels like your anger is never going to end but revenge isn’t always the best –”
“It will stop them hurting other people!” Allison argued loudly. She looked behind her, to somewhere that Stiles could not see, but he guessed it was at Chris, the thought that the man was close enough to listen was unsettling.

“Just – never mind,” Stiles finished bitterly. “I thought you’d be smart enough to be able to listen but I guess not.”

Stiles turned to leave but Allison’s inhale made him pause.

“What is it?” she asked, forcing more bravado into her voice than she felt she had.

“At the rave – did you hear the wolf howl?” Stiles asked, his eyes focusing on Allison’s face.

“Yes but what –”

“That was Scott,” Stiles said. “Derek was with me, he told me to break the line of mountain ash because Scott was in trouble. That’s why he howled. I don’t know exactly what happened,” Stiles admitted. “Scott doesn’t remember too much and getting information out of Derek is… well – anyway. When Scott came out and started healing he mentioned your mum –”

“Stiles,” Allison said softly, a plea.

“He – your mum wasn’t happy with your relationship. She knew you were together,” Stiles said, knowing that Allison knew this much. “She had a type of wolfsbane, one that when burnt would make a death look like an asthma attack. She knew that Scott had a history of it before he was bit,” he explained. “His death would have looked like an accident and you wouldn’t be together anymore.”

“That –”

“Just – listen,” Stiles begged. “Scott remembers Derek dragging him out of the room – away from the wolfsbane – he remembers hearing a fight and then when he woke up, Derek was next to him, still healing from the wolfsbane.”

“It doesn’t matter!” Allison shouted, her eyes red and her face pale.

“I’m just saying that you might not know the full story. Derek saved Scott, he was being poisoned, both of them were,” he added. “I know you’re angry. I know it feels like it was a personal attack. Just – just don’t accept only half the story.”

“It isn’t like I can ask her,” Allison said, her voice breaking as she spoke.

“No,” Stiles agreed. “I – no one wants to see you turn into a monster,” Stiles said softly. “You agreed with us that they were out of control,” Stiles reminded her, his voice quiet, hoping Chris couldn’t hear him. “Kate – she murdered innocent people, not just werewolves. Your – your grandfather – he’s hurt so many people,” Stiles said, his own voice shaking. “Getting caught up with revenge is the starting point. You won’t think clearly and you will end up stopping at nothing until you reach your goal, then it just grows.”

Allison had her arms wrapped around her stomach, tears were falling slowly from her eyes as she stared at Stiles. She remembered her own words from before; “If they try and protect him, then we kill them. All of them.”

“It sucks,” Stiles said softly. “Losing someone you love,” he added, not even sure if Allison was listening now. “You shouldn’t push people away. It – it isn’t worth it. It just makes it so much worse
Stiles was cut off as Allison threw her arms around his shoulders. Startled, Stiles raised his own arms and hugged her back as she cried against his neck.

Stiles looked at the open door, he could see Chris hovering, clearly having been worried when his daughter had moved out of his sight. The image of him standing there, openly worried was such a contrast to what his father had looked like, the lack of emotion in his eyes as he watched on, the amusement at the disgust and horror as the reality of the situation sunk in.

Yet, Chris, despite the faint resemblance, had soft eyes as he looked at his daughter. Stiles couldn’t name the emotion that he saw and it made something ache in his chest. Deciding against dealing with it, he closed his eyes and buried his face in Allison’s hair, not bothering with saying anything else. As difficult as it was to say relaxed enough with Allison’s arms around him, it was so much worse to know that her father was nearby.

“I want them to suffer,” Allison admitted softly, her voice weak.

“I know,” Stiles said as he tightened his hold on her. Not bothering to argue, he knew that she had listened to him and it was fair that she wanted them to pay. Stiles couldn’t bring himself to argue against it.

“I – it’s not – he’s been through so much,” she settled on finally, her anger seeming to have faded completely. “He lost all of his family. I don’t – how did he –”

“He let anger take over,” Stiles said. “He didn’t hurt anyone but he let the anger control him. He told Scott that it’s his anchor,” Stiles said carefully.

“That’s –” Allison shook her head, pulling back. “He – I – I thought anchors were a positive thing.”

“They should be,” Stiles replied. Chris was no longer loitering in the doorway, something Stiles was thankful for. He let himself focus completely on Allison once again.

“I can’t – I can’t forgive him,” Allison said firmly.

“I don’t blame you,” Stiles said honestly. He still hated hospitals with a passion since his own mother had died there.

“Allison,” Chris said, having come back over to the door.

“Do – do you want to come in?” Allison offered to Stiles.

Stiles looked from Allison to Chris, the man didn’t seem as tense as he had when Stiles first got there. It was obvious that he was uncomfortable with Stiles’ presence. Perhaps Stiles was projecting that uncomfortableness, it still did not stop the fact that Stiles did not want to set foot into that house again.

Looking back to Allison, Stiles said, “No, thank you though. I’m around if you want to talk.”

He gave both of them a nod, and Allison another hug before he turned around and made his way back to his jeep. The distance between him and Chris made itself known as his chest ached but overall, he felt lighter. Allison may not be completely ok, but she seemed to have calmed enough to think over the whole situation.
A Moment of Panic

Allison had seemingly taken Stiles’ words to heart and had approached Scott after a few weeks. Scott had told her what he could remember and they both had tearfully reunited and became overly touchy feely ever since. As much as it only made the loneliness in his chest grow, he was glad that Scott had his girlfriend back.

As accepting as Allison was, she still had yet to attend the pack nights that were forced upon them by a grumpy looking Derek who demanded their presence. Stiles both looked for to and dreaded these nights. It seemed as though he would always find himself either opposite Peter or next to him as they talked about how to handle whatever threat was around, or were given a werewolf lesson.

Peter seemed to branded these nights as ‘Stiles watching nights’ since that was all the man ever did. Every time that Stiles had forgotten to stop himself from glancing over, Peter would be right there, meeting his eyes and raising a single eyebrow. The thought of the man watching him so closely sent a shiver up his spine, not in a negative way, more of a positive way, and the acknowledgement of that made Stiles nauseous. It also made Stiles want to pull him to the side and let him know every single thing he had kept secret, and that was an even more terrifying thought.

Stiles was positive that Peter knew what he was doing. He would constantly were a low-cut V-neck and Stiles would always catch him smirking to himself when he entered a room and took his breath away. It wasn’t just that the man was attractive, it was that he had a habit of making himself so tempting that Stiles struggled to remind himself of just why he refused to let the bond be completed with a few simple words.

“Chris,” Peter’s voice called, making Stiles still in his seat as everyone turned to look behind him at the door. “So nice of you to join us,” Peter’s voice was practically dripping with something, and it made Stiles’ stomach tighten.

Shaken, Stiles stood, not looking at anyone in the room as he fled to the nearest bathroom. He could barely handle Peter, how could he cope with both of them here. Why was Chris here? Did Chris know? He hated werewolves. There was no reason for him to be here.

Sitting on the toilet seat lid, Stiles rested his head in his hand, counting as he inhaled. *One, two, three, four.* Exhale. *One, two, three, four.* Again, inhale. *One, two-*

Stiles was pulled out of his thoughts when he heard someone knock on the door.

“You ok bro?” Scott called.

“Y – yeah,” Stiles called back. “Not feeling too well, I might just go home.”

It was a lie. Every wolf would know it was a lie.

“Derek says you need to stay,” Scott said, clearly repeating what the Alpha had said so Stiles knew.

Stiles let out a shaky breath, he nodded to himself. He could do this. He could spend the night around both of them. He doesn’t have to talk to them. He doesn’t have to look at them. He can – he couldn’t do it.

“Stiles?” Scott said, clearly worried.

“I’m fine, just – I’ll be a minute,” Stiles said weakly. Not quite ready to leave the room, even though
he knew that he didn’t have the privacy to let the panic bubbling away take over.

Stiles considered his choices as he attempted to calm his breathing once again. He could leave and face Derek’s wrath if he actually managed to escape. He could go out there and try his best to ignore the ache in his chest that happened anytime one of them were close. Neither sounded appealing. He didn’t want to face Chris. He didn’t want to see the look on his face that reminded Stiles of just how unlike his father he was. It was easier to think negatively against the bond if he could push Chris in the same category as his father.

Stiles had a brief thought of making himself sick, but shook that away before he really considered it. It would not be an ideal way to handle the situation.

Stiles stood up, he looked at himself in the mirror. He was pale, he could tell that he was shaky, but he hoped that it would be brushed aside as typical nervous energy that he had. He was always moving.

“You can do this,” he whispered quietly to himself, before taking a deep breath and releasing it slowly. He didn’t believe his own words but he had to get through this.

Slowly making his way back to where the pack were gathered, Stiles noticed that the seating arrangements had changed slightly. There was an open space in between Peter and Chris, which he ignored almost as soon as he noticed it. There was no way he would sit there; he could barely stand being in the same room as both of them. Never mind the current overwhelming anxiety at the thought of Chris just being in the room with him right now.

Stiles sat next to Scott, who had obviously kept the space empty.

“You ok?” Scott asked, frowning as he looked at his friend. Stiles shrugged, not quite comfortable with talking as everyone looked at him. “You haven’t had one like that for a while,” Scott pointed out, clearly ignoring Stiles’ mental Oh my god! Shut up! “You’ve been a lot more on edge –”

“Enough Scott,” Stiles sighed, his voice still somewhat horse. “Can we please start?” he asked Derek.

“Wait,” Scott said as he stood up and pulled Stiles with him. “We need to talk,” he told Derek, half dragging Stiles with him as he made his way through the loft that Derek had rented.

“We don’t need to talk,” Stiles argued, not fighting against Scott as he was pulled away from the room of dread and horror.

“This is like the twentieth time you’ve been close to a panic attack,” Scott pointed out, reminding Stiles of just how observant his friend could be. “What happened? Have there been changes to your medication again?”

“Dude!” Stiles hissed, not having forgotten that the rest of the house expect a few people could hear them clearly.

“I’m concerned!” Scott pointed out. “What is happening? Allison said that her dad was worried as well.”

“What?” Stiles asked, unable to help himself. “He – it doesn’t matter,” he reminded himself, as well as Scott. “I think I’m allowed to be a bit jumpy –”

“This isn’t just jumpy,” Scott interrupted. “You’ve been quiet, you haven’t wanted to do anything, you’ve been avoiding us unless Derek tells you to come here,” he listed.
“In case you forgot, I was attacked just for knowing you,” Stiles said icily, he regretted it as soon as Scott took a step back in shock. “I – Scott –”

“I get it,” Scott said stiffly.

“You don’t,” Stiles argued sadly. None of them would understand it. “You really don’t.”

“Are you – if you need to leave because of Mr. Argent – I can – they’ll understand,” Scott offered weakly.

Stiles knew that this was Scott trying and it reminded Stiles of just how much he loved him.

“It’s fine,” Stiles said, he wanted to prove to himself that he could do this. “Mr – he didn’t hurt me,” Stiles said. From the look of confusion on Scott’s face, he knew that his heart did not agree with that statement. “He didn’t hurt me on purpose,” Stiles amended, as much as it did pain him to admit.

“When –” Scott started, Stiles cut him off.

“The night Peter – when Lydia was in the hospital,” Stiles changed it to. “He pushed me against the wall, it hurt,” Stiles offered weakly. He didn’t expand on the fact it was an emotional pain rather than a physical one. Nor the fact that when Chris had just left Stiles to his father’s mercy it furthered the emotional pain he had felt. None of the wolves needed to know that.

Scott nodded, accepting the answer.

“Let’s – let’s get this over with,” Stiles said, not looking forward to the meeting but knowing that it would be easier to face both of his soulmates if he managed to survive tonight.
The actual meeting itself went well. Stiles managed to not speak a single word, despite the confused looks the others sent his way when Derek had said something remote suggestive or light-hearted.

The only thing that stopped the pack from worrying completely, were the small twitches of Stiles’ lips when Peter commented something sarcastic. Despite that, Derek still felt the need to ask them to stay longer, the promise of pizza and a film to bribe them.

The pack agreed, Stiles stayed silent. He knew that if he left now, they would only continue to worry. He tried not to let how uncomfortable he was show when someone turned the lights off. He tried not to flinch away when he felt Scott settle closer to him. Stiles tried to keep his breathing steady, even though he knew that he was receiving cautious looks due to his heart rate.

Stiles managed to stay calm until everybody suddenly moved. Almost as one, the pack sat up straight, their faces turning to the door just before the knock came. Derek answered it, and the stranger voice sounded so familiar. It was smooth and the chuckle that he made when he handed Derek his change made Stiles feel bugs crawling along his skin once again.

He waited until Derek had closed the door before he stood and shakily made his way to the kitchen. He needed to be alone. He needed to make sure he was ok. He needed to breathe.

Stiles braced himself against the countertop, he tried to tell himself that the pack would be forced on the film and the food, rather than him.

He took slow, shaky breaths. He told himself that he was being stupid. He was safe with the pack. They wouldn’t let anyone hurt him. There was no need to panic at the darkness with so many people around him. The delivery man was just a harmless human. There was no way that he was one of the same men as –

“Are you ok?”

Stiles jumped at the voice. He recognised it instantly and even though it only set him further on edge, he offered a nod that he knew would be ignored.

“So it’s not just me,” Peter said thoughtfully, causing Stiles to turn fast in order to look at him. Peter was leant against the door frame, watching curiously whilst Chris stood closer to Stiles.

Stiles could feel his cheeks reddening, he knew that his heartrate had sped up significantly and he hoped that everyone would put it down to being startled. He hated people seeing him like this. He wanted to have his episode in peace. He wanted everyone to just give him space.

Chris looked back towards Peter, clearly wanting him to explain what he meant.

“Stiles won’t talk to me, but he freely talks to everyone else,” Peter said. “Except you it seems.”
Stiles watched with wide eyes, trying to stop how his body shook and his every breath shook in his chest.

“I wonder why that is,” Peter said softly.

“Stop it,” Chris said, he glanced back to Stiles. “He’s clearly –”

“He isn’t going to break,” Peter argued. “He’s anxious but still –”

Stiles tuned him out, he looked around the kitchen, annoyed at the fact he had chosen the one room without another exit. He needed to leave. He needed to put space between himself and –

“Stiles?” Chris had said, he had stepped even closer, his hand on Stiles’ shoulder. Some of the pain in his chest stopped, his breathing came easier and his shaking lessened. “Do you need to get some air?”

Stiles nodded quickly, he still felt on the verge of a panic attack but the fuzziness in his head was slightly more bearable. Outside was good, there was space. There would be so many ways to escape.

“Ok,” Chris said softly. “We’ll go stand outside for a bit. Let you calm down away from all the ears.”

Thank you, the words almost left his mouth. As soon as they came to mind, Stiles sharply inhaled and stepped away from Chris. His chest aching as his hand fell from his shoulder. Almost instantly, the overwhelming panic was back at full force. Chris was not safe. Chris’ family were not safe. There was no one who was safe –

“No touching,” Chris nodded, his hand raised slightly. “Understood, loud and clear.”

Unable to stop himself, Stiles let out a whimper as he reached for Chris again. He needed the panic to stop. He needed to breathe. He wanted his soulmates and they were so close.

If Stiles were completely aware, he might have felt slightly sorry for Chris and how confused he looked as he helped Stiles stand steadily.

“It seems to help him,” Peter offered quietly. “When you touched him, he calmed slightly. Letting go made him panic again.”

Chris nodded to Peter, moving slightly so he had a better hold on Stiles’ arm, his other hand resting on the boys back.

“Outside we go,” Chris said softly, nodding for Peter to lead the way. Past experience had told him that Peter would not leave.

Stiles almost stumbled on the stairs, managing to catch himself by grabbing onto Peter’s shoulders. The noise he made at the contact was close to a sob, the panic’s growth that had been halted at Chris’ touch was beginning to disappear. Stiles had never felt anything like it, his body was still braced for the attack to come but his feelings of panic were losing their strength.

Almost as if he understood, Peter slowed his pace, letting Stiles continue to touch him as they made the rest of the way down the stairs.

The breeze from outside helped Stiles instantly, it woke him up, and made him gasp for breath that he had not realised he was holding.
“That was some anxiety,” Peter commented lightly, his hand still on Stiles’ arm as they stood against the wall

“Fuck you,” Stiles said weakly, before his brain had chance to fully reboot.

Peter froze, his hand tightening on Stiles’ arm before he caught himself.

“I thought as much,” Peter said softly, breathing out slowly.


“It’s ok,” Peter said, he didn’t look at Stiles as he spoke.

“What –”

“He’s my other soulmate,” Peter answered Chris’ question.

“He’s…” Chris stared between the two of them with an open mouth.

“Other?” Stiles asked quietly, unable to stop himself.

“Indeed,” Peter said. He moved his hand from Stiles’ arm to his hand. He gave the younger man’s hand a squeeze. “Chris and I met when we were both young.”

Stiles took a moment to breathe. Of course, it made sense. The three of them would be each other’s soulmates. Deciding to finish it since he had already messed up by talking to Peter, he turned to Chris.

“You’re my other soulmate,” he said softly, unable to look at the other man, instead focusing on his shoulder. He felt Peter squeeze his hand again.

“I –” Stiles stopped. Not sure what he should do. He should leave. That was the sensible option. The stories they were told were happily ever after’s, soulmates meeting and not having a single problem with each other. People being made for one another.

Shaking his head, Stiles pulled himself away from both men. He had finished the bonds, there would be no more pain when they were not together. They would be linked but the emptiness should not return. Yet, the relief was not there. Instead, Stiles felt horrified. He had spent so long denying the truth. He could feel the bonds, he knew that if he focused on one, he would get their impression.

Stiles wanted to take it back. He knew – he knew that everyone would be happy. He knew that they would want to celebrate rather than see it as a death sentence it really was. He had to keep in touch with both of them. Not doing so would send them all into insanity.

Neither Chris, nor Peter stopped Stiles when he left. They didn’t call his name. They didn’t move to stop him. They both just watched as he got into his jeep and drove away as his anxiety began to overwhelm him once again.
Talk To Dad

Chapter Notes

So it's been a bad morning. I almost overslept, the person I was meeting with was there almost an hour early and got to witness my fumbled half-dead arrival as well as the tech guys getting in my way by messing and updating with the computers. I cannot deal with this and I have another 2 meetings after this as well. UGHH!

Stiles didn’t go home.

He drove for a while, not sure just where he would end up. As much as he wanted to go home and lay in his bed, he knew that would be too obvious. If either of them wanted to find him, it was the first place to look.

They didn’t stop him from leaving. In Stiles’ mind that said a lot. They didn’t care. They were disappointed. They didn’t want him. How could they? Why would they want someone like him?

He ended up at the station, it had been a while since he had visited. He had felt overly uncomfortable in the place where he had seen multiple people murdered, where his father was put at risk.

Not even questioning his presence, the lady at the desk shook her head and motioned for Stiles to go through to see his dad.

“You ok kid?” the Sheriff asked when Stiles finally got into his office.

“I – yeah,” Stiles smiled weakly as he made his way into the seat opposite his dad’s desk.

“Thought you were at Scott’s tonight?”

“Something came up,” Stiles offered with a shrug.

“Trouble in paradise?” he asked with a smile.

“Something like that,” Stiles shrugged. “I – I think I met my soulmates,” Stiles said softly, half hoping that his dad wouldn’t hear him.

“You think?” the Sheriff asked.

“Well, I know I did,” Stiles confirmed. “I knew who they were a while ago but I –”

“You didn’t say anything,” the Sheriff concluded as Stiles trailed off. He sighed when his son nodded. “You did say years ago that you wouldn’t, I thought you had forgotten it.”

“I…” Stiles tried but the words wouldn’t make themselves known.

“Who are they?”

Stiles opened and closed his mouth a few times, trying to work the courage to say out loud just who they were. He had acknowledged it, but it was completely different to admit it to somebody that wasn’t part of the situation.
“Does anyone else know?” the Sheriff questioned quietly, aware of how much Stiles seemed to be struggling.

Stiles shook his head. Only him, Peter and Chris knew.

“Did they say anything?”

Stiles shook his head again, he licked his lips and managed to say, “They let me leave.”

“They let you leave or you ran?” his dad’s tone was gently, almost hesitant in his questions.

“Both,” Stiles croaked out, he fidgeted with the loose thread on the chair. “They – I – it was stupid,” Stiles sighed.

The Sheriff stayed quiet, he knew that Stiles needed to get this off his chest. He wanted to demand names, to know just who Stiles’ soulmates were. He wanted to make sure that whoever they were, they would be right for Stiles. That they wouldn’t hurt him.

“I tried so hard,” Stiles sighed. “I knew who they were months ago,” he let himself slump back into the chair. He offered his dad a small smile when he saw the look of shock. “I – they spoke to me first,” he explained. “I knew who they were but they didn’t – I didn’t – I couldn’t,” he stressed.

“And you did tonight?” was asked cautiously.

“Yeah,” Stiles breathed. “Pe – one of them – he – they – he thought – he said he had guessed because I refused to talk. I didn’t think that – the other, he was there,” Stiles said, stumbling over the words he was trying to get out without telling his dad just who they were. “I had said something to the first one and it was stupid to hide after that.”

“They were both together?” the Sheriff asked, he had picked up on the fact both of Stiles’ soulmates were male and that Stiles had almost named one.

“Yes,” Stiles frowned. “I – Peter was there and I knew it would be but when Chris –” Stiles cut himself off, meeting his dad’s eyes with a panicked look.

“When Chris?” the Sheriff prompted, not willing to tackle the terrified look just yet.

“I didn’t expect him,” Stiles offered quietly. “I don’t – it’s complicated,” he said. “I panicked and they helped me get outside –”

“Where were you?” the Sheriff frowned, now sure that Scott’s house was not where this occurred and from the sounds of it, it wasn’t just a run-in outside.

“We – ah, well – um, Scott –”

“Well?”

“Pass?”

“We’ll come back to it,” he relented. “They helped you outside?”

“Yeah,” Stiles said, relaxing back slightly at the fact he wasn’t being pressed too much to talk about everything. “Peter – he said something and I just snapped at him,” Stiles said, he couldn’t stop the slight smile. “I’ve wanted to tell him to shut up for a while. All the staring and all the sarcastic comments,” Stiles rolled his eyes. “He needed to shut up and no one said anything.”
The Sheriff just sat silently. Peter didn’t seem to be a problem, sure from the sounds of it he was sarcastic but so was Stiles.

“What about Chris?”

“He – I don’t know,” Stiles admitted. “I haven’t talked to him –”

“Obviously,” his dad cut in.

Stiles sent his father a glare before continuing. “He – don’t take this to badly,” Stiles begged. “I just don’t feel ok around him,” he admitted.

“You do with Peter?”

“More than with Chris,” Stiles said honestly. “I know that Peter is – he’s not good but he’s – he’s – he would listen to what I say,” Stiles offered softly.

“And you don’t think Chris would… listen?” the Sheriff asked, taking care to use the same words that Stiles had.

“I – I don’t know,” Stiles’ frown deepened. Chris hadn’t seemed like the rest of his family, but Stiles wasn’t sure how truthful that was or if it was all just an act.

“Has he done anything to make you think he wouldn’t listen?” his dad asked quietly, he was watching Stiles carefully. Waiting for a reaction that he hoped would not appear.

“I – not really,” Stiles said. “It’s confusing,” he admitted. “I know his family don’t, they don’t care about anyone but themselves and they’ll do anything to get their way.”

“Is Chris like that?”

“I didn’t think so,” was the quiet response.

“That changed?”

“Yes,” Stiles said automatically before he paused. “No,” he changed his mind. “Sort of,” he finally settled on.

The Sheriff waited for Stiles to continue, not wanting to prompt him too much since the confusion and honest distress he was showing was clear.

“They’ve known they were each other’s soulmates for a while,” Stiles finally added. “They met when they were younger –”

“How old are they?” the Sheriff finally cut in, his eyebrows were drawn in consideration as he looked at his son.

“They – I – I don’t actually know,” Stiles admitted. “They are older, Chris – he has a daughter and Peter – I don’t know.”

The Sheriff let out a sigh.

“Neither of them are your age?”

Stiles shook his head.
“Oh, ok,” he said. It was a lot more unusual for soulmates to have large age differences, then again, Stiles seemed to be a magnet for unusual things. Two soulmates, both of which were several years older. Ones that knew each other beforehand. Perhaps Stiles was destined to be one of the few people that were not romantically involved with their soulmates, it was something that he didn’t want for his son. He knew first-hand how much more fulfilling soulmate relationships were, if Stiles never experienced that for himself… He just didn’t want his son to continue being so cynical of soulmates.

“Will you give them a chance?” he asked his son.

“What?” Stiles responded, clearly shocked at the rapid change in the conversation. “They didn’t want –”

“Stiles,” the Sheriff cut him off. “These two men had just learnt that they had an underage soulmate, one of them having a child himself. I think it’s fair that they were a little shocked,” he reasoned.

“They could have stopped –”

“Stiles,” the disappointed tone appeared. “You ran, you told me so yourself,” he reminded the boy. “I know you are scared of this, you can’t just run away forever.”

“It would be easier,” Stiles had grumbled.

“Easier isn’t always the best choice.”


“You said you’ve known for months –”

“But they didn’t!” Stiles exclaimed, cutting his dad off from whatever point he was going to make. “They didn’t know and it isn’t – they shouldn’t be stuck with a kid.”

“You aren’t just a kid –”

“No one should be stuck with anyone!” Stiles huffed. “It isn’t – if it doesn’t work out – I –”

“Breathe,” the Sheriff advised. He hated how worked up Stiles would get over this, he understood, he just hated it.

“I – can I leave the jeep here?” Stiles asked, not meeting his fathers eyes. “I don’t want anyone to know I’m home.”

Taking a look at his son, the man sighed and agreed. He knew that Stiles needed time. He needed to calm down enough to realise that this wasn’t such a bad thing.

“Go straight home though,” he ordered.

Stiles nodded, quietly thanking his dad.
A Really Bad Night

Chapter Notes

So, in this chapter there is a bit more of the implied sexual assault. I would suggest you read with caution, whilst nothing happens it may be triggering. I'll add a note at the bottom to sum up what happened in case you need it.

It wasn’t until Stiles had left the station that the reality of what he just did sunk in. Leaving his jeep behind would fool Chris, but Peter would know if Stiles was in the house. Peter would be able to pinpoint him just on account of his heartbeat or scent.

Which was creepy. It was also a somewhat terrifying thought.

Stiles was tempted to turn around, he could have helped out in the station, done filing for older cases or even harass his dad into letting him look at the current ones.

Despite the fact that most of Stiles’ being was urging him to turn and go back, he continued forward. Not quite ready to head home and face what may be waiting for him, Stiles just let himself wander aimlessly.

It didn’t take long before the hair on the back of his neck began to stand. Stiles took the chance to look behind him each time he turned a corner, yet the feeling of being watched did not leave.

“Look who it is!” A voice from behind him called, snapping Stiles out of his paranoia induced thoughts. “This is the one I told you about,” the man had laughed.

Taking a sharp breath, Stiles sped up his pace. He let out a sigh of relief as he turned another corner and saw two figures ahead. He was sure that the people behind him wouldn’t do anything with potential witnesses around.

“Did you have fun last time?” was called from behind him again.

Stiles began to doubt his own thoughts, they were still shouting and following him, seemingly not concerned with the people ahead. He was getting closer, perhaps the two people in front of him would be willing to wait until the threat had left.

“He asked you a question,” the taller of the two men said when Stiles reached them. It caught Stiles off guard for a second before his mind jumped to the worst conclusion. He took a step back, ignoring the smaller man’s chuckles.

“Where you going?” the man from behind asked, standing overly close.

Stiles yelped and tried to cross the road, putting distance between both groups that clearly knew each other.

“No you don’t,” one of them said, Stiles didn’t know who. A hand tangled into his hair and pulled, causing Stiles to fall back against the taller man.
Stiles struggled, unable to move too far away as the hand tightened and threatened to pull his hair out.

“Down here,” one of them said, gesturing to an alleyway with his head. “Don’t want a passing car to see us, do we?” he added, meeting Stiles’ eyes with a smirk.

“How’s the mate?” the one he knew asked.

The taller man pushed Stiles away from his chest, letting go of his hair but keeping him close enough for any of them to grab if they wanted.

Stiles backed away from them, panicking when his back hit the wall behind him. He opened his mouth, but before he could even consider what to say, an arm was pressing against his throat.

Stiles could see the green eyes that hardened, the pale skin that stood out in the darkness, he could see the scar that the man had. He was the man he knew. He was one of them.

The man pressed harder against Stiles, making his breath stutter.

“I realised something,” he said. “Not many female wolves around here,” was said lightly. “The only one is sweet on another wolf. That means that your monster is a boy. Makes everything that happens between us even more special.”

The other men snickered, where they had pushed him was darker than on the actual streets. It made it harder to pick out features of them.

“Does he know that you were marked by other men?” one of the other three asked. “Did it make him fuck you like the monster he is?”

“They don’t like their toys being used by other people, don’t like anyone marking what is theirs;” another said with a chilling tone.

“Yet we did,” the man pressed against Stiles almost purred. “We marked you so nicely, didn’t we?”

Stiles stayed silent, struggling to breathe against his captor.

“He’s asking you a question,” one of the other hunters snarled.

“The fact he isn’t answering says it all,” the last voice pointed out.

“Does he care about how dirty you are? Or did he not know?” the hunter asked, smirking widely at Stiles. “He’d have to be stupid not to know. Does he not care that you were taken by an enemy?”

“That’s against their own nature you know,” one of the others pointed out. His tone was amused but there was also something else there. “He must really not like you if he’s happy with you being marked by others. He didn’t even try to find them and they did leave their scent all over you –” he was cut off by a voice to the other side of Stiles.

“Or is your monster a turned one? One of the teenagers that think they are all special?”

“They’re not as fun, they don’t follow their instincts as much. It takes more effort to rile them up, they’re too human for the monsters they are,” another added.

“That’s why born wolves are so much more fun to play with,” green-eyes said, drawing Stiles attention back to him. “Their senses are so much stronger, when we said that we were marking you, he would have known as soon as he thought about you. He would have known just how much you
begged for it –”

“I did –” the man’s other hand moved to cover his mouth as more pressure was put on his neck.

“Now, now, don’t be rude. We’re only helping you learn your place,” the man had said softly into his ear, making Stiles shiver in disgust. He hummed for a second before asking, “Do you present for him? I hear that wolves love the face down, ass up look,” he chuckled as Stiles tried to shake his head.

“Have you gone to your knees for him yet?” another asked gleefully.

“You could show us just how well you are for him. Gerard isn’t here. He’s the one that had the problem with you being a monsters’ plaything,” was purred into his ear. “I bet you would even ask nicely this time. It wasn’t very nice to tell us to fuck ourselves. Especially after we did such a nice thing, making you smell so good for your boy. We could make it last so much longer, we could do more, not all of us are too scared for angering a dog by fucking his bitch –”

He was cut off by a low growl. One of the hunters cursed and began to fumble with his clothes. Almost as one, the hunters that were not holding him, drew their weapons and turned to face the threat.

Seeing a chance due to the distraction, Stiles pushed the last of his strength, fuelled by his adrenaline, and he struggled against the man that had him against the wall. He pushed, kicked, hit and whatever else he could do to try and get free. The others were distracted and the man holding him hadn’t been expecting the renewed fight that Stiles had.

The grip against him lessened, even more so when one of his friends cursed loudly and another had screamed in pain. One last push, the man had let go. Stiles ran, he didn’t look back as he ran further into the darkness and away from the group of men that were hopefully not going to follow him.

Chapter End Notes

Don’t hate me! Next up is Peter and Chris.

The sum up:
Stiles ran into one of the hunters and a few of their friends and he was cornered a bit but before anything could really happen (beyond threats and bringing up bad memories), they were interrupted by a growl and Stiles managed to get away with them being distracted.
Breathe To Stay Alive

Chapter Notes

This one was honestly exhausting to write. Stiles has a bit of a (well a lot of a) panic attack. It does get slightly happier though!

Colliding with another chest, Stiles automatically began to struggle again. He fought as arms wrapped around him and held him to the chest. It took a second for Stiles to be aware of the quiet voice guiding him to calm down, to breathe and not fight. Stiles didn’t know just who it was, other than the pain in his body had begun to fade and the panic was slowly beginning to reduce.

Chris or Peter. It had to be one of them.

If Stiles’ energy wasn’t rapidly draining, he would have put up more of an effort to get away.

“That’s it, just breathe.”

Stiles did. He gasped as the air wouldn’t quite satisfy the burning in his lungs. He couldn’t breathe.

“You can, just take breath, try to hold it for a second.”

Stiles had begun to shake his head. Whoever it was, they didn’t understand. Stiles was going to die and he had just gotten away.

“Focus on me. Try to match my breathing, ok. I’m not going to let you die.”

Stiles mentally disagreed, he would much rather die than continue taking lungful’s of air that did nothing.

“Stiles!” a new voice called to his right.

The world had started to blur as his mind became fuzzy. As much as Stiles wanted to continue to fight, giving up seemed so appealing.

“Come on, you hid from us for so long. Do not – Chris, turn him around,” Peter – it had to be Peter next to him, which made Chris the one holding him.

Stiles didn’t feel the movement that happened, he had changed from being pressed chest-to-chest to having his back against the chest. He seemed to be sat on the floor, his head pushed back against Chris’ shoulder as Peter tilted his head to look at him.

“We’re not going to be happy if you pass out,” Peter had said, trying to get Stiles to focus on him. Stiles just stared, trying to settling his frantic gasps. Peter – or the blob that Stiles assumed was Peter, had pressed a hand against the cheek that wasn’t against Chris’ shoulder.

“You’re doing great,” Chris said quietly. He had taken one of Stiles’ hands in his own. “Just hold on for a little longer.”

“Slow breaths, that’s it,” Peter murmured. “Just like that.”
When Peter made to move his hand away, Stiles whimpered and grabbed it with his free hand.

“Touch isn’t always a good idea when someone is panicking,” Peter reminded the boy gently. “If you want me to, I will, but if you need to let go, do it.”

Breathing was easier, it was still difficult and every breath did little to stop the pain that was in his head.

“That’s it,” Peter said.

Stiles opened his eyes, which he didn’t remember closing. It took a few seconds, but he was able to focus on Peter, who had become less blurry.

The man looked older than normal, his worry was clear and his eyes had lost their calculating glint that they had normally held. The most startling thing, however, was the smudged red marks that were around his mouth and the red that had gotten onto his clothes. Blood. He was covered in blood.

Letting go of Peter’s hand, Stiles raised his own shakily to wipe at some of the blood, frowning when it only caused it to smudge more into the man’s skin. Not that Peter seemed to have minded, he merely leaned into Stiles’ touch.

“You feeling better?” Chris asked, startling Stiles, who had forgotten that the gentle movements of his body were caused by him breathing.

Stiles shook his head.

“No going silent,” Peter scolded gently. “You’ve already spoken to us.”

“Peter,” Chris warned.

“I – I’m tired,” Stiles offered, feeling out of his comfort zone by openly talking around the both of them. He had spent so long refusing to do so that it had become second nature.

“I can understand that,” Chris said.

“Shall we get you home?” Peter asked.


“You don’t want to go home?”

He shook his head.

“We can’t stay here,” Peter pointed out.

“We could take you to your dad –”

“No!” Stiles protested, cutting Chris off before he could finish. “I can – I can make my own way –”

“If you think we’re leaving you after that, I might have to take back every time I’ve called you clever,” Peter said with an eye roll.

“We could take you to Peter’s place?” Chris suggested, meeting the other man’s eyes. He knew that the likelihood of Stiles wanting to go to his house was very slim, especially after the reaction of inviting him in to talk to Allison.
Stiles thought for a moment. He didn’t want to go home, the thought of being in the house alone until his father came ago back was not a pleasant one. Peter’s place, it wasn’t ideal but he would be safe there, no one knew where Peter disappeared to after meetings, nor where his hidden stash of knowledge was kept. Clearly, Peter had an interest in keeping Stiles safe as well, the blood covered man proved that only moments.

“Brilliant,” Peter had smiled widely when Stiles nodded. The faint trace of blood showing against his white teeth. “Luckily Chris drove his car here so we can all just bundle in and head on our merry way.” Peter’s tone was full of forced cheerfulness.

With some effort, Stiles managed to peel himself away from Chris’ chest, managing to keep the noise of protest from escaping as he did so. He was thankful that his body was no longer shaking as violently as he stood, it would not do well to make a bigger fool of himself.

“Easy,” Chris had muttered when Stiles had used him as leverage to stand. Chris took care not to grab the boy when he wavered on the spot, only holding his hands out at a distance to catch him if he were to fall.

“How did you…” Stiles trailed off, unsure of whether he actually wanted to know how they had found him.

“You were terrified,” Chris pointed out. “Even though you – even though the bond is struggling to form, it came through and we came as fast as we could.”

“Struggling?”

“You haven’t exactly accepted it,” Peter spoke gently. “Denial causes it to take longer to form and it isn’t fully complete until you accept it.”

“Oh,” Stiles breathed.

“The car’s this way,” Chris motioned, having stood once Stiles seemed stable on his feet. He led the way out of the alleyway and back towards the lightness of the street.

“It isn’t that I haven’t accepted –” Stiles tried as he followed Chris, even though he knew that his own words didn’t sound true to himself.

“We’ll work it out,” Peter interrupted. “Just… don’t run away again,” Peter said softly.

“I’ll try,” Stiles nodded, it was too late for him to run away properly.

“You can lay down in the back,” Chris offered, opening the door.

“Just because Peter doesn’t want me to know where he lives,” Stiles said, noticing that Chris had not unlocked it. They must have arrived and just left the car as it was before finding him.

“Oh honey, I am more than happy to show you where I live,” Peter purred. “You shouldn’t push yourself too hard yet though,” he added, his tone more serious. “Just relax for now.”

Stiles found himself sinking back into the seat as Peter spoke. He was tired. Surely it wouldn’t be so bad to relax.

“Did you kill them?” Stiles asked, suddenly remembering the group that Peter had helped him escape from.
“Would you be disappointed if I said yes?” Peter asked, curious.

“No,” Stiles responded quickly. “I – I mean –”

“They’re dead,” Peter confirmed. “Now relax.”

Stiles nodded, aware that neither Chris nor Peter were looking back at him. He was glad they weren’t still around to corner him again. If only Gerard were with them, that would have been a huge weight off Stiles’ back.

“Stiles,” Peter called to get the boys attention. “Lay down.”

“No,” Stiles refused.

“Let it go,” Chris said as he hit Peter’s leg. “How are you doing?” he added, briefly looking back at Stiles before starting the car.

“Better,” Stiles answered honestly. “Any chance your death list can add a few more people?”

“Who?” Peter asked, not missing a beat and not looking back at Stiles.

Stiles paused, not quite expecting Peter’s reaction. Granted, he felt stupid for not expecting it, Peter had killed a number of people.

“I – it was a joke,” Stiles said weakly, he ignored Peter’s glance back at him.
So it's a bit early! I wasn't able to sleep so I ended up writing a full chapter and a half, which is more than I expected to do and it went a surprising direction. There is a bit some of solidifying the soulbonds coming soon! Plus general getting to know each other and Peter and Chris show off their own marks! Granted, it's in chapter 13 (I think unless I end up adding more and that gets pushed back a little).

None of them offered any conversation pieces for the rest of the journey. Stiles spent the most of it by looking out the window at the passing buildings and trees. He ignored how both of the men sat at the front glanced back at him regularly. Instead, Stiles got lost in the blur of lights against the darkness.

Stiles was pulled from his trance when the car slowed to a stop. There was nothing that stood out right away from the buildings, they were typical, nothing that would even hint that a werewolf lived nearby.

It was even stranger inside; Peter had unlocked the door and opened it to show no decaying corpse. There were no blood splatters on the walls or ceiling. Instead, there were pale green walls without even a hint of red.

It was clean, yet homely. It was clear that somebody had been living here, there were shoes by the door and coats hung on hooks. There was even a welcome mat that read ‘I Like It Dirty’, which made Stiles snicker.

“It was either that or ‘Our dog is not a biter. He’s a humper.’,” Chris said lightly, smiling when Stiles burst with laughter.

“Yes, dog jokes are all the range,” Peter rolled his eyes as he toed his shoes off. “Shoes,” he prompted Stiles, who had glanced over to see Chris taking his own off.

“So…” Stiles said as he took his shoes off. “You and…” he gestured between Chris and Peter.

“What about us?” Peter asked, his eyebrow raised.

“Soulmates.”

“Ah, of course,” Peter nodded.

“But – how –”

“I thought you were tired,” Chris pointed out.

“Oh – I am,” Stiles admitted. “Exhausted really –”

“You can take the guest room,” Peter said lightly.
“No – I – we should probably talk,” Stiles frowned. He didn’t want it to happen so soon but he would rather not be in awkward company.

“Yes,” Chris said firmly. “We should talk about earlier.”

“Exactly,” Stiles nodded. “I shouldn’t have just dumped that on you and –”

“Stiles,” Peter interrupted gently. “We should talk about what just happened.”

“– I should – what?” Stiles asked as he stared at Peter blankly.

“The men,” Peter said as Chris said, “The hunters.”

“We – there’s nothing to talk about,” Stiles said quickly. “It’s fine – it’s over. No more of them – it was nothing –”

“Stiles,” Peter said, his tone was calm even though his eyes were dark.

“Let’s sit down,” Chris suggested. He led the way through the apartment, leaving Stiles following in a daze as he realised just how comfortable Chris was here. He knew the place, he knew where things were.

The living room was almost as surreal to be in. There were books cluttered on almost every surface and there was a black couch as well as an armchair that sat in the corner, near a bookshelf that seemed to be full, despite the fact that there were other books still dotted around.

Peter had herded Stiles to the couch, he pushed gently to prompt the boy to sit before sitting next to him. Chris had joined on the other side.

“Did you know them?” Peter asked.

“I – no,” Stiles said, he looked down at his knees. He really didn’t want to have this conversation. “Just – how much did you hear?” he asked, suddenly aware that Peter was a werewolf.

“I heard enough,” Peter growled. “Enough to have questions about what they meant.”

“What did you hear?” Chris asked.

Stiles shook his head frantically, “It really doesn’t matter – they were just trying to get –”

“They were threatening you,” Peter growled through gritted teeth.

“It was – I was fine,” Stiles snapped. “I could have handled it.”

“How? You were pressed against the wall at that things mercy,” Peter snapped back.

“I handled it last time!”

“Last time?” Chris repeated faintly.

Stiles smiled bitterly. “It isn’t the first time someone made threatening remarks –”

“It sounded like –”

“I know! I was there!” Stiles said loudly.

“What am I missing?” Chris asked, his eyebrows furrowed.
“From what I heard, it sounded like they were going to –”

“They were going to fuck me,” Stiles ground out, not wanting to hear whatever Peter would have said. He didn’t want that *word* being used in relation to him. He wanted to forget the whole thing.


Stiles couldn’t stop the bitter laugh from escaping. “So an Argent actually cares –” Stiles stopped suddenly. He felt the room temperature drop and he saw Chris and Peter both freeze.

Stiles stood up with the intention to leave, only to have Peter stop him by gently holding his wrist.

“No running away,” Peter reminded him softly.

Stiles didn’t look at either of the men as he let himself be pulled backwards so he was sat between the two of them again. He stared at his knees as he pulled his wrist from Peter’s too loose grasp.


“It doesn’t matter,” Stiles hissed.

“When have you been around the rest of the Argents?” Peter asked. “I know the girl –”

“No!” Chris gasped. He was suddenly on his feet and he had begun to pace. “He – did he – I never – how could –”

“Chris,” Peter said calmly, Stiles was sure that if he were to look, the electric blue would be glowing from Peter’s eyes.

“Did my – did that – did he –”

Stiles stayed silent. Not looking at Chris.

“Fuck!” the man swore. “I’m going – he’s dead. I don’t care. He’s –”

“Explain,” Peter said icily.

“When Stiles was – when he was kidnapped – I – fuck – I didn’t *know,*” Chris said, his voice had taken a shaky horrified tone at the end. “They don’t ra –”

“Nothing happened!” Stiles shouted, his hands halfway up to his ears in preparation to attempt to stop himself hearing what Chris was about to say. “They – I – they didn’t –”

Stiles flinched as Peter took his hand.

“They – they assumed that one of my soulmates were – they wanted to send a message,” Stiles said softly, barely a whisper. “They didn’t – I was too *tainted,*” he smiled bitterly. “They – *he* didn’t want to – no need to risk fucking a bitch –”

Stiles was cut off by Peter’s growling.

“Wh – what did they do?” Chris asked hesitantly.

Stiles shook his head.

“Stiles,” Peter said, he tried to stay calm, despite the still rumbling growls that were emerging from
“They – they – they c – I – can, can we just forget it?” Stiles begged. He made the mistake of looking up. Chris stood, his pacing stopped as Stiles had spoken, the man’s face was overly pale, taking a slightly green tint. Peter was partially changed into his beta form, his eyes glowing, and his fangs out.

Looking back down, Stiles took a breath. He knew the words he wanted to say. He knew just what he wanted to admit. He just didn’t want to deal with the consequence of saying it. He didn’t want to see the pity. He didn’t want –

“Stiles…” Chris whispered.

“They marked you,” Peter suddenly announced.

Startled, Stiles looked at him in horror.

“They ‘made you smell good’,” he hissed, Stiles paled at how the words were almost the exact same as the hunters. “They – tonight they threatened to make it last longer. They were going to –”

“Enough,” Stiles hissed, pushing his hands under his legs to stop them shaking visibly.

“Stiles they were –”

“I know!” Stiles snapped. “They had no problem with the fact I’m a –” Stiles cut himself off. He swallowed. “It doesn’t matter. They didn’t do anything –”

“They were going to,” Peter growled.

“They didn’t even get as far as last time –” Stiles stopped, he closed his eyes. He did not want to do this.

“Last time… when you were – fuck, I – I thought they would just let you go. I – my – I thought it was just another test,” Chris said brokenly.

“You knew he was there? When he was taken, you knew? And you left him?” Peter snapped. “He was a child!”

“I didn’t know at first,” Chris said. “When I saw him bring you in,” he added, looking at Stiles. “I – I thought it was never done that.”

“You’re sister learnt it elsewhere then?” Peter couldn’t help but ask.

Chris paled even more.

“You didn’t know?” Stiles asked quietly.

“No!” Chris protested immediately. “If I had – they shouldn’t –”

“What did you expect to happen?” Peter asked coldly.

“I…” Chris suddenly looked tired. “They had already – the injuries weren’t from the game,” he explained. “I hoped that was all.”

“They – they said –” Stiles pointed out.
“I know,” Chris sighed. “My – he likes to make me angry. Leaving was the best thing I could have done –”

“You could have stopped them,” Peter seethed as he cut in.

“Four men, all with their own weapons on hand, plus my own father who had taught me what I know,” Chris pointed out with a bitter smile. “If I had stayed or tried to stop them…”

“It would have been worse,” Stiles said, it did make sense. Chris was a disappointment in Gerard’s eyes. He wouldn’t have listened – he didn’t listen to what was said. Knowing that did not stop Stiles’ uneased posture around Chris, nor did it make him feel much more comfortable with the other man.

“Stiles…” Chris whispered. “Please, I – I didn’t know. I wouldn’t have left if –”

Stiles didn’t know what to do. He didn’t know what to say. Chris looked so broken. Stiles felt so tired.

“Can – can I still use the guest room?” he asked Peter.

“Of course,” Peter agreed instantly. He didn’t look back at Chris as he led the boy out of the room, away from him.

They had made it to the bathroom when Peter paused.

“Just because he is your soulmate,” Peter said earnestly, “it doesn’t mean –”

“I know,” Stiles interrupted. Everyone heard that phrase a million times when they went through school. “Just because someone is your soulmate doesn’t mean it’s sexual. The bond between you is your own choice,” Stiles recited.

Peter nodded. Having said what he wanted to, he pointed out where the guest room was and he left Stiles to shower.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter is the longest one yet, and I liked writing it. Even though it was a bit of an exhausting one (nothing like the past two though). It was more exhausting because I wanted to get Chris across in a certain way and yet I don't think I managed it completely.
I also tried to get stubborn Stiles a bit clearer. Denial is a lot and it's a strong thing.
Up next is a Chris and Peter talk, another one I liked writing and hopefully it's a nice change to Stiles being the focus, even though I find him so much easier to write.
Peter noted the shower running as he made his way back to the living room. His steps were controlled, his rage hidden as best as he could. He paused in the doorway, looking at the man who was sat on the edge of the couch. His head was in his hands, his heart rate unsteady. His body shook.

“Chris,” Peter said. He kept the anger out of his voice, he met the man’s pain-filled eyes when he looked up.

“Peter – I –” words did not seem to fully leave Chris’ mouth. His voice was broken, his face still tinted green.

“I don’t want to hear it,” Peter growled, pleased at the flinch from his tone.

Chris bowed his head again, stealing some of the pleasure from Peter as he seemingly surrendered.

“If he does not want you around, you will respect that,” Peter decided on. “You will not be alone with him,” he added. “If I – if you do anything he doesn’t like –”

“Kill me,” Chris said quietly. “If – if I do that – just kill me.”

“I will,” Peter added, no trace of hesitance. “I’m going to kill him,” Peter said, he didn’t know just what he expected. Part of him anticipated Chris’ protest, his fight against the statement, he hoped that it wouldn’t happen. He didn’t want Chris to be against it, he wanted his agreement, even though his protests would not change his mind.

“We,” Chris said firmly. “We are going to kill him,” the faintness in his voice was still there, even through the death threat.

“You would kill your own family?”

“He is nothing to me,” Chris spoke quietly, clearly battling against himself as he said it. Peter knew how much the man before him valued his family, for him to declare them as nothing showed just how much he disagreed with their actions.

“Ok,” Peter nodded. “He’s going to die –”

“Soon,” Chris said, his voice was becoming stronger again. The steely tone that the hunter used against his enemies was once again present. “He needs to die quickly.”

Peter nodded his agreement. He moved away from the doorway, into the room. Whilst Chris had regained some of his composure, he still looked shaken by the news they had gotten.

Peter stood in front of him, meeting the hunter’s eyes.

“I didn’t know,” Chris whispered.

“I know,” Peter agreed, the man’s heart had not contradicted him. “I just – I want to blame you,” Peter admitted. His hand moved to Chris’ shoulders, the other resting on the man’s neck. “I hate your family,” he muttered.
“I know,” Chris sighed, he leant into Peter’s hands. “I don’t like them either,” he admitted, it was painful to say but their actions had been so drastically unacceptable that he couldn’t stand by what they had done.

“You can’t go home,” Peter said suddenly.

“I – Allison,” Chris had gasped. He went to push himself up.

“Call her,” Peter urged gently. “Tell her to stay at Scott’s, or Lydia’s.”

“I can’t just –”

“If you go home then he’ll know,” Peter argued. “Unless you are that good of an actor to ignore what he’s done. What he –”

“I – you’re right,” Chris sighed. He had sunk back into the couch. “Fuck.”

“I know,” Peter said, he sat next to Chris, letting their sides brush.

“How can I make it up to him?”

“I don’t know,” Peter said honestly.

“I saw his marks,” Chris admitted softly. “I didn’t think much of it, he had met us both and – Jesus, the one they – it was my mark –”

“How do you know?”

“He reacted when they touched him –”

Peter growled lowly.

“He touched the words,” Chris continued. “I was so close, if he just –”

“Don’t,” Peter hissed. “He fought it. I don’t know why but he refused to let it finish. He was… scared.”

“Of us?” Chris asked, he had moved slightly so more of his weight was pressing against Peter’s side.

“I don’t know,” Peter admitted. “He doesn’t seem scared of us.”

“I haven’t given him any reason not to be scared of me,” Chris pointed out.

“We’ll have to change that,” Peter said lightly, aware that it would not be an easy task for either of them, more so Chris. He sighed, “If he had just –”

“We are not blaming him,” Chris pointed out. “Not even when we know the full story,” he added.

“If it’s a stupid reason I won’t be impressed,” Peter grumbled, his anger having faded into the background to work on a plan to finish the elder Argent.

“I missed you,” Chris admitted quietly.

“It has been a while,” Peter commented, letting Chris move closer.

“I – if I knew what Kate –”
“Shut up,” Peter said, his tone was light and friendly despite the air of annoyance.

“Do we – is there any chance for us?” Chris didn’t specify just who us were, he didn’t need to. Peter held the same memories as the hunter did.

“You’ve just lost your wife Christopher.”

“I know,” Chris sighed. He didn’t say how the marriage had been an arrangement rather than for love. He didn’t point out how both of them were unable to be with their soulmates so they created their own something. He had not learnt just who Victoria’s soulmate was, nor had she learnt his. It was better that way. They kept each other sane enough to function.

Victoria had noticed – of course she had. When Peter woke, Chris felt him. He was pulled back to Beacon Hills, he needed to be close. The disappointment he felt when he had visited Peter in the hospital, the pain at seeing the man he had so many feelings for, nothing seemed to have changed. Yet Chris hoped, he could feel Peter growing stronger, he waited.

Then, Peter had stood with his claws against Kate’s throat. Chris understood, he didn’t like it, but he understood. The rage and the strength that had been growing, it was Peter, he was awake. He didn’t acknowledge Chris, he merely went through with his revenge, only meeting the hunters eyes just before he had died.

The pain was worse. He had felt when Peter had burnt, he had seen the aftermath. Seeing his death, that was so much worse. Victoria knew. She had been ready, when he had come back so emotional, she had told him that she was happy for him. That he deserved to be with his soulmate.

Victoria was there when Chris broke. When the pain of losing Peter grew too strong. She helped him stay centred and not lose himself in the emptiness. She hadn’t asked, Chris was sure she knew, but she didn’t ask who Chris was bonded to. She just helped pull him from his grief. He did love her. She meant so much to him. The pain of losing her just never could compete with the loss of Peter, and the guilt that Chris felt by acknowledging that fact was overwhelming.

“We need to focus on Stiles,” Chris finally said, pulling himself out of his thoughts. “He needs someone.”

“Indeed,” Peter agreed. He heard the shower stop in the background. “We can’t leave him to face anything else alone.”

“We need each other.”

“We have each other.”

Chris smiled faintly. He moved his hand up to Peter’s bicep, he squeezed over where he knew his words were written on the wolf. They did have each other, and Stiles would figure out just how true that was.

Chapter End Notes

Chris feels! Ahhh, I do love his character, even with his many many flaws.

So, slight spoiler but it'll be good news. The final death is written! Plus a bit of bamf Stiles. I'm not sure just when it'll be, but that chapter is written. There is a chance it'll be
chapter 16, but things improve very soon!!!!!! There is only a little bit of angst left, and then I think it's almost finished, which is kind of scary because I love this story so much at the moment.

Also, I have a total of 5,000 words left for NaNoWriMo and gosh, that is amazing. I am on such a high at the moment and I am so happy.
Not Wanting To Be Alone

Stiles had been pleasantly surprised to find clothes waiting for him on the guest bed, it was only a t-shirt and a pair of jogging bottoms but it was more than he had expected when he left the bathroom with a towel around his waist.

Without thinking too much, Stiles had donned the clothes and pulled the brown blanket from on top of the bed and wrapped around his body. He held the edges of the blanket tightly against his chest, letting his body stay hidden as it trailed on the floor.

He made his way back towards the living room, unsure of whether either man would still be around. He hoped that Peter at least would hear him and let him camp out in front of the television or sit with one of the many books.

“*We have each other,*” Stiles heard Peter say. There was something in his voice that Stiles had not heard before, it was gently and reassuring, something that Stiles could picture along with a soft, caring look. It made him pause outside of the room. He felt conflicted about possibly interrupting any private moment between the two older men.

Between the thought of being in some strangers (granted, Peter’s) house and interrupting a *moment* between two men that were his soulmates, Stiles didn’t want to be alone. With that decision made, Stiles closed the gap between himself and the room.

He paused again upon seeing the two. They were sat close together. Chris had his hand on Peter’s bicep. They seemed at ease with each other, even though Stiles knew that Peter, at the very least, knew he was there.

Yet, it was Chris who looked back towards the door and offered a small smile at Stiles as he removed his hand from Peter’s arm. Stiles clutched at the blanket even tighter as he looked down at the floor.

“You alright?” Chris asked.

Stiles shrugged, knowing that it was a step back rather than the open communication that Peter seemed to have wanted. He still didn’t feel comfortable around the man, yet he could logically understand how little Chris could have done in order to stop anything from happening.

“You’re overly pink,” Peter frowned, running a critical eye over Stiles as he looked back. The boy’s face was red, but there was no scent of embarrassment.

“Shower was hot,” Stiles offered quietly.

Chris frowned, he knew that Peter’s shower wasn’t hard to navigate, if Stiles had wanted, he would have easily figured out how to change the temperature.

“Hands?” Peter asked, holding one of his own out.

Stiles hesitated for a second before loosening a grip of the blanket he still had wrapped around him and let one of his arms peak out.

“Jesus,” Chris muttered, as he saw Stiles’ red hand.

“It helps,” Stiles said defensively.
“No future showers that could end in burns,” Chris requested, seeing Peter’s overly hostile look that he knew was not meant for Stiles.

“Sorry,” Stiles muttered, he pulled his hand back to his body, back under the cover of the blanket as he tightened his grip again.

“Nothing to apologise for,” Peter said stiffly. “Come sit,” he added.

“I don’t want to intrude,” Stiles said as he shook his head.

“Nonsense,” Chris said. “You wouldn’t be.”

“We should get to know each other,” Peter added.

“I – I can – I just wanted a book or something,” Stiles argued quietly.

“Stiles,” Peter sighed. “You know you can’t lie to me, just sit in the armchair and if you don’t want to talk we won’t.”

Stiles shuffled over to the armchair, even though he wanted to be sat closer to both of his soulmates, especially after his highly emotional episode. He pulled the blanket even tighter around him as he sat and sunk back into the cushions. Stiles pulled his feet up onto the chair, tucking his knees to his chest and wrapping his arms around them, still holding the blanket over himself to cover his body.

“We should –” Peter began as Chris called Stiles’ name.

Stiles looked over to the couple, his eyes wide. He felt unprepared for exactly what both of them may want to talk about.

Peter and Chris exchanged a look, Peter tilted his head slightly.

“I was going to ask if you had any questions,” Chris said. “For either of us –”

“We should get to know each other better,” Peter cut in, finishing his half sentence.

“Nothing too invasive,” Chris added quickly, noticing Stiles’ slightly panicked look. “Anything anyone,” he stressed, glancing over to Peter, “doesn’t want to talk about is ok. Just say so and we’ll move on.”

“Are you two a couple?” Stiles asked abruptly.

Peter raised an eyebrow at the question.

“I mean – it’s just –”

“You don’t need to justify it,” Chris said with a smile. “We,” he hesitated, glancing over to Peter. “We haven’t been for a while.”

“We were never officially anything,” Peter cut in.

“Only because we hid it,” Chris pointed out.

“You were the one to –”

“You agreed,” Chris said calmly. “We met when we were teenagers,” he added. “I had learnt of a plan and in my quest to find a Hale, I found Peter and we figured out just what we were.”
“He freaked out,” Peter added, with a nod to Chris. “He left and a few days later I was cornered –”

“What…” Stiles stopped himself asking, he knew that soul marks were personal. He was given permission to ask but he felt like _that_ question was too invasive.

“You can ask anything,” Chris reminded.

Stiles huffed out a laugh. Not feeling too comfortable to point out how much of a bad idea that was. He finally settled on asking ‘How did you meet?’

This time it was Peter who answered, “I was making my way home, like the innocent young boy I was,” the innocent tone made Stiles snort as Chris shook his head with a fond smile. “Imagine my surprise when I was pulled into the woods and pressed against a tree –”

“Oh you could have stopped at any point,” Chris pointed out.

“I’ll admit that I was curious why I was being followed,” Peter admitted. “Well, I was curious why someone was so persistent, you see,” he met Stiles’ eyes. “Dear Chris had not only been following me for that day, he was recognisable.”

Chris rolled his eyes, he didn’t bother to interrupt Peter to defend himself.

“So, pressed against a tree, with such a pleasant specimen in front of me. Granted, the smell of wolfsbane was off-putting but sacrifices must be made sometimes. Then he spoke –”

It was Chris’ turn to raise his eyebrow as Peter stopped abruptly. Peter just smirked and waited.

With a sigh, Chris said; “You’re in danger,” in a deadpan tone.

“I recall it being more flustered,” Peter teased. “Of course, those words left me with an overwhelming desire to have my wicked way with him –”

“Peter,” Chris warned.

“Fine,” Peter sighed as Stiles chuckled. “I felt him and my mark burned, so I told the young Argent; he was as well.”

“That isn’t what you said,” Chris said, unable to stop himself. He shifted forward on the couch, he met Stiles’ eyes for a second before he lifted his shirt. In almost the exact same place as Stiles, he had a phrase written on his side, it started just below his rib and curled towards his back. It read, ‘ _Apparently so are you._ ’

Stiles could help but lick his lips, “Where –” once again, he stopped himself.

Chris offered the boy another smile. He moved so his other side was more visible, yet he let his shirt fall back down and he moved a hand to the outside of his thigh.

“How can I see?” Stiles asked. He knew that Chris meant the words were there, yet an overwhelming desire in Stiles begged to see the words that were his branded on him.
So the chapter title sounds really bad. I know.

Previously: “Can – can I see?” Stiles asked. He knew that Chris meant the words were there, yet an overwhelming desire in Stiles begged to see the words that were his branded on him.

“You sure?” Peter asked before Chris could.

Stiles nodded jerkily.

Chris met Peter’s eyes for a brief second, there was no threat in them. Taking a breath, Chris stood up and undid his jeans. He wasn’t normally one to feel uncomfortable, yet he was highly aware of the eyes on him. Plus with the knowledge of recent events, he hated the idea that he would trigger something from the boy.

Stiles couldn’t look away as Chris slowly pulled his jeans down, the blue boxers he wore still covered him. Stiles couldn’t stop the halt in his breathing when he saw his words. The words began on his outer thigh, midway down, they then curled towards his inner thigh, moving right across the front of his leg. Written neatly were the words; ‘You’re my other soulmate’.

Peter watched in fascination. He had not witnessed anybody seeing their marks, other than when Chris had seen the words written on his own body for the first time. It was interesting to see the instant recognition in Stiles’ eyes when the mark was on display. Peter could see Stiles twitching beneath the blanket. He remembered just how much he needed to touch the mark on Chris when he first saw it.

Feeling somewhat unsure of just how it would go, Peter nudged Chris towards Stiles. He tried not to smile at Chris’ wobble as his jeans refused to stretch enough to move. He kept an eye on Stiles, ready to pull Chris back if the boy showed any signs of feeling distressed.

Once Chris was in reaching distance, Stiles hand shot out. Without his consent, his fingers ran over the words on the man’s thigh. As soon as he made contact, Stiles felt a tingle run down his spine, he could feel a heat bloom across the words on his back – Chris’ words. When Chris also shivered, it pulled Stiles out of the trance he had been in.

“I’m sorry,” Stiles said automatically.

“It’s – it’s ok,” Chris said, he was slightly breathless and Stiles could see his tensed fist by his side. He took the small step that he could backwards before pulling up his jeans. He settled back on the couch next to Peter, who let the man brush against his side.

Stiles looked to Peter, he didn’t even need to ask before Peter had lifted the sleeve to his t-shirt. Stiles mentally noted that it was the same one that Chris had been touching when he entered the room. Starting from his elbow, running up towards his shoulder, Chris’ words were written; ‘You’re in
Pulling his eyes away, Stiles met Peter’s. He didn’t want to vocalise his want again, it had been
difficult enough to ask Chris and then they both had been hesitant to let it happen.

“You sure?” Peter asked gently.

Stiles nodded again.

Peter regarded him for a second before standing. He stood closer to Stiles than Chris had, yet still far
enough away that the boy was untouchable at the moment. Unsure of just how much to reveal, he
settled for lifting his own top, he would have taken it off completely, yet he didn’t want to scare the
boy away.

Right below his ribs, the opposite side to Chris, were the words, ‘Fuck you.’ Without prompting,
Peter moved closer, prepared for Stiles to reach forward. What he was unprepared for was the instant
need to return the favour. He ached to touch Stiles. He had almost reached forward before he
managed to stop himself.

Peter stepped back, unable to keep in contact with Stiles as he touched him. He heard the barely
audible noise of protest that Stiles made as his fingers fell from his skin.

“Careful,” Peter warned when Stiles reached for once again. “I am not fully –”

“He means,” Chris interrupted. “It’s difficult to stop ourselves touching you when you do that.”

“What?” Stiles asked.

“It’s another part of soul bonds,” Peter explained calmly, feeling more able to relax now that he
knew Stiles wouldn’t just reach forward and test him again. “The urge to touch, it solidifies the bond
even more.”

“I – I didn’t know that,” Stiles admitted quietly.

“It isn’t taught,” Chris said. “Not every bond has that urge, some are different and there aren’t too
many things known about the differences since it tends to be a secret between soulmates.”

“I –” Stiles looked down with a frown. He understood that they didn’t learn a lot about the actual
bonds. As strongly as he had fought the initial bonds forming, he knew that it was unwise to leave
them weak. The possibility of things going badly for any of them would result in insanity.

“You don’t have to do anything,” Chris pointed out. “We would never –”

“I – I know,” Stiles muttered. “I can’t take my top off,” he said, hoping that they would understand,
or at least accept that much.

Chris nodded instantly, accepting what he said without an issue.

“I want it – I want –” Stiles fumbled with his words. He pushed the blanket off of his body, letting it
fall behind him on the chair.

“If you really want to do this,” Peter said softly. “We can –”

“One at a time?” Stiles asked, looking at them hopefully. He didn’t think he could handle both of
them at the same time.
“Of course,” Chris agreed instantly.

Stiles met Peter’s eyes, since he was the closest one. He reached forward with one hand, holding it out for Peter to take. It took the man a second before he let the younger boy move his hand closer to his body.

Peter watched, prepared to put a stop to the whole thing if he needed to. It wasn’t that he didn’t trust Stiles’ judgement, yet he was unsure about the boys ability to stop if he wanted to.

Stiles’ shaky hand held Peter’s steady one as he slowly moved it under his shirt. Both men knew the moment Peter’s hand touched the mark. Stiles shivered, his eyes fell closed, his body flushed, and his breath stuttered. The boy’s free hand came up and curled into Peter’s shirt, holding on over where his own mark was on Peter’s body.

Taking control, Peter pulled his hand away, somewhat reluctantly. The warmth that had engulfed his body was intoxicating, yet even with the distance, Peter could still feel a faint trace of Stiles. It was different to the bond he had with Chris, that was one that had developed long ago and had helped him when he began to regain consciousness from the coma. The feeling of Stiles was so different, yet so similar. The two of them inside of him felt right.

“That was…” Stiles trailed off, unsure of just how to describe what he felt.

“Want to finish it with Chris?” Peter asked, making sure that Stiles knew he had the choice.

Still slightly flushed, Stiles nodded. If it felt anything like it had done with Peter, he was more than willing to feel that again.

“You can say no,” Chris said gently. “We can wait.”

“No!” Stiles gasped. “I want – please?”

Peter met Chris’ eyes and nodded. He turned back to the younger boy and helped him stand up. He gently pulled Stiles over to the couch, Chris having had enough sense to move over so there would be space between them.

Peter sat, Stiles following without needing a prompt. The boy licked his lips, a hint of nervousness hitting as he realised just how high up the mark for Chris was.

“Do you want to lean forward a bit?” Chris prompted. “It’ll be easier to go under your shirt like that.”

Stiles nodded, feeling somewhat uneasy. Peter moved his hand over to Stiles, and let the boy hold on as he leant forward.

Chris took care to move his hand under Stiles’ top, making sure not to touch the boy any more than necessary. He guessed that when Stiles tensed, he was near the right spot. He reached forward and brushed his fingers over Stiles’ back, he felt the shudder under his touch. He also felt the warmth that spread from his fingers, to his hand, up his arm and throughout the rest of his body.

Stiles reached out with his free hand, gripping onto Chris’ thigh. His whole body felt sensitive, he felt like he would combust if anybody let go. He needed both of them to keep touching him, it felt like everything would instantly be worse if they had let go of him. It felt as though the world was in threat. He needed them both.

Both Peter and Chris panicked when Stiles fell forward, and wouldn’t wake.
Stiles regained consciousness slowly. He was no longer sat between the two men, instead, he was laid across the couch. Having not recalled just what happened, Stiles began to panic briefly, he pushed himself upwards into a sitting position, groaning as he did so. He glanced around quickly, noting that he seemed to be mostly alone. Throwing the blanket from his chest, his hand made contact with the coffee table, causing a slight noise.

“You ok?” Chris asked, poking his head around the doorway. He stayed there as Stiles stared. “Peter wanted to shower, he can be done soon if you would rather he be here. I can leave as well if you want?” Chris offered, and Stiles could tell that the man meant it. That fact caused conflicting emotions to rise within Stiles. He did want Chris to leave but at the same time, he didn’t want to be alone.

“Peter can hear everything,” Stiles pointed out as he fidgeted on the couch, trying to hide just how much he actually wanted the company. Thankfully the blanket had not been thrown off completely and was still covering his legs, allowing him to tangle his fingers into the soft fabric. Stiles wanted to trust the man. He wanted to not worry about him being a hunter or an Argent. He Peter could come and stop everything if he needed to, he also knew that Peter seemed more than willing to do that if the situation required it. “You don’t have to… leave,” he said slowly.

Chris nodded, sitting down in the armchair.

“Thank you,” he said. “I know there is nothing I can say that will change anything.”

The fact he didn’t continue with a ‘but’ made Stiles relax a bit more. Chris wasn’t trying to shove empty words out to try and make himself look better.

“Peter’s planning on killing everyone involved,” Chris said gently, watching for Stiles’ reaction. The reaction he saw was a slow exhale.

“Will you stop him?”

“I’m helping,” Chris said firmly, no hint of any doubt in his tone. “I don’t expect it to change anything between us,” he reassured quickly. “This isn’t me trying to – well, I want to try and fix – or at least make you feel safe. It doesn’t stop me leaving if you want me to.”

“Did – did he know about you and Peter?” Stiles asked. He felt like he needed to know more. They had said they were together, if that were the case, how could Chris have kept it hidden from his family?

It took a moment before Stiles felt the need to look away from Chris. The man expressed so much understanding as well as sadness that it felt overwhelming.

“My father never knew,” Chris said. There was such a tone of sureness that made Stiles frown in confusion. Taking pity on the boy, Chris continued. “My mother knew. She – I told her right away,” he said with a sad smile. “I knew how obsessed he was over werewolves, my mother – she is the one that stuck to the code. She warned me to be careful, she didn’t want me to lose Peter and suffer because of it.”

“She told you not to tell him?”
“She recommended not telling him,” Chris said. “She warned me that my father did not follow the code too closely.”

“So you kept it a secret,” Stiles clarified, nodding in response to Chris’ own nod. “How did he not notice?”

“Luckily, he was distracted by training my sister,” Chris said with a forced smile.

“How long…?” Stiles asked, unsure of whether he actually wanted to know.

“Until she acted out the plan?” Chris asked. “I was nineteen when I met Peter, Kate was sixteen. She… she was twenty-three when she finished it –”

“Six years,” Stiles said in awe.

“We weren’t together the whole time,” Chris said. “We… he was a werewolf and I was a hunter. We danced around like that, our relationship was built on hate and a mutual annoyance at the universe.”

“When did you get together properly?” Stiles asked.

“We accepted it after a few years. We stopped hating each other and something changed,” Chris shook his head with a smile. “We ignored it, stubborn as we were. Peter… I don’t think either of us knew just how much things had changed until I was pulled out of town to help on a nearby job. I was bait for the vampire that was murdering the people he fed from. The others almost didn’t arrive in time to stop him –”

“He almost drained you?” Stiles asked, leaning forward in his seat slightly.

“If it weren’t for Peter, he would have,” Chris said seriously.

“What did –?”

“Neither of us really know what happened?” Peter’s smooth voice cut in. “One second I was sat with a book, all cosy in bed, the next I felt empty.”

“We can only theorise over what happened,” Chris said. “What we think happened, based on what Peter felt and what I felt, his wolf protected me.”

“How – is that even possible?” Stiles asked, looking from Chris to Peter.

“It isn’t documented,” Peter answered.


“After that incident –”

“Don’t hide,” Peter chastised the other man. “You learnt from that ‘incident’, plus it made your father take you somewhat more seriously.”

“Only because an inexperienced hunter took out a vampire,” Chris pointed out.

“How did you?” Stiles asked, putting more force into the words than he originally intended.

“The bond between Peter and I took over,” Chris said, he was choosing his words carefully. “I still don’t know how to describe it, there was just something that took over and stopped the vampire.”
“I told you,” Peter said in a bored tone, “it was more than likely the wolf –”

“But you’re born,” Stiles interrupted. “There is barely a difference between you and –”

“Yes, turned wolves have a harder time being one with themselves. Born wolves are more in tune with themselves but there are still differences between the human and the wolf,” Peter explained.

“So – so the – your wolf side took over Chris?” Stiles asked. “Did you shift?”

“No,” Chris smiled. “I didn’t change but I believe I was stronger and his wolf used my body to kill the vampire. I was able to push him away and cut off his head, something that I should never have been able to do.”

“That’s amazing,” Stiles breathed. “Did it just happen once?”

“I haven’t been that close to death since,” Chris admitted. “I can feel the wolf through the bond though. Ever since – I can differentiate between Peter and the wolf.”

“That’s amazing,” Stiles whispered again. He could feel both of their bonds, he couldn’t imagine feeling two bonds within one, which was what it seemed like Chris was describing.

“We accepted the fact we were in a real relationship after that,” Chris said with a smile. “We had less time to see each other because my father had deemed me worthwhile.”

“Time passed quickly and the next thing that happened was Kate,” Peter growled.

“I – I didn’t know just what they were planning, I didn’t know Kate was seeing Derek,” Chris admitted, his smile gone. “When I found out Peter had survived… I went back to my mother.”

Both Peter and Stiles were silent as Chris paused. Peter had not yet heard Chris’ side of what had happened after the fire.

“I – we were lucky,” he said bitterly, “about the fact we couldn’t see each other much before it happened. My mother managed to sneak me into the hospital. She had to distract the other hunters that were guarding the place. I didn’t have too much time, I saw – the bond was faint again and I couldn’t stick around. My father found out what my mother did and I left before he could find out why.”

“Your mother –”

“Was ill at the time,” Chris explained. “We knew that I would have to leave afterwards. She didn’t have much time left and we had already said our goodbyes. I left, making sure to come back enough to keep myself sane and check to see if anything had changed but nothing did and I eventually met Victoria and the visits reduced.”

“You came back,” Stiles pointed out.

“I felt Peter getting stronger,” Chris smiled. “I couldn’t stay away.”

“Did she know?” Peter asked.

Chris shook his head. “If things did change, I would have told her and we would have figured something out.”

“That’s neither here nor there,” Peter pointed out.
“Did you –” Stiles cut himself off. He saw Chris’ interested expression and remembered that the man had said he could ask anything. “Did you feel – you were there – did you,” Stiles bit his lip. “Did you feel his death.”

Peter tensed, as Chris let out a large exhale.

“Yes. It was – it was worse than the fire – than the years of not being able to feel Peter completely,” Chris’ tone was shaky.

Peter moved over to the armchair, he sat on the arm and let Chris press into his side.

“It’s ok,” Stiles heard Peter say quietly. “I’m not going anywhere else.”

It tore at his heart to see the two and how well they seemed to fit together. They should have had the chance to live how they wanted. They shouldn’t have been separated just because of who they were.

“I want to be there,” Stiles suddenly said quietly, making both men pause and look at him. “When you kill him,” he clarified. He felt marginally calmer than he had when he first sought their company. Gerard would be dead. There was going to be no plan to talk and change the man. He would not be a problem for much longer.
Chris and Stiles both stayed at Peter’s apartment overnight. Chris had told his daughter to avoid the house for a few days, something she was happy to do. Stiles had told his dad that he wanted to try and get to know his soulmates, and with assurances that nothing would happen unless he was OK with it, Stiles had been able to get his dad to agree to letting him have at least the next day away from home to let the bonds fully form. He had stated how important it was that protection was used, to which Stiles had stuttered out how unlikely it was and the fact he didn’t want that, or anything like that.

Stiles had observed between the two men when he finally felt ready enough to venture from the bedroom the following morning. Peter had seemed to lose most of the hostility towards Chris that he had shown before, and Chris seemed to be more at ease around Peter. They would share casual touches whenever they were within reaching distance, they were nothing overtly defining, from what Stiles guessed, it was more of a reassurance between the two men that they were nearby.

It was strange to watch how the two gravitated to each other. Peter had been the first one there when Stiles had searched for company. He had stood with his back to the doorway as he made pancakes. An ex-murderer cooking was something that Stiles had not been prepared to see.

In the time it took for Stiles’ brain to comprehend just what he was seeing, Chris had made his way by him, his hair wet and a towel hanging off one shower. He was fully dressed, his grey t-shirt showed signs of the fact he had not thoroughly dried himself before getting dressed.

Chris had made his way over to the coffee pot, letting his hand brush across Peter’s lower back as he did so. Stiles couldn’t see either of their faces but as Chris got a cup of coffee and stood to the side to watch Peter finish cooking, he was sure that Peter was smiling.

Peter had huffed at the first touch but once Chris had settled against the countertop, Peter seemed to make a point of moving close though to let their arms brush as he plated the pancakes he had made.

Neither men seemed concerned over Stiles lurking in the doorway, nor did they seem reluctant to share the small touches. Stiles had the brief thought that they were unaware of just how much Stiles noticed, until he had shrugged it off on him being silly. He doubted that the werewolf or the hunter thought he was stupid, especially when Peter had made a point of commenting several times on just how smart Stiles was.

No, Stiles was somewhat sure that they were aware that he noticed. He knew that Peter could sense just how he felt when he observed them. Yet Stiles didn’t understand how they had gotten as close as they were.

Seeing them as they were, Stiles couldn’t help but wonder if they acted differently when they were together before. Two young adults, happily in their relationship once they had gotten over the hate. Perhaps it was how they had coped with no one willing to accept them, they shared brief, explainable touches in case they were caught.

He couldn’t stop himself comparing their behaviour to Allison and Scott. Those two were vastly different. They had no problems with being open about who they were and who they liked, yet Peter and Chris had to hide it. They couldn’t have been together openly, they didn’t have the safety of
school to hide within. Nor did they have the opportunity of family members with dull senses that wouldn’t be able to identify the smell of a hunter.

Peter and Chris hadn’t commented on how quiet Stiles had been during breakfast, granted, they had only experienced him talking recently and had not encountered the more talkative version that he used to be. Peter had to know it was not the norm, he had to have heard Stiles talking a mile a minute before, when Scott had just been changed. Stiles wasn’t naive enough to believe that Peter didn’t keep tabs on what Scott did, perhaps not during the day but at night the man must have been curious about his Beta.

"So what’s the plan?" Stiles asked once everyone had finished eating. It had been Chris who had stood to gather the plates up and put them in the sink.

"The plan?" Peter asked, looking at Stiles curiously. His lips twitched as he noted how the hesitant that Stiles normally held around them seemed to be missing from the boy.

"To kill them," Chris almost choked at the blunt tone. There was no emotion in Stiles' voice and Chris could see the determination showing on his face.

"There isn't one," Peter said calmly.

"I thought you were -" Stiles began, his voice rising.

"There isn't one yet," Peter reiterated, still outwardly calm.

"So? Let's make one."

"You want to be included?" Chris asked, finally able to speak without choking on his own tongue.

Stiles gave him a look that said 'duh'.

"You said -"

"I want him dead," Stiles confirmed. "If you can do that, brilliant, if not, I'll find someone else -"

"As if," Peter scoffed. "Who else is there that is even likely to kill him?"

"I would find someone," Stiles stressed.

"We are more than capable darling," Peter purred.

"Peter," Chris warned.

Peter just rolled his eyes.

"So the plan?"

"We'll use Chris," Peter said simply, smirking at the now pale man. "He'll be the inside man."

"Obviously," Stiles pointed out. He didn't verbalise just how unsure he was about that, even though he knew it was the best way. Chris wouldn't be suspected right away and if things turned badly, then he would have the chance to make the final blow. Stiles knew that Peter would rather finish the man himself, as on board as Chris was, it was clear just how happy Chris would be with murdering his own family.

Both males paused when Chris took a deep breath. They watched him exhale before he spoke; "it
would be ideal if we could make it seem like an attack -"

"That would make them defensive," Stiles pointed out with a frown.

"If they didn't know where the attack was coming from, they would be separated. You would have to be quick," Chris added to Peter. "They'll be checking in, standard protocol when we split up and search. That way, if someone falls, we can get there as soon as possible."

"Easy enough," Peter shrugged. I want to know who was involved in your kidnapping," he said to Stiles.

"I can name them and get you their scent," Chris said.

"Perfect," Peter grinned sinisterly.

"What about me?" Stiles asked.

"You wait somewhere safe," both men said together, causing Stiles to scowl.

"I'm not breakable!" He huffed.

"I would rather not worry about you getting hurt, Chris explained.

"It would be quicker to get rid of the extras with you out of sight. Less chance of us being spotted," was Peters explanation.

"I'm not -"

"Stiles," Peter said softly. "You've been through enough at their hands, why would we risk anything else happening to you?"

Stiles stayed silent. He had no response. Part of him wanted to protest, he was not a liability, he could help. Yet Peter seemed to mean that he didn't want Stiles to get hurt. Sure, he had said things along those lines before but hearing it so clearly in his tone and seeing how honest he seemed made it so much clearer.

"Once my father is incapacitated, we'll get you. Then we'll kill him," Chris offered.

Stiles nodded, he felt somewhat weightless at the thought of it actually happening. Gerard would be dead soon.

Chapter End Notes

Have a good Thanksgiving, those who celebrate it! If you don't, have a good day! Next chapter will be long and probably a lot to handle but it'll end positively.
The Plan Went Wrong

Chapter Notes

So this one is longer, and it might be difficult to read? There is a summary at the end of the chapter if you need it, nothing too bad happens but there is a chance it could make you uncomfortable.
I don't have too much free time but I wanted this updated, I really need to work on this essay though so no more internet today for me!
Hopefully you all enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Stiles woke slowly, his head hurt and he couldn’t stop the groan. Did he mention how much he had hated the plan of just waiting?

Peter and Chris had gotten together to finalise a few details when Stiles had gone home. They picked one of the hunter’s ‘secret’ dens. The plan was that Peter would mark his need for revenge with the spiral. From there, it was Chris’ duty to make sure that his father took the bait and collect a group of trusted hunters to help station the den. Then, Chris would pose as helping search for whatever wanted the revenge.

Once night hit, Peter would make his move, he would stealthily take out each of the hunters stationed around. Ideally, that would be done within five minutes since the regular check-ins were an issue.

The plan was that Stiles was meant to stay near the car, which Chris would park in a spot that was left unused. The only issue was that with all the anticipation and worry over what might happen, Stiles had felt the need to leave the car and attempt to work off the energy. He stuck close by, knowing that this area was one that was not normally used. Yet, somehow, Stiles had been found.

“I hear there’s one of the monsters here,” Gerard said in amusement, pulling Stiles fully out of his dazed thinking. Almost instantly, Stiles wriggled in the chair he was sat in. “Not one of the brats though, an older one. The oldest. Were you that unlucky kid?”

Stiles glared at the man. He tried to pull his hands forward, he could feel the familiar metal around his wrists. The bastard had handcuffed him. Wriggling slightly, he realised just how little he could move his arms, which meant that the chain of the cuffs were stuck around something, probably connected to the chair. Stiles’ glare deepened.

“Don’t give me that look,” Gerard chuckled. “How long do you think it will be until he gets here? A few minutes? An hour? What if the hunters waiting are able to stop him? Then what?”

“Then I’ll kill you myself,” Stiles bit out.

“You think you could? Last time we were this close you weren’t so cocky,” Gerard smiled as he leant forward, his hands on both armrests.

Stiles fought back the shiver. He kept his eyes on Gerard, not wanting to show any weakness that he felt.
“Last time you had friends,” Stiles spat. “With guns.”

“Now those friends with guns are going after your dog,” Gerard sneered. “Does daddy know you are involved with monsters?”

“You know nothing,” Stiles hissed. His fear around the man was quickly being replaced by more and more anger.

“You’re lucky you haven’t been bitten yet!” Gerard roared. “You think they care about anyone but themselves? We were doing you a favour –”

“By sexually assaulting me!” Stiles laughed bitterly. “You call them monsters but you’re the one that acted like it –”

Stiles was cut off from his shouting by Gerard punching him.

“You’ll realise what they’re like soon,” the old man said coldly.

“Fuck you,” Stiles hissed.

The door behind Stiles slammed shut with a loud bang, making Stiles tense.

“Hale is here,” he heard Chris’ tense voice.

“Hear that kid,” Gerard said, finally moving back from Stiles.

“Stiles?” Chris questioned.

“Hale’s the monster he –”

“Fuck you!” Stiles shouted.

“Stiles,” Chris warned. He walked up behind Stiles, noticing how the teen tensed as he drew closer. Chris put a hand on his shoulder, seemingly holding the boy still. At such a close range and with the physical contact, Stiles could feel the nervousness that Chris felt.

“We’re going to prove a point to the brat,” Gerard said calmly.

“You tied him up,” Chris frowned, or so Stiles assumed with the unimpressed tone.

“He fought last time,” was Gerard’s half-hearted excuse.

Chris squeezed Stiles’ shoulder gently when the boy snorted.

There was a bang from outside of the room. Then another. Stiles felt something fall beside to his hand when the next bang happened.

Chris moved away from him. His hand leaving Stiles’ shoulder. Chris went to stand next to Gerard. Stiles could see how uncomfortable he was, thankfully, it could be excused as being invaded by an enemy. Stiles eyed the gun in Chris’ hand for a second before he let his fingers feel around for what had dropped.

“No use struggling kid,” Gerard said as Stiles moved.

The object was small, cold, and difficult to grasp. Finally managing to do so, as the door bounced off the wall with a noise that made Stiles want to cover his ears.
The object was metal, the size was – Stiles realised that it was a key. He bit the inside of his cheek to avoid the smirk spreading across his face.

A low growling started, no doubt when Peter noticed that Stiles was in the middle of the room.

Hoping to pass off the movement as fidgeting with nervous energy due to the wolf behind him, Stiles began to slowly unlock the handcuffs. He sent a mental thank you to his own dad. The years of playing with the Sheriff’s handcuffs had finally been useful. Stiles had learnt how to undo them without looking after one too many times of being stuck and his dad refusing to help until Stiles promised it was the last time.

“Take another move and I shoot him,” Gerard said calmly, his gun pointing right to Stiles’ chest.

Peter growled deeper.

Stiles heart rate began to shift quicker, this was unexpected. They hadn’t planned anything for the chance of Gerard using Stiles as bait. It had even taken Chris by surprise, his own gun still held steady towards Peter. Stiles could see the twitch in the man’s eye as he glanced between Gerard and Peter.

“You’re quiet kid,” Gerard said. He took a step towards Stiles, raising an eyebrow over Stiles’ shoulder when Peter growled even more. “Anything you want to say before your pet dies? Chris is ready to put a bullet right between his eyes.”

Stiles licked his lips, wanting more than anything to turn around and see Peter. He met Chris’ eyes, who nodded and let his gun shift to his father’s back. The plan had changed. No matter what, Gerard was not leaving this room breathing.

“I – he isn’t my soulmate,” Stiles gasped. “I don’t know –”

“I will shoot you,” Gerard hissed, stepping even closer.

Stiles let himself shiver as the gun moved within reach. One wrong move was the end. He also knew that Chris and Peter wouldn’t do anything to put him at risk, or in any more risk. That was the only thing that had stopped Peter intervening already.

Stiles moved his arms slightly, reaching for the knife he had hidden under his sleeve, thankful that they had seemed too oblivious to check him for any type of weapons.

“Please,” Stiles whispered, met Gerard’s eyes. “I – I met them, both of my soulmates. They aren’t – I promise. I – I couldn’t just leave my friend.”

“Yes, the McCall kid. He was doing what I wanted, you know. He was working against the rest of the dogs – Shut up!” he yelled to Peter. “I will kill him.”

“He’s already told you that he isn’t mine,” Peter said, his voice distorted by the fact he was partially shifted.

Stiles closed his eyes momentarily before remembering the gun, Peter was going with it. The plan changed but this may work.

“So the wolf shouldn’t care about your death,” Gerard pointed out. “Why hasn’t he moved?”

“I –” Stiles took a gamble, hoping that it would work. “I know where his soulmate is. He ran and I found him – Peter needs me alive to find him.”
“You know the wolf’s mate?” Gerard asked, a lecherous grin on his face. “Maybe we should leave the dog to go insane again, then kill him slowly.” Gerard moved even closer, letting his gun drop from Stiles’ body. “Tell me, where is he?” he once again, leant his hands on the armrests of the chair Stiles was still supposedly handcuffed to.

Moving fast, Stiles tightened his hold on the small knife and thrust it into Gerard’s stomach. He took a great deal of pleasure in seeing the shocked look on the old man’s face.

“Next time make sure your prisoners are unarmed,” he said quietly. Stiles felt Gerard fall backwards, away from him. Chris had pulled the gun from his father’s hand and Peter had moved to hold the man against the floor.

Chris had thrown his father’s gun away from the three of them before turning to Stiles and kneeling before the boy.

“Are you ok?” he asked, his hands moving to Stiles’ biceps.

Stiles nodded, he was sure that he would crash from the adrenaline soon and he didn’t want to give Gerard the satisfaction of seeing that.

“Thank you,” he whispered to Chris, trying to put as much emotion into the two words as he could. Chris had given him a way out, he had given Stiles the key. If it weren’t for him, Stiles couldn’t have done anything but watch.

Stiles looked over to where Peter was growling at Gerard, his clawed hand curled around the man’s throat.

“I should introduce you to my mates,” Peter said loudly enough for Chris and Stiles to hear. “You really shouldn’t have hurt either of them. Chris, be a dear and take Stiles home?”

“You want to stay?” Chris asked, remembering Stiles requesting to be present for Gerard’s death.

Stiles let himself view the scene before him. He knew that Peter was the one in control, there would be no way of Gerard escaping unless Peter allowed it.

“He’ll be dead?” Stiles asked, wanting the reassurance.

“With no hope of returning,” Peter promised.

“Take me away from here?” he asked Chris, taking the man’s hand.

Chris startled slightly as Stiles’ fingers tangled with his own. He gave the boys hand a squeeze and pulled his out of the building, already making plans to stop by a drive-thru to get the younger man some food to postpone the adrenaline crash until Peter was able to return.

Chapter End Notes

If you need it, the summary is;
When they went through with the plan, Stiles didn’t listen completely and he left the car he was meant to be waiting in. He was captured and he woke handcuffed to a chair. Gerard taunts him, Chris arrives and manages to pass Stiles the key to the handcuffs whilst Peter is making noise on his way towards them.
When Peter arrives, Chris acts as though he is ready to shoot the wolf but Gerard points the gun at Stiles. Peter and Chris both freeze, unsure of what to do since Gerard would shoot him. Stiles lies and claims that the only reason Peter cares about him is because he knows where his hidden soulmate is and that Gerard was wrong in thinking Peter was Stiles’ soulmate. Gleeful with the thought of using Peter’s real soulmate to turn him feral before slowly killing him, he demands Stiles to tell him.

During all of this, Stiles had uncuffed himself and realised that when he was taken, they hadn’t checked him for weapons. Using the fact that Gerard was really close, Stiles acted quickly and stabbed him in the stomach. This allowed Peter and Chris to disarm him and get him away from Stiles.

It ended with Peter asking Chris to take Stiles away, Stiles making Peter promise to kill Gerard before going with Chris.
Gerard's Death

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It had taken longer than expected to take down the hunters surrounding the building, they were well prepared, each with their own arsenal of weapons. They varied on how alert they were, some noticing small noises whilst others noticed shadows that were cast. a few had spotted Peter, yet none had any chance of preparing the others before they fell to the floor. There was no hope of them contacting Gerard to let him know just what creature it was that wanted the revenge.

Peter had hoped that Chris was correct in his assessment that the more talented hunters would be stationed outdoors, whereas the others would be inside. Therefore, the man should not come across anyone that he could not handle. Chris would deal with the people indoors, whilst Peter dealt with the mass outside.

It wasn’t until he had stormed into the centre of the building, the large, empty room, that he realised how wrong everything had been.

The rage he had kept at a low simmer flared to life. Gerard stood smugly. He was grinning, his white teeth showing as he levelled his gun towards Stiles.

"Take another move and I shoot him," those seven words made Peter want to roar. He needed to feel Gerard’s blood. He had to make the man suffer.

Peter knew, no matter how much he wanted to wish otherwise, Gerard’s reflexes had been honed by his years of hunting. Supernatural speed, or not, Peter had no chance of getting Stiles safe without the gun being fired.

Chris met Peter’s eyes. He glanced at the back of his father’s head, the smallest twitch in his fingers, yet his hand held steady as he pointed the gun at him. Peter knew, Chris had a plan, one that they had organised years ago when a similar situation had occurred. Only this time, there was a third party at risk. It wasn’t a rouge hunter who had threatened Peter, it was a trained and experienced hunter that would stop at nothing.

Chris seemed to understand. He knew that Stiles was under threat, a simple ploy would not work.

“I – he isn’t my soulmate. I don’t know –” Lie. Stiles’ heart had stumbled more so than it already was.

Peter had seen the flash of movement that Stiles should have been unable to do. His growls had faded somewhat, now curious as to what the teen was planning.

“He’s already told you that he isn’t mine,” Peter managed to get out. He didn’t want to test anything, plus it seemed as though Stiles had a plan, which was more than he or Chris had.

Peter waited, tensing as Gerard moved even closer, no longer paying attention to what was being said. Soon. He needed to act soon. The closer Gerard was to Stiles, the more danger the boy was in.

The snarl left his throat when Gerard leant forward, too close to Stiles. Before he had the chance to move, Peter could smell blood.
Thinking the worst, Peter surged forward as Chris did the same. Catching the man as he fell, Peter dug his claws into the soft flesh of Gerard’s neck. Peter waited long enough for Chris to take the gun from the man’s hand, before slamming him backwards, into the floor and holding him down.

Seeing Gerard open his mouth, Peter dug his claws further into the pale throat. A pained groan left him, cutting off the words that he had prepped to throw at the werewolf.

“I should introduce you to my mates,” Peter said loudly enough for Chris and Stiles to hear. “You really shouldn’t have hurt either of them. Chris, be a dear and take Stiles home?”

Peter kept his focus on the man before him. Briefly noting how Stiles had asked Chris to take him home. The wolf within him wanted to howl, he was glad Stiles accepted it. He did not need to see what was about to occur.

Peter waited until he could no longer hear Stiles and Chris before he made his next move. He was concerned about the younger boy but he trusted the hunter to care for him, even though he had previously forbidden them from being alone together. Chris would not do anything, he would know just how much Peter would need to be around them both once he was done. Chris would surely know how much Peter needed to make sure they were safe.

Peter took a steadying breath, willing his features to shift back to human. He didn’t want this to be the wolfs kill. He kept his claws, still buried into the man’s throat.

“You made a huge mistake,” Peter said softly, pleased at how calm his voice came across. “I let what you did to Chris slide. I ignored the fact Chris was terrified to let anyone know about us. I let him talk me out of ripping out your throat.”

Before Gerard had a chance to response, Peter had dug his claw even further.

“I don’t want to hear a single noise from you,” he hissed.

Gerard gurgled beneath Peter’s hand.

“I said –” Peter cut himself off, breathing out harshly through his nose.

He pulled his hand free, before slowly using his claws to cut cleanly across the man’s throat, from ear to ear.

“There,” Peter said smugly. “No more talking and if you manage it, I can cut a little deeper and make sure the laryngeal nerves are more than severed.”

Gerard gurgled, blood steadily spilling from both wounds inflicted upon his body.

“I am tempted to leave you to bleed out slowly,” Peter said casually. “It would be more satisfying to watch you die slowly. Knowing that the boy you hurt so much had a part in it.”

Peter knelt back, leaving Gerard on the floor. The man clutched at his throat, blood spilling from between his fingers as he looked up at Peter with wide eyes.

“Do you even care about how much you hurt Chris?” Peter asked, his eyes flashing in anger. “He may have lost the chance to be close to one of his soulmates because of you. You took an innocent boy,” his words were barely clear through the growling that had started once again. “You hurt a boy who did nothing wrong but stick by his friends, and you call me the monster.”

Peter watched as Gerard paled, the loss of blood finally showing an effect other than the weakening
of the man’s body. He gasped for breath, his heart rate rapid but slowly weakening as time passed. As breathing grew harder, Gerard’s lips turned a pale blue. Peter smirked as Gerard began to fight to stay conscious.

“You will not hurt either of them again,” he promised, he wanted to let the man die like this. Yet, he also wanted him to suffer even more.

Peter brought his claws to Gerard’s shirt, slicing through the fabric before digging them into the centre of his chest. The ease at which Peter pulled the skin from the man’s ribs left him satisfied as Gerard gurgled even more against the blood pooling in his throat. It seemed as though the slightest pressure caused the bones to snap, clearing the path to the lungs.

Peter could see how pitiful Gerard’s heart was beating, trying to pump the blood around his body despite the weakening. The heart stopped as soon as Peter managed to curl his hand around it, preparing to pull it from Gerard’s now lifeless body. The fight had left his body, his hands fell from his throat and the change in temperature was even more obvious with Peter’s hand in his chest.

It was done. The man who had hurt both of his soulmates was laid lifeless below him. Peter couldn’t stop the victory howl that left him as his wolf took over to ensure that the man was going to be no more, since Peter knew how death was not always final.

Chapter End Notes

I didn't plan on Peter being all 'let's lecture the slowly dying man' but it happened. Cuddles next chapter! Peter just took over this one.
Cuddles With Chris

Stiles didn't know how he made it from Gerard's hideout. Time seemed to move in flashes. One blink, he was away from Gerard's bleeding form. Another, he was outside, the wind hitting his face with enough force to take his breath away. Another blink saw him settled in the car. He remembered hearing Chris say something but he couldn't make out the words.

Stiles watched the buildings pass, not really seeing anything around him. He stared blankly at the bag that was placed in his lap. The smell made his stomach lurch. It wasn't until he made an effort to remove the offending item that stiles noticed his arms were covered. He frowned, not quite understanding why there was a blanket covering him.

Chris had been glancing over, hoping that Stiles would come back to himself with the prompt of food. He saw Stiles look down with a frown.

"You were shaking," Chris tried, aware that Stiles had not been fully aware of his surroundings and that whatever Chris may say might still not register with the boy.

At the next set of traffic lights, Chris took another look at Stiles. The boy was still trembling, but it had seemed to have settled somewhat. Stiles still looked dazed, not quite focusing on anything as he looked ahead.

It wasn’t long until Chris had reach Peter’s apartment. He was thankful for the fact that the other man had clearly not considered changing where he kept his spare key. Those countless times that Chris had sneaked in to wait for him to return came to mind before Chris focused on Stiles.

The younger boy did not struggle, nor did he seem able to assist Chris in moving him from the car into the apartment. Keeping the blanket over his shoulders, Chris slowly helped Stiles stand, steadying the boy when he swayed. It took a bit more coaxing to get him to move, and it took longer than Chris would have liked before Stiles was settled on the couch. Chris had half a thought to bundle the boy into bed, but he was unsure of just how Stiles would react.

Chris quickly walked back outside, collecting the lukewarm food and locking the car behind him before making his way back. He paused before entering the living room, he gathered that Stiles would still be reluctant to eat, so he left the room in the kitchen.

His next step was towards Peter’s bedroom. He didn’t plan on lingering, no matter how unusual it felt to be back. It had been rare that Chris had been in Peter’s room without the other present. It was one thing that they both respected, they understood the need for personal space and they were happy to grant that to each other.

Chris took steady steps over to Peter’s bed, ignoring the urge he had to burrow into the sheets. He gathered the quilt and made his way back towards Stiles. Even just holding the blanket to himself, he could smell Peter etched into the fabric. He hoped that the smell would help Stiles, even if it were just reinforcing that Stiles was away from Gerard.

Stiles had not moved from where Chris had placed him. The thin blanket still covered him, yet the boy was no longer shaking, but he was clearly dazed. Without a second thought, Chris had sat next to Stiles, spreading the quilt over the boy.

He paused when Stiles leant against his side. When Chris looked down and saw how unfocused Stiles seemed to me, he pulled the boy closer to him, hoping that the contact would help. Chris could
feel Stiles moving closer, burrowing further beneath the blankets covering him and into Chris’ side. Chris kept his arms loose around Stiles, wanting to let him pull away if he needed to.

Chris let the silence take over, letting Stiles’ weight anchor him as he lost himself in his own thoughts. He needed to tell Allison, she deserved to know the truth. So many people in their family had died recently, this would probably be the one to cause her the least pain. She knew that her grandfather was not a good man, yet admitting that he had aided in the murder plan is another thing.

Chris was brought out of his thoughts when Stiles shifted even closer to his body. One of Stiles’ hands twisted in Chris’ shirt, holding tightly. Chris tighten his arms around the younger boy, letting him take whatever comfort he wanted.

Chris heard the door open, Peter had returned. It made Chris want to sigh with relief, he felt better knowing that the other man was around.

“How are you?” Peter asked, drawing Chris’ attention. Looking back, Chris didn’t answer the question since his face fell into a frown.

“You’re covered in blood.” Chris pointed out. He glanced over Peter’s body. His clothes were torn and Chris could see evidence that at least one person had shot at Peter, which made him slightly remorseful that he had very little to do with the execution of the other hunters.

“How is he?” Peter asked, noticing the younger boy curled up into Chris’ chest. Chris noticed the gentleness in his voice, it was out of place when he was covered in blood.

“I think he’s in shock,” Chris admitted. He glanced down at the boy who had burrowed into his side. He if it weren’t for the fact his eyes were open, Chris would say that he was asleep.

“His heartbeat is irregular,” Peter noted after a few seconds. He moved closer to the two, looking down at them fondly. “It’s not too abnormal, I don’t think we should worry too much.”

“No,” Chris agreed. “He stopped shaking before we got hom – before we got here,” Chris corrected himself. “I couldn’t get him to eat, plus his temperature was dropping so I thought keeping him warm was more important.”

“Food can wait,” Peter agreed. He brought his hand up, feeling the need to reassure himself beyond his sight. The young boy looked so helpless.

“Peter,” Chris warned, seeing the movement.

Peter pulled his hand back, looking down at the limb before wiping what blood he could off onto his trouser leg.

“After you get clean,” Chris said sternly.

Rolling his eyes, Peter reached out, lightly taking hold of the back of Chris’ neck. He let his thumb caress the skin as Chris tilted his head, giving Peter more access.

“If you got blood on me –”

“I’ll make it up to you,” Peter promised, his voice quiet. He knew that the threat Chris was going to say would be empty. It didn’t stop the small thrill that went through Peter as he saw the smudged blood left behind by his hand. It brought back memories, ones that he had pushed to the back of his mind since returning from the coma.
“Go get changed,” Chris ordered gently, pulling Peter out of his mind before he regressed into his memories. “I want someone with him when he comes back to us and I need to move soon.”

“I could –”

“You’re covered in blood,” Chris interrupted, his lips twitching at Peter’s own teasing smirk.

“Yes your majesty.” Peter mock bowed before heading out of the room to, hopefully, change and wash the blood from his body.
“You have blood on you,” Stiles’ voice was scratchy from being unused. He still didn’t feel one hundred percent aware, yet he recognised the blood for what it was.

“I told you to clean up,” Chris sighed. Peter hadn’t taken long to get changed and clean the most of the blood off of his body before making his way back to the blanketed duo. He had raised his eyebrow when Chris offered to move over for Peter to join them, instead moving to Stiles’ other side and laying with his feet over the edge of the couch. He had stayed on top of the blankets, his head resting on the boy’s lap.

Peter turned his head, looking up to Stiles. He offered the boy a wolfish grin.

“How are you feeling dear?”

“Strange,” Stiles responded to Peter.

“How so?” Chris let his voice drop to the same volume as the other two, aware that being overly loud may change something and cause Stiles to regress once again.

“I feel… floaty?” the younger boy asked. “I don’t know. It’s hard to describe. Nothing feels real.”

“It sounds like shock,” Chris noted.

“No, shock is medical,” Stiles argued, more life entering his voice. “Shock needs a hospital because your blood pressure falls and you run the risk of dying –”

“He means emotional shock,” Peter explained, trying to hide his amusement.

“Oh… like acute stress reaction?” Stiles asked.

“What’s that?”

“Where your body kind of blanks after an intense emotional thing, not proper shock but your emotions stop,” Stiles frowned, annoyed at himself with how unsatisfying that explanation was. He couldn’t think of any other way to explain it, there was just so much and it didn’t make sense.

“That sounds right,” Chris soothed.

“Oh, ok,” Stiles nodded. If it sounded right, then it made sense. Even if it wasn’t to himself.

“Do you want anything?” Peter asked. “We have food, water, condoms –”

He was cut off as Chris hit his head and Stiles smiled.

“No – not now,” Stiles said. He felt strange, he knew that he would have normally laughed at Peter saying that. He wanted to laugh. Deciding not to worry about it – not that he had the urge to worry about it – he focused back on the blood that he saw behind Peter’s ear.

Absently, Stiles struggled against the heaviness of his arms as he pulled them from the blanket. He let his free arm drop again, his hand coaxing Peter to turn his head. Once the older man allowed the movement, Stiles sought out the blood. It wasn’t much, only a few drops worth that had managed to stay. Letting his finger brush it, he found that the blood was dry, enough so that some force would be needed to remove it.
“He’s dead?” Stiles asked, connecting the dots as he let his hand move from Peter’s ear and into his hair.

“Very much so,” Peter agreed, slowly turning his head back so he could look up at Stiles.

“Did he suffer?”

Peter considered the question for a moment. If Stiles were anyone else, he would be inclined to lie. He had done before the fire. Whenever Talia had asked him to finish a job, Peter would lie and tell her how painless it had been for the guilty party. How, even the most traitorous deed was given a quick death. Yet, Stiles was different. He had not once shied away from someone’s death. The boy had aided a murder to protect the people he loved. He had been brutal in doing so as well. So, the truth was the best bet with him.

“I made him regret even thinking about you,” Peter said frankly.

Chris sat tensely, he agreed with Peter feeling the need to do that and he had no issues with anyone who hurt Stiles dying. Yet it was his family, as loosely as he now used that term. He had grown up idolising his father and that had not fully disappeared, even with the knowledge of all the bad things that he had planned and done. The man was a monster, even if some small part of Chris still did not want to believe that.

Chris glanced over to Stiles, concluding that he should know as well, “What did you do?”

“His body will be found,” Peter said, unsure of just how to word what had happened. He didn’t want to say anything that could cause Stiles anymore additional stress than necessary. “It is likely they will conclude it an unfortunate accident. A hungry mountain lion has been spotted in the area after all and he had left all the doors open.”

“Nothing that can be traced back to you?” Stiles asked quietly.

“Nothing,” Peter agreed.

“Good.”

His fingers tightened in Peter’s hair briefly before he let himself relax. Gerard was dead. Peter had killed him. Stiles was safe.

Chris leant forward, tapping Peter’s forehead to get the wolf’s attention. Peter let his fangs come out as he snarled half-heartedly.

“What did you do?” Chris asked again. Peter looked up at Chris, before letting his gaze fall to Stiles.

“Let him bleed,” Peter said quietly, he locked his eyes back onto Chris’, looking at the man from upside down. “Tore him apart. Took his heart from his body as well as a few limbs –”

Stiles watched Peter, his eyes unfocused yet his mind was growing increasingly aware as Peter continued.

“ – and burnt then further away from the building. I scattered the ashes around the forest. It’s not one hundred percent safe but the chances of him coming back are almost impossible,” Peter admitted.

“Why not burn everything?” Stiles asked, his voice seemingly strengthening. He didn’t sound as feeble as he had done before.
“It’s better if the body isn’t kept in the same area,” Peter explained. “Burning him completely and scattering the ashes would be best, but having evidence of him being dead would make people notice if he suddenly comes back. A record of death will be good for everyone as well, closure for those that need it.”

Chris nodded, knowing that he wanted proof for the possibility of Stiles doubting him as well as the rest of Chris’ family. Even with Chris’ trust in Peter, he knew that having nothing but ashes wouldn’t offer the same certainty as an actual body.

“My phone!” Stiles gasped, sitting up abruptly as he heard the faint tone from across the room. It was his dad's ringtone, which always struck a sense of fear into Stiles.

“I’ll grab it,” Peter said, as he stood.

The noise didn’t last long, settling Stiles somewhat since it wasn’t a phone call. That narrowed down a number of possibilities for the impromptu contact.

Chris looked over to Peter, worried, at the man’s soft ‘ah’. The noise also caught Stiles’ attention, making the boy reach for his phone. Peter passed it over, sitting back down next to Stiles.

From Daddio: **Scott says you went to the shop Stiles.**

**It’s almost midnight**

**We both know Scott is a terrible liar**

**Tell your soulmates I want to meet them**

Stiles swallowed around the lump in his throat. The last message had been sent about half an hour after the others. Stiles had told Scott to cover for him whilst they went out to deal with Gerard tonight. Clearly, he had been found out. It was very rare – like a more serious, shit’s gone down reason for one of their parents to contact them when they stay at the others house.

**What’s up?**

Stiles sent back, pointedly ignoring the last message.

**We’re all having dinner Stiles.**

Peter stopped Stiles from banging his head back against the couch.

“Tell him we’ll meet him tomorrow,” he murmured into the boy's ear. “We’ll drop you off, say hi and then disappear again before he can question us too much.”

“He wants you to stay,” Stiles complained.

“Meeting the Sheriff?” Chris clarified, getting a nod from Peter. “We’ll stop by, follow Peter’s plan and if things go well, we’ll stay, if not, we’ll go. Sound good?”

“No,” Stiles frowned down at his phone. He followed Peter’s instruction and typed out the response, once he had done so, he muted his phone and leant forward to put it on the coffee table.

“We should sleep,” Chris said with a sigh, not noticing just how much Stiles’ heart sped up at the suggestion.
Peter, however, did notice.

“You’re not leaving my sight darling,” he promised, glad that his words eased some of the anxiety that had built up from the three words. “My bed is big enough for all of us.”
Peter had claimed the middle of the bed, stating how he was not going to risk getting pushed out of his own bed. He had also given Stiles another pair of jogging bottoms and a t-shirt that he could wear to sleep. The day didn’t go as he had hoped but the end result had been satisfying.

“Can’t sleep?” Chris asked into the darkness, pulling Peter out of his almost asleep state.

“No,” Stiles admitted, cutting off Peter’s clipped reply.

*Oh yeah,* Peter remembered that the boy was with them. It wasn’t just Chris and himself, Chris wasn’t being difficult for the joy of being annoying.

“I keep seeing…” Stiles trailed off, his scent flaring with disgust.

“It’s ok – normal even,” Chris pointed out. Peter reached out, keeping his movements hidden in the darkness, giving Chris’ hand a soft squeeze.

“I guessed,” Stiles sighed, yet he was happy to have that stated. “It’s just – how do I pretend –”

“You don’t,” Chris said simply. “You won’t forget it and it’ll be something you always doubt was the right thing.”

“I know Peter was the one to… you know.”

The avoidance made something in Peter’s gut twist. He didn’t blame Stiles for not wanting to make the whole event even more real but knowing that it had clearly done so much was not easy to hear.

“He was, and I’m sure that he wanted you away to help you not blame yourself,” Chris said, voicing his suspicions with an answering curl of his fingers around Peter’s hand. Peter rolled his eyes into the darkness, of course he didn’t want Stiles to blame himself, the boy had acted in self-defence.

“He wanted you out of the way as well,” Stiles pointed out.

Peter resisted the urge to comment on how clever Stiles could be, enough to notice what was happening around him when he was on the verge of going into shock.

“More than likely,” Chris agreed. “It’s never easy to be a part of your family’s death.”

“Who – who was the first person you killed?”

Peter froze, holding his breath. He knew the story, he knew how upset Chris had been. It had taken the man years to feel comfortable enough to even talk about what had happened. Peter turned his hand, his palm facing upwards as he slid it below Chris’ hand, letting the man know he was there if he needed the extra strength.

“It was – when I first started hunting,” Chris spoke quietly. “There were reports of an Omega in the area and it was evidence that linked them to the murder of a group of campers. We went out into the woods, looking for the werewolf. My father had decided that it was a good idea for us to split up and I came across a woman. She lunged at me and I shot her out of reflex –”
“Self-defence,” Stiles pointed out.

Peter could see Chris nodding.

“It wasn’t serious,” Chris explained, “just enough to slow her down. It seemed to pull her out of whatever drove her to attack me. She begged me to spare her, she said she didn’t do anything and that she was just looking for a pack.”

“Please! Don’t – don’t kill me! I – I did – I didn’t hurt anyone. I’m just – I’m looking for a pack – I swear! My family – they were killed. Please!” The echo of the woman’s voice was still as clear as if she had spoken only moments before. The honest panic and fear that were etched into the few words made Chris shiver in remembrance.

Chris was pulled out of his memories by Peter nudging his hand.

“My father arrived just as I was going to let her go, I didn’t want to kill her,” Chris frowned. “He just shot her, no hesitation at all. I still wonder what would happen if I had let her go as soon as she begged, rather than debating it.”

Peter watched the two men around him fall silent, Stiles obviously weighing Chris’ words. Peter hoped that the words offered him some comfort, knowing that it was normal to regret his part, even though the old man had deserved it.

“Now that story time is over,” Peter said, smirking when Stiles jumped. “Can we go back to sleeping?”

“Peter,” Chris sighed. He leant over to the lamp on the bedside table and turned it on, grinning at Peter’s hiss. “I forgot how grumpy you are when someone interrupts your beauty sleep.”

“He obviously knows he needs it,” Stiles snarked

With a grin of his own, Peter pounced on Stiles with a, “Oh no you didn’t.”

Stiles yelped, being manhandled onto his back, slightly closer to the middle of the bed as Peter held him down with a clearly fake glare. The giggle escaped before Stiles could stop it, even as he wriggled and attempted to push Peter off of him.

“Get off me you oaf,” Stiles laughed, pushing against Peter's chest again.

When Peter glanced down to Stiles, he noticed the boy’s struggling stopped and his cheeks had flushed. Raising an eyebrow, he was rewarded to an even deeper flush across the boy’s cheeks and down his neck. Following the blood flow, Peter was drawn to the pale neck, slightly arched, and begging to be bitten.

Peter leant forward, he moved slowly, willing to pull back if Stiles began to struggle again. The boy stayed mostly motionless, the barest tilt of his head to expose more of his neck as he slowly exhaled.

Chris watched, conflicted with just what he felt at the display before him. There was a part of him that wanted to protest, to pull Peter off of Stiles. It was irrational, especially since Peter and him had not been anything in such a long time. Plus, Chris knew that Stiles was young, even younger than Allison.

Yet, watching Peter bury his face in the younger man’s neck also made Chris want to do nothing but watch. To see just how far the blush would travel, to see how long Stiles would hold his breath – to hear the noises Peter makes as he breathes in the scent that was being emitted.
Chris’ lingering feelings of jealousy and worry over ages disappeared at the noise Stiles made in response to Peter’s gentle growl.

“You smell delicious,” Peter whispers in stiles’ ear, making the boy shiver.

“Peter –” Chris sighed, knowing he should put a stop to this before it went too far.

“It’s true,” Peter protested, lifting his eyes to his other mate and letting them flash an even brighter blue. “I cannot wait to devour him.”

“Do – do I get a say in this?” Stiles flushed.

“I’m sure I’ll have your enthusiastic consent my dear,” Peter said lowly. Chris held back his laugh, hearing the challenge in Peter’s tone.

“This probably isn’t what you had in mind,” Stiles panted as he wriggled again underneath Peter, looking to Chris. He was making a point to avoid Peter’s smirking gaze.

“It wasn’t,” Chris agreed, unable to stop his short laugh.

“We should – we should get back to the original plan of sleeping,” Stiles said, slowly getting his breath back and stopping the wriggling.

With a forcefully fake sigh, Peter rolled off Stiles. He had moved away from Chris, making Stiles lay in the middle of the bed. With a squawk of protest, Stiles found himself laid on his side, facing Chris as Peter moved in close behind him.

“Am I really getting force-spooned?” he asked Chris, who just laughed and turned the light back off. “Some help you are,” Stiles muttered half-heartedly, leaning back into Peter’s warm body.

Chapter End Notes

Hopefully a bit more lighthearted, Stiles is getting his character back and so is Peter. Up next is a talk with daddy - wait, daddio, I have just realised how I don’t feel 100% comfortable calling the Sheriff daddy in this story, it’s just a bit too not good. Even though the Sheriff is a daddy, most of the men on this damn show are. In case the above needs explaining, I am ill, and tired and my house terrified me earlier. Short story time! I was working on an essay, decided to give up for today and just as I closed the document, part of my shelf fell and made a huge noise. I almost died (not really, but I was startled very badly). So my house was punishing me for giving up on uni work for today.
So I took a few days break from this story. It was such a nice thing, especially after writing so much last month. I'm not sure if the super super quick updates will be around this week since I have a super important essay to write and I have a week to do it in, but writing is going to be my 'relaxing time' at the end of the day so quick quick updates might still happen.

Anyway! Here's the Sheriff!

"Calm down," Peter soothed, talking to both of the males in the room.

"He knew he would be home late," Stiles fussed. He was making the final preparations on the chicken before finally setting it to cook. "He said four."

"He probably wants us to wait and worry," Chris pointed out, trying not to show how worried he actually was at the prospect of meeting the Sheriff as his son's soulmate.

"It will be ok," Peter said for the hundredth time.

"Easy for you to say," Chris had muttered under his breath. "You heal," he added, speaking softly enough for Stiles to miss what was said even though Peter's amused eyes showed that the man heard it loud and clear.

"He's pulling up," Peter said, making Stiles jump and flail momentarily as he closed the oven door.

"Shit," Stiles cursed. "You can leave and I can say something came up? Or we could play dead, that might work! Maybe - maybe we can just hide and he'll leave -"

Chris laughed as Peter held back his amusement.

"I don't think he'll fall for that," Chris said once he got his laughter out. "He is a good officer after all."

"He's going to kill us. We're dead -"

"We'll survive darling," Peter said soothingly. He took a step backwards, putting more distance between himself and Stiles, gently pulling Chris along with him just as the front door opened.

"Stiles?"

"In here dad," Stiles called back, thankful that the shakiness he felt did not travel through to his voice.

"What's cooking?" the Sheriff asked, making his way into the kitchen. He didn't look at the occupants as he took his gun from its holster and placed it on the table, ignoring Stiles' huff of annoyance.
"We've talked about this," Stiles pointed out. "No guns where we eat."

"Kid..." the Sheriff trailed off, having finally looked up. He had glanced at his son's face before letting his eyes sweep around the room, briefly focusing on Chris before stopping on Peter.

Stiles froze, noticing his father's stiff posture and his unimpressed expression.

"Ah, Dad, these are my soul mates; Peter, Chris, my dad," he offered weakly, already regretting not fighting harder for them all to just play dead in the hopes that his dad wouldn't question who they were.

“Peter hale,” the Sheriff said, eyeing the man. “I remember you. Which means you are Chris Argent, always a few steps away when he got into no good,” he turned a critical eye on to Chris, leaving Peter's raised eyebrow. Chris stood tensed, after a minute of being stared at, he finally broke and fidgeted under the gaze.

"Sir -" Chris began weakly.

"No, I don’t want to hear it," it was said firmly, not offering any room for interruptions. Even Stiles felt frozen at the weight of his father's words. "What I want to know is how a missing coma patient is bonded to my son."

"Dad!" Stiles hissed, snapping out of feeling chastised. "You -"

"It’s a good question," the Sheriff pointed out.

"You shouldn’t just bring up things like that!" Stiles snapped.

The sheriff just raises an eyebrow

"So he didn’t want to stick around once he woke up, who can blame him? Hospitals are horrible," something in Stiles' tone and expression made his father's sternness crumble.

"Stiles," the Sheriff sighs.

"No, this was a mistake," Stiles said with a shake of his head. "Just – just forget it. I knew -"

"Stiles!"

"He didn’t mean anything bad by it darling," Peter said gently, stepping forward and placing his hand on Stiles’ back.

"It was rude," Stiles huffed. He felt hurt by the question, even if it wasn't directed at him.

"Yes, it was," Peter agreed solemnly. "But he’s looking out for you," Peter reminded him.

The Sheriff watched the interaction diligently. His hand twitched when Peter had touched his son, yet the way the boy practically caved into the slightest pressure let him know that Stiles at least wanted it. He remembered Stiles talking about the two, how he trusted Peter more than Chris. Recalling his past experience with the two boys, the Sheriff wondered just what had happened to cause that.

The Sheriff met Chris' eyes. There was a slight critical glint in them as he looked over his son's other soulmate. Chris was nothing like the boy he remembered. There was a difference in his posture, in his whole being that was obvious. The pain he had carried was obvious, but it wasn't the biggest change. The Sheriff couldn't place just what it was, he could only tell that Chris was not the boy he
had known, he looked tired, worn and as though he had seen things he couldn't forget.

"You knew we were together?" Chris asked, finally breaking the silent staring.

"You two didn't exactly hide it," the Sheriff scoffed.

Stiles was pulled out of Peter's gently coaxing as he saw Chris flush slightly. He stared at the man with an open mouth as Peter's lips twitched in amusement.

"They didn't hide it?" Stiles asked eagerly, his anger disappearing at the chance to learn more about the two men. Plus the mystery at how his father knew even though they were hiding it from their own families.

"I caught them making out," the Sheriff answered with a shrug. It wasn't a new thing and it seemed as though every new couple had been caught.

"You didn't!" Chris yelped, before turning even redder in embarrassment. He even looked shocked that he had made such an outburst.

"You had just finished then," the Sheriff rolled his eyes, finally seeing the boy he recalled within the man. "All bright-faced and clearly excitable, it doesn't take a genius to work out that you two were an item."

"Pardon the interruption," Peter said smoothly. "We had not told anyone that we were mated, so it is understandable that Chris got a bit shocked."

Peter's words seemed to have snapped Chris back into reality as he rolled his eyes.

"Now, I believe you had a question about my recovery," Peter continued, ignoring Stiles' angered look once again. "By the time I had begun to improve, the nurses were not entirely..." Peter tilted his head as he thought, "approachable," he settled on. "The nurse assigned to me helped me leave the hospital when he noticed my improvement and I spent some time recovering with a few relatives before returning to Beacon Hills to see Chris once again."

Stiles snorted at Peter's explanation.

"Your nurse disappeared," the Sheriff pointed out.

Peter suddenly adopted a concerned look that made Stiles want to laugh in shock.

"She did?"

"Yes," he nodded. "We had considered that she had abducted you. We'll need a statement to prove that wasn't the case."

"Of course," Peter nodded. "I will be more than willing."

"Oh my god," Stiles groaned, the absurdity of the situation hitting him.

"How did you meet Stiles?" the question was directed to both men, who quickly looked at Stiles with a look of horror.

"Chris talked to me for the first time the night Lydia was in the hospital," Stiles shrugged.

"You knew him before?"
"He's Allison's dad," Stiles pointed out. His father nodded, knowing how obsessed Scott had been about the girl.

"We hadn't had opportunity to talk before then," Chris said. "Stiles seemed to need a distraction from worrying about his friend."

Stiles bit his lip to stop the laugh, Chris had a fairly good poker face.

"I had heard of Stiles from my Nephew," Peter added. "Before I left town, I happened to run into him."


"Derek Hale - your Nephew," the Sheriff said, unimpressed. "Why was he talking about my son?"

Stiles froze.

"They seem to be friendly," Peter explained, frowning at Stiles' groan.

"Friendly?" the Sheriff asked, turning his attention solely to his son.

"It was before the murder charges?" Stiles offered weakly.

"Peter didn't go missing until after those, so, try again?"

"Fine, we felt bad for accusing him so we apologised and now are friendly?" Stiles said quietly, wincing when his father sighed.

"Why can't you just stay away from trouble?"

"I don't look for it!" Stiles protested.

"The woods," was all his father said, it made Stiles pause because ok, his dad had a point with that one.

Chapter End Notes

Up next is a chat with the pack and Scott worrying a bit about Stiles and how much he smells like two 'bad guys'.
Guess who finished her essay! This gal! I am so glad it’s done and it’s two days before the deadline! Granted, I spent a good 6 hours on it today as well as the past two days so I think I’m going to post this for you all and then eat chocolate and watch Bobs Burgers because I deserve a reward!
I partly want to make an excuse and say that if this chapter seems off, it’s because I wrote it over the past few days when I had given up on the essay but reading it over, it still seemed ok to post. Also reading it over made me remember just how many fuzzy feelings I had, so hopefully it’s a bit of a nice chapter to read.

"What's up buttercup?" Stiles asked into his mobile. He turned his body away from the three men in the room, even though he knew that it was more for the illusion of privacy as Scott's voice came through clear.

"A meeting was called," Scott said tensely.
"By who?" Stiles frowned, turning to give Peter a questioning look.
"Derek didn't say," Scott replied, causing Stiles to wince on the chance his father heard that.
"Ok, I shouldn't be too long," Stiles sighed. He didn't have chance to say any parting words as Scott hung up.
"How's Scott?" his dad asked.
"You know what he's like," Stiles said with a nervous chuckle.
"We'll talk later about your meetings with Derek," the Sheriff said. "I expect you back at a reasonable time."

Stiles nodded, knowing that arguing would be pointless at the moment.
"Go on then," his dad nodded.
"Um, you two coming?" Stiles asked Chris and Peter.

Chris looked over to the Sheriff, noting that the man was stood tensely.
"We'll catch up," he said, giving Peter a look telling him not to argue. "It would be better for you to drive yourself there since we'll need to talk with Derek afterwards."

Stiles narrowed his eyes, looking between the three men.

"Don't harass them," he finally said, giving his father his no-nonsense look.
"Go," the Sheriff ordered gently.

Giving each man another warning look, settling on Peter for a moment longer, Stiles grabbed his car
keys from the table and left the room muttering 'Don't let him intimidate either of you' to Peter when he was finally out of his dad's hearing range.

"You treat him with respect," the Sheriff said firmly.

"There's no question about that," Chris said calmly.

"You don't force him into anything."

"Nothing will happen that Stiles does not want," Peter agreed.

"If someone did force him to do anything, we both would make them pay," Chris added, meeting Peter's eyes for a second.

"What if it is one of you?" the Sheriff asks thinking back over Stiles' quiet words of worry about Chris. He would be lying if he didn't worry about what had caused the boy's timid nature lately and then the talk where he mentioned his worries did nothing to help ease that fear.

"Whichever one of us it was, would pay," Peter said firmly, not even taking a second to think about the answer he gave.

"You would go against each other?" the Sheriff watched Peter, thankful that he seemed to have the correct attitude to being bonded to one so young.

Chris looked at Peter, "Neither of us are the kids we were. I think we both feel like living in the past would be a mistake -"

"Life continued," Peter added in bitterly. "Nothing can change that and frankly, it was important for both of us."

"We're adults," Chris said. "We know how to differentiate between the past and the present. You cannot live in the past."

"As long as you both can promise to keep him safe," the Sheriff sighed.

"With everything we have," Peter said firmly.

With a final nod, both Chris and Peter were dismissed from the house. Neither spoke until they were settled back into Chris' car. Peter had leant over, stopping Chris from putting the car into drive with a hand over the man's.

"We wouldn't be living in the past," Peter said after a moment.

"We aren't the same people -"

"No," Peter agreed. "I do not begrudge you living your life."

"Peter," Chris sighed.

"No. We both know -"

"Shut up," Chris muttered, pulling his hand free from Peter's.

With a soft growl, Peter moved his hand to the back of Chris' neck, pulling the man closer to him and meeting him halfway. He crashed their lips together, letting the feeling of them grow once again. Before, their kisses had been passionate, frenzied, and mostly lust filled, yet the one that Peter pulled
Chris into was slow, and comforting. It was almost as if they were both reconnecting as their soulbond flared to life and rushed between them. Both men gasped at the sensation, at how it felt so right to be so close once again.

Peter felt Chris’ reluctance when the man pulled back.

"We shouldn't," he whispered, knowing Peter would hear him.

"Slowly," Peter promised, still holding onto Chris' neck lightly. He watched Chris bit his lip, wanting nothing more than to pull the man back against him.

"It isn't just us," Chris reminded him, still not making any effort to move further from Peter.

Another growl left Peter's throat as he lunged forward and buried his face into Chris' neck.

"Peter," Chris warned half-heartedly.

"You have no idea how difficult this is," Peter huffed, taking a moment to breathe in Chris' scent. It had changed over the years but the base of it all was the same as it had been.

Chris let his head fall onto Peter's shoulder, groaning slightly at the uncomfortable position they were in. Just for a few minutes, he had told himself. He would let them both get what reassurance they needed for a few minutes before they went to meet with the pack.

---

Stiles sat awkwardly in Derek's current hiding place. Around him were all the teen wolves. Isaac, Eric and Boyd all stood to one side, none talking. Scott stood closer to Stiles' position, shooting concerned looks at his friend who fidgeted in the silence.

"Who died?"

Stiles visibly relaxed. Peter had arrived. A glance showed that the whole room had tensed while Stiles had done the opposite.

"Finally," Derek had huffed.

"Allison?" Chris asked, confused upon seeing his daughter.

"Scott said it was important," the girl shrugged, she had been stood close to Scott. She had a tight hold of Scott's hand.

"Good," Peter nodded. He stepped further into the room where they were all gathered. He glanced over to Derek and said, "Gerard's dealt with."

Derek sighs audibly enough for Stiles to hear, "What did you do?"

Peter raised an eyebrow, "What a responsible alpha should have ordered when he first threatened the pack."

"You killed him," Scott gasped. He stared at Peter with a wide open mouth, a hint of betrayal showing in his eyes.

"He broke the code," Chris pointed out.

"You knew!" Allison said loudly, staring at her father.
"When?" Derek asked, his eyes were closed momentarily. When he opened them again, his eyes met Peter's, a steely glint viewable. Derek didn't seem too shocked, nor did he seem to protest that Peter was right in what he said.

"Last night," Peter supplied. "There were a handful of hunters -"

"How many?" Derek asked, not judging his Uncle's actions.

"There were five inside -"

"You helped!" Allison gasped at her father. "You - you knew and you helped!"

"Allison -" Chris sighed.

"There were ten outside," Peter interrupted. "Fifteen hunters who were all trusted by Gerard."

"What did you do with the bodies?" Derek asked.

"Hunters were burnt," Peter said. Derek nodded, knowing that similar actions were taken when his mother was the Alpha. "Gerard's body was left to be found."

"Why didn't -"

"It's important he's found," Chris interrupted Isaac's question firmly.

Derek nodded again, wordlessly agreeing with Chris' statement.

"Anything else?" he asked, looking at Chris, Peter and Stiles individually. "Stiles?" he called, snapping the boy out of his brief mental sanctuary.

"What -"

"He wants to know why you smell like Chris and I," Peter explained with a smirk, which only grew when Scott growled.

"Oh! Oh -" Stiles chuckled nervously as he avoided looking at any of the wolves in the room. "- Ger- Gerard took me again -" he said quickly, imagining ripping off a band-aid. "- Chris found me, helped me escape and Peter finished off Gerard," he ended with a shrug,

"You did a good job," Peter offered to the boy.

"Stiles!" Scott gasped, clearly wanting to know more.

"Thanks," Stiles muttered, annoyed since Scott will probably pester him until he knows what happened and if Stiles was honest, he really didn't want to lie to his best friend but how can he explain that he helped kill the guy.

"What happened?" Scott demanded.

"It wasn't like it was part of the plan, Scott," Stiles said with frowned.

"Letting yourself get caught?"

"I didn't let myself -"

"Then what happened?" Scott said again, watching Stiles with hard eyes. "Why were you there?
Why do you smell like them?" Scott asked, nodding his head towards Chris and Peter.

Stiles knew he had to be careful with what he offered. He wanted to say it was Scott's fault his dad knew, that his diverting attention and covering for him was what had caused him smelling like the two men. Yet, Stiles knew that wasn't even related to what Scott wanted to know, plus he did try to cover for him and he didn't ask any questions on where he was actually going, so Stiles guessed that he was due to explain a little.

"I was taken from the road -" which was the truth "- they rescued and with how late it was, I stayed at Peter's and so did Chris," Stiles said, thankful that it was all technically true without stating the whole story.

"It smells like you slept together - like - you know what I mean!" Scott ended with a huff.

"We ended up crashing near each other," Stiles said, once again tiptoeing around the truth, "and I woke up as a Stiles sandwich with two hot men either side of me," Stiles ended, knowing what reaction that would cause.

"Dude!" Scott gasped, staring at Stiles with wide eyes.

"You asked!" Stiles shrugged, ignoring the quiet chuckles from Erica as well as the stares from everyone else around them.

Stiles caught Peter's smirk, which made him flush. It made his mind flash back to that morning, waking up to Peter's smirk pressed against his neck as Chris laid close enough to feel his body heat. Stiles made an effort to push the memory back, not wanting the wolves around him to notice anything off.
You Knew?

Stiles sat at the table, he knew his father wanted to talk, it had been over an hour and Stiles had yet to be interrogated.

"Dad," he relented, only wanting to get the whole thing over with.

"Yes son?"

It frustrated Stiles to no end when his father used his techniques on Stiles to get the information he wanted. There was a reason John had been Sheriff for so long, he was good at getting the truth out of the people he needed to talk. Stiles was aware of the silent treatment, and the way his father had seemed to hover just close enough for Stiles to be prepared for the questions to begin.

"Just interrogate me," he sighed.

"Why would I do that?" John asked his son innocently.

"Fine!" Stiles huffed, pushing himself up from the table and he made to leave the room.

"Sit back down," his dad said firmly.

Stiles levelled his father with a glare, doing as requested.

"Want to explain Derek?"

"Not really," Stiles said honestly.

"How did you go from accusing the man of murder to being 'friendly'?" his dad asked, slipping into his Sheriff voice again.

"Scott felt bad for getting him arrested," Stiles said.

"That doesn't explain it."

"Derek is a nice guy when you get over the eyebrows and the silent broodiness," Stiles pointed out.

"Is he the one who caused the change in Scott?"

"The change?" Stiles asked faintly.

"His asthma hasn't been as bad," the Sheriff pointed out. "He's been acting different as well."

"That's -"

"Stiles. I want the truth."

"You wouldn't believe the truth," Stiles said with a sigh. It had been exhausting to constantly lie to the people around him.

"Stiles."

"Scott was bit," Stiles finally announced.

"By?" the eyebrow was raised as his father stared down his son.
"Just - trust me ok? You wouldn't believe it -"

"Stiles."

"Fine!" Stiles snapped. "Scott was bitten by a wolf and we thought it was Derek but it turned out to be Peter in his half-healed brain."

"Was that so difficult?" the Sheriff asked, taking a step back from the table.

"No - wait! What?" Stiles asked.

"Did you really think I didn't know about the Hales?"

"You - you knew?" Stiles gasped.

"Of course, your mother was rather close with Talia -"

"What?"

"So Scott is one of them now?"

Stiles just nodded, his mind not comprehending just what was actually happening.

"Have you been bit?"

"No!" Stiles answered quickly.

"Is it planned?"

"No! Jesus dad! I'm not going to be a werewolf. I said no -." Stiles cut himself off, throwing a hand over his mouth as he did so.

"Who offered it?" the Sheriff asked, his interrogation voice back in place.

"It doesn't matter -."

"Who is the Alpha?" John asked calmly.

"Derek," Stiles said with a sigh. He admitted to himself just how much his dad seemed to know. "It was Peter -."

"Peter was the Alpha," John said thoughtfully. "I thought it didn't pass on unless the Alpha died."

Stiles paused. He could explain how Peter had been the one murdering people, but he doubted that would help his father accept him. He could explain that Peter had died, and came back to life, but again, it didn't seem like a story that would cause a law-abiding citizen to like someone.

"Stiles, the truth," John said firmly.

"Fine, but just... let me finish what I need to say before you grab your gun," Stiles asked.

"I'll hear you out," John agreed with a nod.

"Ok, so... the night in the woods, Scott was bitten," Stiles began. He continued the story, how suspicious Derek had acted, always being around but doing nothing more than lurking in the shadows. Stiles paused for a second, he had explained the night where they had been caught in the school. He held his hand to stop his dad interrupting as he explained how they thought Derek was
dead, how the Alpha had been following them, waiting to get Scott to join him.

"Who was it?" John asked, catching Stiles as he tried to recall some of the details.

"We... we tracked the messages that were sent and it came from the hospital," Stiles said. "It was from Melissa's account and we knew it wasn't her so I went to check - dad wait," Stiles asked, stopping the coming interruption. "I went to check on Peter - he was Derek's family, his only family and he was in danger but..."

"Peter was the Alpha," John concluded.

Stiles swallowed around the dryness of his throat. He nodded.

"He spoke to me," Stiles said quietly. "He knew who I was and I still don't know how unless he was watching Scott more than we knew..." Stiles shook himself out of his thoughts, making a small note to ask Peter at a later point. "Derek came in, told me to leave."

John nodded, leaning back and motioning for Stiles to continue.

"Derek... a group of people took Derek, they were..."

"Hunters," John interrupted, nodding again.

"Yes," Stiles agreed, feeling less conflicted. He felt a lot lighter when he was explaining it all. "Peter - he wanted me to track Derek using the phone he had. When I helped, he offered me the bite," Stiles said, unable to stop the small smirk. "He was so shocked when I refused..."

"You didn't talk to him," John said. He remembered Stiles saying as such beforehand since he didn't want his soulmates to know who he was to them.

"I shook my head," Stiles said with a smile. "He just froze, didn't fight when I pulled my arm away from him and he - he looked like it pained him to let me go. He told me he thought I was lying before leaving to save Derek."

"You're smitten," John noted with amusement, even though the thought of his underage son being so attached to this older man was worrying.

"He - we thought he was a monster," Stiles pointed out. "He seemed to want nothing more than Scott joining him and yet he let me go and he asked me. It's what made me realise he wasn't evil," Stiles said honestly.

"So after that night?"

"Well... I went to visit Lydia and I ran into Chris," Stiles frowned for a second. "He warned me about werewolves and how dangerous they were. He's a hunter," Stiles added, realising that his dad may not know that fact.

"So you met them both," John said.

Stiles nodded.

"Why isn't Peter the Alpha now?"

"He - Derek killed him," Stiles said, emotionless as he fought back the feelings he felt when he watched Peter die. "He came back to live -"
"Like Jesus?"

"More like magic and trickery," Stiles answered faintly, staring at his dad in horror. The thought of Peter being compared to Jesus was hilarious and slightly scary.

"Ok, so he came back and now what? You're happy with letting him know that you're bonded?" John asked.

"Of course not," Stiles said honestly. "I don't - I felt Peter die," Stiles added, frowning when his father paled drastically. "That was with a half-bond, I am terrified."

"You can't let this fear hold you back," his dad said finally. "I know - Stiles, I know you've seen a lot of bad examples but you cannot let it ruin your own bonds."

"I've been spending time with them," Stiles argued.

"Yes but I know what you're like," John said firmly.

"Dad -"

"No Stiles," John interrupted. "I listened, now I will say what I want to. I don't like the fact one of your soulmates is a werewolf and the other is a hunter and you'll probably run headfirst into any danger coming your way, but you need to accept the fact soulmates are a thing," John pointed out. "Not accepting it won't do any of you any good."

"I've accepted it," Stiles said quietly. He had done, even if he hated the fact. He didn't mind that his soulmates weren't his own age. He didn't mind that they seemed to fit together well enough without him in the picture. He had accepted that the fantasy of happily ever after wouldn't be his, it was never something he had wanted, not after seeing the relationships around him crumble despite the soulbonds holding them together.

"You haven't," John sighed and shook his head at his son.

"I'm going to do homework," Stiles huffed, standing up from the table and when he wasn't called back, he left the room at a fast pace.

John stared at where Stiles had been sitting. On the table sat the boy's phone. John glanced over to the door before making up his mind. It was an invasion of privacy, but he wouldn't be looking for anything but their numbers. Stiles' phone would be easier than tracking them at the station.

He didn't exactly trust the two men, but he wanted to give them a chance to prove that they did care for his son. So John wasn't going to feel guilty as he found the two numbers and copied them into his phone, nor would he regret the short message he sent to the both of them before preparing to head back to the station. Stiles needed to be pulled from his denial before he hurt himself and John was only looking out for him.
I was slightly tempted to call this the 'Mentally Draining' chapter because jeez, it was hard to write. Writing when you are so emotionally invested in these stubborn people is not always fun!

"I'm shocked Derek didn't protest," Chris mused, not looking behind him where he knew Peter was sat at the dining table, having followed him home. He wanted to clear the last of Gerard's things from the house so it was safe for Allison to come back without worrying about some hidden trap in place.

"He wasn't thrilled," Peter drawled. "It was the right choice though and he knows that," Peter said firmly.

"I know," Chris said, he knew that Peter knew that he still had mixed feelings even though it was the right choice to make. Chris didn't grieve for his father, he felt bad for having built the man up to be more than he really was.

"Stop that," Peter had moved from his chair. He stalked up behind Chris and stood close enough for Chris to feel his body heat. The reaction was almost instant, Chris leant back, letting Peter wrap his arms around Chris' stomach. "Is Allison coming back tonight?"

Chris shook his head, "She's at Lydia's so I can sort the house out."

"Leave it?" Peter prompted. "There is nothing obvious around."

"Peter..."

"Christopher, it's been far too long since I've had you all to myself," Peter said softly, closing his eyes as he buried his face into Chris' neck. He wanted to bite at the flesh, to make Chris turn weak against him and beg for more, just as he had done in the past. He didn't. Peter did not do more than breathe in Chris as the man exposed more of his neck to Peter.

"We shouldn't," Chris repeated.

"Why not?" Peter snapped, stepping back from Chris, regretting the instant coldness in his arms. "Sure Stiles is part of this now but that doesn't mean we don't exist."

Chris turned, watching Peter warily. He was close to giving in and letting Peter have what they both wanted.

"It's too soon," Chris sighed.

"I'll go to Stiles," Peter threatened, pleased when that got a reaction out of Chris. The man had slammed his fist against the countertop, his eyes fiery.

"Don't you dare," he hissed. "He is underage -"

"He is ours," Peter pointed out, keeping his voice calm and even as he spoke.
Peter anticipated Chris lunging at him, he moved with his body, not wanting the hunter to get hurt. It sent a thrill through him when his back hit the wall, when Chris had stepped into his space. The man smelled angry - furious.

"Don't you fucking dare," Chris threatened, his arms boxing Peter in as he glared at him.

"He isn't ready," Peter agreed, letting Chris know that his only aim in those words were to rile him up, he had no plans to push Stiles into anything. "There is a difference when someone isn't ready and when someone is being stubborn."

"I hate you," Chris growled.

One side of Peter's mouth twitched as he heard Chris' heart stutter. They both knew that it was a lie. Chris stared at the wolf in front of him. Peter made no efforts to look intimidated by Chris' crowding, in fact, the man seemed to bask in the attention. His eyes stayed on Chris' as the other man took in every detail. Chris watched as Peter licked his lips, how the tongue poked out before rushing back in.

It felt like a test, the way Peter nipped at his own lip. One Chris had every intention of winning, until he met Peter's eyes. It wasn't the normal blue that shone during his day-to-day life, nor was it the supernatural blue that came out when he was angry or overly stimulated. The blue in Peter's eyes looked darker than normal, it made Chris shift where he stood, suddenly feeling like prey. The *last time* Peter had that look in his eyes was when he had tackled Chris to the ground during the full moon, the wolf was partially shifted but as soon as Chris' back was on the floor, he was human once again. Peter had taken his time stripping Chris of his clothing, only chuckling when Chris had whined about how dirty the outside was. Chris could still hear the faint howling coming from the rest of Peter's pack, he could feel every touch that Peter made, teasing him under the moonlight.

With a growl of his own, Chris pressed forward, crashing his lips against Peter's in a poor attempt at a kiss. Almost as one, they both moved so the angle was easier and their teeth didn't clash. It was frenzied, Peter and Chris both battling for control of the kiss. Chris wound his hand in Peter's hair, a faint voice in his mind warning him not to mess it up too much as Peter growled when he pulled at the hair.

It felt like all too soon, the passion left the kiss. The frenzy tamed and turned lazy, so different, yet so *right*. They both whined when they pulled apart to breathe, foreheads resting against each other, eyes still closed. Chris didn't want the moment to break, he was terrified of opening his eyes and Peter leaving again. The hand not in his hair, clung to Peter's shirt, holding tightly so the man couldn't just escape. He listened to the sounds of their breathing, along with the sound of his own heart thumping in his chest. He needed Peter. He was scared of losing Peter again.

He felt Peter shift, his hands tightening in case the man tried to flee. Instead, Chris found himself responding to another kiss, one much gentler, similar to the one they shared in the car. It was a promise, Chris could tell. Peter was promising to be there. Even if he acted like *himself*, he would be there.

Chris drew back to himself as soon as he heard his phone chime. It had been a habit ever since he became a hunter, news couldn't wait. Knowing he would regret it, he pulled away from Peter, ignoring the pain that flared in his chest as he checked his phone.

*I'm going to the station. Keep an ear out for Stiles. He's not happy.* - Sheriff

"Should I question how he has my number?" Peter mused, clearly having gotten his own message.
from the man.

"He's the Sheriff."

"He's Stiles' father," Peter counterargued, and Chris tilted his head in agreement, the boy had to have picked up his own tricks from somewhere. "Is he expecting us to run over there?" he asked, looking slightly baffled at the thought as Chris tried his best not to laugh at Peter.

"I think he accepted we might," Chris said. "Especially if Stiles asks us to."

Peter stared at Chris, he knew the moment was over. He knew when he heard the chime of the phone, another thing that brought back so many memories from their time together. One sound had the ability to freeze Chris and make him divert all his attention on saving the world. No, Peter had no chance of claiming Chris once more, that would have to wait. There was a large chance they would be needed by Stiles' side.

"Let us go rescue our fair maiden," Peter said with a heavily put on sigh.

"We should at least wait until he asks for us," Chris pointed out with a small smile.

"The boy is stubborn," Peter said with a wave of his hand.

"So the plan is to just break in?"

"No, not break in," Peter smiled innocently. "I'll merely knock on the door and when he slams it in my face, I'll go through the window and let you in before we sweep our prize off his poor feet and make sure he rests."

Chris let out a surprised laugh, mentally shaking his head, he should have known.
Stiles didn’t start his homework, he had every intention of doing so when he had left his dad. He had thrown himself into his desk chair and stared at the papers he had laid out the previous night. He had gotten his pen, held it and pulled the papers towards him. Then just stared. None of the words seemed to be words. Stiles knew that they were because why would anyone send work home to be completed if it was gibberish?

Stiles heard his father moving around, it made Stiles’ jaw clench. How dare he. How could his dad just disregard what he knew? Of course, he had accepted the fact he couldn’t just ignore Peter and Chris. He knew that their lives were entwined now.

Ok, Stiles admitted to himself that he still had a bit of work left until he was fine with knowing that his relationship with his soulmates wouldn’t be more than it currently was. He had spoken to them, he let them know who he was. That had to mean something.

Stiles was man enough to admit to himself that it didn’t have to mean something. He had been so tired of keeping it hidden that in a moment of weakness he had spoken. It wasn’t something he would regret, not yet anyway. Thanks to that weakness, Gerard was dead. Even if Stiles ended up going insane, it was worth that much.

“Stiles, I’m going to the station!” he heard his dad shout from downstairs.

It wasn’t a surprise, even if it did hurt to hear. His dad had a lot of work to do and he liked to stay busy anyway, it was easier to deal with the passing of his own soulmate. In a brief moment of horror, Stiles pictured himself in the future, he would be so fixated on everything he did that nothing else mattered. Work would be what got him through the day and he probably wouldn’t have children to distract him. His friends would all be happily bonded and Stiles would probably be alone. Dear lord, that thought made him feel nauseous. Even if, by some stroke of luck, his soulmates were open to having him in their life, they were several years older. That meant Stiles had an uncertain future.

Sure, Stiles had his doubts about living until old age, but the thought of trying to fight insanity along with the general ailments of old age was not a happy thought.

Stiles could pretty much see all the psychology majors shaking their heads at him. He knew that he had taken steps backwards, but that was normal. He had never wanted to face either of his soulmates and the reality of just who they were was enough to send anyone backwards in their mental stability. Stiles was just thankful that his panic attacks were happening multiple times a day again, that was exhausting. No, Stiles could handle the depression. He could manage it like a pro.

Stiles wondered if it was this normal to be so aware of his problems. He hoped that it was due to his super amazing skills, even though he knew that he had been through enough to notice some of the signs.

Stiles made an effort to pull himself from his thoughts before he gave into the urge to bang his head against the desk. He wasn’t going to prove his dad right, he was going to make the man feel stupid for doubting him.

A knock snapped his from that determined thought.

Peter and Chris stood outside of the front door, both stood calmly. Peter was focused on the sound of Stiles’ heart, thankful that it seemed mostly steady as the boy moved around.
“You shouldn’t just break in,” Chris said, resisting the urge to shift where he stood. For some reason, he felt as though he had aged back to a child again, feeling that worried yet excited feeling of just waiting for the door to open.

“Now Christopher,” Peter tutted. “Don’t ruin my plan.”

“It’s a stupid plan,” Chris pointed out.

“You’re just jealous you didn’t think of it.”

“Really? Why would I want to break into the Sheriff’s house? Especially when he already hates us,” Chris asked skeptically.

“If he hated us, he wouldn’t have sent us here –”

“He didn’t send us,” Chris pointed out, cutting whatever else Peter was going to say off.

“He could have warned us away,” Peter pointed out. He nudged Chris with his shoulder. “Stiles needs us.”

The door opened before Chris could respond and there stood Stiles. Chris caught the brief flash of shock before the boy shook his head and turned on his heel to go back into the house.

“Well, that went well,” Peter mused.

“The door didn’t slam,” Chris noted.

“No break in, you must be pleased.”

“You know how much I love your disappointment,” Chris teased lightly.

“He said we can come in,” Peter repeated quietly.

Chris nodded, taking the first step into the house with Peter following behind. He heard the soft click of the front door closing. He found Stiles in the living room, flipping through channels of the television.

“I know I’m irresistible but you saw me like two hours ago,” Stiles said. The words were meant to be playful, light-hearted teasing. The tone of voice didn’t match them. Chris didn’t need to glance at Peter to confirm that, he could see it in Stiles’ body language. The boy had clearly noticed, he seemed to cave in on himself for a second before he straightened his posture. “What are you doing here?”

“We wanted to see –” Peter said, only to be cut off by Stiles.

“Bullshit,” the younger man snapped.

“Your father told us you might need a bit of support,” Chris said, deciding that honesty was the best policy here.

“My – of course he did,” Stiles glowered. The boy stood up, stalking out of the room with an air of anger. Chris half expected to hear the tell-tale stomps as the teen made his way to wherever it was he was going, yet it was silent. Rather than the common anger, Stiles seemed to move with purpose, he seemed to move elegantly, controlling.

“He’s cursing his father,” Peter told Chris. “Rather colourfully,” he added with an amused tone.
“For contacting us?” Chris asked.

“For, ah, how should I say it?” Peter grinned, he tilted his head slightly. “That’s it, ‘how dare that meddling bastard get involved’.”

If Chris were a better man, he wouldn’t have found his own amusement in the words Peter had repeated. Then again, if Chris were a better man, he wouldn’t be happy to have Peter around him when he was clearly still sadistic.

“I am curious as to what his father said to make him so angry,” Peter mused. Chris couldn’t help but agree, Stiles normally showed nothing but love and adoration for his father, for it to have changed so dramatically must have been caused by something more than Peter and Chris showing up.
When Stiles returned, it was with a forced fake smile and his phone clutched in a tight grip. His knuckles were white around the phone. Chris didn’t need to be a werewolf to know that the boy was radiating anger even if he pretended he wasn’t.

“Why are you so angry with him?” Peter asked. The boy had his phone clutched tightly in his fist, his knuckles white with how tight he was holding it.

“He went through my phone,” Stiles growled, throwing himself down on the couch. “He didn’t even try to make it look like it didn’t.”

“Don’t you go through his things?” Chris asked in amusement, recalling the amount of times Allison had mentioned recent crimes that Stiles had find out from his police scanner and the police records.

“Nothing as personal,” Stiles hissed. “I only do that when I need information to keep people safe.”

“Maybe he thought this would keep you safe,” Chris suggested, refusing to buckle under the weight of Stiles’ glare turned to him.

“By telling two old men to hang out with his underage son, sure,” Stiles said harshly. The small satisfaction he felt at Chris’ wince was short lived as Peter stepped forward.

Peter took the insult in his stride as he gracefully sat down next to Stiles. He didn’t say anything when the angry boy leant towards him instinctively. He did, however, send a knowingly smug look over to Chris.

“I’m sure he was only trying to do what he felt was best,” Chris tried, even though it sounded fake to his own ears.

“Just sit down and look pretty,” Peter sighed with an eye roll, both men grinned when Stiles laughed.

“Just a warning, Peter gets grumpy when cuddle time is cut short,” Chris said as he sat down on Stiles’ other side.

“Cuddle time?” Peter repeated, unamused. He had never been the one to insist on them spending time together entwined.


“No, we don’t.” Peter huffed, wrapping his arms around Stiles and pulling him close. He sent a glare to Chris, trying to convey just how much he blamed the man for that comment. “You could get food,” Peter suggested to Chris, his arms tightening slightly around Stiles as though making a claim on the boy.

“What I if wanted to cuddle him instead?” Stiles asked, unable to help himself from trying to rile Peter up. It was a startling difference that hit him with Peter’s arms around his body, the anger had drained and he felt lighter.

“Order something,” Peter huffed, burying his face into Stiles’ neck.

Stiles wriggled in Peter's arms, moving slightly away as he held out his phone with a declaration of ‘app,’ towards Chris. He gasped as Peter raised his head slightly from his next and rumbled ‘clever
Once Peter had been satisfied, he moved Stiles easily so the boy was closer to Chris and pressed close enough to the two men to touch. Chris moved his arm behind Stiles’ head, reaching over to touch Peter’s neck as Stiles began to scroll through the delivery app, looking at the choices. Peter had leant closer, making sure not to smother Stiles with his weight as he read over the boys shoulder, making comments on what he would be willing to eat.

“He’s a food snob,” Chris murmured close to Stiles’ ear, pretending not to notice how the boy shivered at the action.

“I have standards,” Peter snapped haughtily. “Unlike some,” he added with a side glance towards Chris.

“I’m not fussy,” Chris countered. “I’ll eat what I’m given until it’s truly horrible.”

Peter rolled his eyes, focusing back on what Stiles was doing. The amusement he was showing was still slightly tainted with hints of his anger towards his father. Peter insisted that they pay for the food when it arrived rather than letting Stiles pay with whatever money he had in his bank.

“What caused the tension between you and your father?” Peter asked, watching as both of the males froze. Chris shot Peter a warning look as Stiles tensed between them.

“No idea what you mean,” Stiles said, trying to sound casual even as his body language betrayed him.

“Now Stiles, don’t lie. We were doing so well,” Peter lightly chastised him.

“Fuck you,” Stiles snapped.

“Not until you grow up,” Peter snapped back. Chris gripped Peter’s neck tightly, not sure what the man was trying to accomplish. He didn’t want the two to argue too much and it was against everything Peter had said before to goad the boy like this.

“It’s not my fault you are destined to be connected to a child,” Stiles pointed out, his voice emotionless.

“ Enough,” Chris growled, making both Peter and Stiles turn to him in annoyance.

“He’s acting like a child,” Peter dismissed.

“I will set you on fire again,” Stiles hissed.

“Try it,” Peter growled.

“Stop. That is enough,” Chris snapped. “We are not going to resort to petty fighting. No one is setting anyone on fire. Is that clear?”

“I’ll behave if he does,” Peter shrugged. “He needs to get out his anger in healthy ways.”

“Get out,” Stiles hissed. “I don’t want any of this ok. I don’t want to have a soulmate let alone two. Just leave me alone! I don’t want you here!”

“That’s a lie,” Peter said calmly. “You want us here, even if you don’t want us as soulmates.”

Chris refused to breathe. He didn’t want to acknowledge how much that hurt. He had assumed that
Stiles had something against soulmates but to hear Peter said it so simply – no, it wasn’t the time to focus on that.

“Why don’t you want a soulmate?” Chris asked, trying to keep his voice steady. The glance from Peter told him that he didn’t master that.

“They aren’t exactly the happily ever after that they promise,” Stiles said bitterly.

Chris didn’t have a response to that, there were so many reasons to view soulmates as less than ideal. It was just a shame that someone so young would have the jaded views that the elders sometimes got. Chris could remember his own hope and excitement when he had thought of his own soulmate, even after meeting Peter, he still held onto that hope everything would be as good as promised.

Peter looked between his two mates. Chris had been trying to withhold his hurt and sadness, whilst Stiles had embraced them as if they were commonplace. It was easy to tell the difference between the two’s scents, the sadness tasted the same yet so different as they both held them differently. The wolf inside whined pitifully, not wanting either of them to feel such sadness. He wanted to bundle them both up and keep them safe from the world, even though they would protest and fight. Peter knew that both men were strong and he wouldn’t have it any other way, it just frustrated his wolf more than was helpful.

Stiles knew that he had said something that caught both men off guard as the silence grew. Peter didn’t seem shocked, yet the quietness seemed telling enough. Chris was a bit easier to read as he stood overly still, he was breathing shallowly, his chest rising faster than normal. Seeing the two made Stiles realise just how much he had already gone back on what he had agreed. By admitting this much, he had made it painstakingly clear that he hadn’t accepted them as his.

Stiles refused to take back what he had said. Peter had started the whole thing. Even if he knew that the fire comment had been way too far. He had felt the pang of regret as soon as the words had left. He couldn’t be weak enough to take that back though, not when Peter was pushing him.

“My dad doesn’t think I have accepted –”

“You haven’t,” Chris said simply, interrupting Stiles.

“Rude,” Stiles frowned. The frustration he felt towards Peter had mostly disappeared even though he really wanted to hold onto that feeling. “You’re both here,” he pointed out.

“Because your father pretty much told us to come,” Peter pointed out dryly.

“We can feel that you’re fighting the bond,” Chris said gently.

“I’m not fighting it!” Stiles huffed, ready to push himself up from the couch.

“You are,” Peter said, wrapping his hand around Stiles’ arm. “It’s evident in your behaviour. Your behaviour has been a lot more negative and it’s getting worse.”

“Trauma,” Stiles shrugged, not fighting against Peter’s hold, yet still not letting himself relax into it.

“You’re fighting the fact you want more contact with us, it’s an instinct to reinforce the bond when it’s weak,” Chris explained.

“Again, trauma can do that,” Stiles said. “I want comfort but after everything…”

“You know that isn’t the full story,” Peter pointed out. “You’re explaining it away in whatever way
you can and it will backfire on you soon.”

Stiles didn’t respond, he couldn’t. He knew that Peter had a point. He wanted to ignore all of his worries but he didn’t feel as though he had an actual place anywhere with the two men.
When Peter left Chris and Stiles in order to answer the door and pay for the food, the room was bathed in silence. Stiles had been stuck inside his own mind as they waited, the television offering little to distract him from his reflection. He was still angry. He was so angry. He couldn’t believe his dad’s actions and then Peter adding on top of that anger did little to help. Having calmed somewhat, Stiles realised that it was a step forward, it wasn’t fear, it wasn’t a numbness that he had been feeling. The intense anger that made him threaten death to someone was one of the first real emotions that he had felt, and Stiles hated the fact he was sure Peter knew it.

“What are you doing?” Stiles’ voice was rough.

“We’re going to eat,” Chris responded evenly.

“No, why are you here?” Stiles asked.

“You don’t want us to leave,” Chris pointed out, sounding so sure of himself as he said it.

“That isn’t your choice to make,” Stiles replied, he wanted to put more emotion into that, to make it sound less defeated.

“Someone needs to make sure you don’t die,” Peter said lightly, returning back to the room with the bag of Chinese in his hand.

“Peter,” Chris said firmly. “Go get plates.”

Peter raised an eyebrow but didn’t argue as he left Chris with Stiles.

“How are you feeling?”

Stiles gave the man a somewhat bitter smile, “Like shit,” he answered.

“I can imagine so,” Chris said with a nod. “I never did thank you,” Chris mused, making Stiles frown in confusion. “What you said to Allison really helped her. She needed to hear it.”

Stiles shrugged, not meeting Chris’ eyes. He had only done it because Scott had gotten on his nerves, it was easier to distract him with Allison around since he only had eyes for her.

“How much do you know about soul bonds?” Chris asked suddenly.

“Why?” Stiles asked, confused about the rapid change of conversation.

“If the education system hasn’t changed much, you’ll have missed a lot,” Chris pointed out. “Most of the knowledge was obtained through brutal experiments –”

“Chris,” Peter warned, sticking his head around the door frame.

“He needs to know,” Chris pointed out.

Peter paused for a moment, his eyes not leaving Chris’ before he nodded and nodded his head towards the room behind him.

“I shouldn’t be much longer, just plating up food, if you can wait a few moments,” Peter said.
“I’ll help,” Chris said, standing up and following Peter into the kitchen.

Stiles couldn’t stop himself from standing once Chris had left, nor could he stop himself from listening in to the two men talk to each other in soft tones.

“We should leave,” Chris suggested. Stiles felt his heart ache at the sadness in Chris’ voice.

“Only with him,” Peter said firmly.

“You heard what he said,” Chris sounded tired, as though more had just taken place than a small argument.

“That is exactly why we cannot just leave,” Peter pointed out. “He is still figuring things out and if we leave, that will just prove his beliefs right.”

“Why did you have to do that,” Chris sighed.

“He needs to get his anger out. Clearly, he’s seen people deal badly with the loss of their soulmate,” Peter didn’t have to specify who, Chris had already gathered that much. It made him wonder just how the Sheriff had coped after his wife passed, he knew Peter wondered the same.

“At least he’s still talking,” Chris noted. Stiles let himself pull a face, it was obviously clear how much effort the two of them were putting into him and he was just trying to push them away.

Peter chuckled, “For now, even if it’s death threats.”

“He won’t kill you,” Chris pointed out.

“I’m sure he would if he really wanted to,” Peter mused lightly. “He seems to have gotten the ruthless part of his personality back. I have missed his smart-ass comments.”

Stiles backed up, everything that he had overheard was too much for him to deal with. He wanted to be angry. He really wanted to hold onto whatever anger he could, just so that feeling stayed. He didn’t need the guilt of them trying and seeming to care. It was too much. He needed to get away. Perhaps space would make his feelings stop, he would rather be numb than feel just how much of a disappointment he must be for them. He messed so much up and if it weren’t for him then they would probably be back together and in a happy relationship without worrying about him. He didn’t want them to hate him for something none of them could control.

Stiles felt his eyes well up. His heart was beating fast. Before he knew it, he was at the front door, it open in front of him as he prepared to run. He didn’t manage to get far before Peter was gripping his arm tightly.

“Where are you going?” his eyes were glowing in the darkness and Stiles could see Chris not far behind. There was a wariness in the hunters’ eyes as he watched. Chris seemed to anticipate Stiles bolting the second he could, and from the grip Peter had on his arm, it seemed as though he agreed.

Stiles shrugged, trying to shake off Peter.

“I thought we agreed that verbal responses were the norm for us now,” Peter said carefully, his eyes losing their supernatural glow.

It should have been easy, Stiles could tell them to leave him. That he wanted to just walk around the neighbourhood. He needed the space. Granted, Stiles knew that whatever he would say would feel like a lie. His body and his mind were so against each other than no matter what he chose it would
feel wrong. He knew that he looked on the verge of breaking down, that they would know he was panicking.

“Stiles,” Chris said, having moved closer. “Where were you planning on going?”

Stiles shrugged again. It was the truth. He didn’t know. He had considered just walking around, passing houses and seeing how many lit windows he could count until his mind was blissfully quiet. Though, he didn’t like the thought of running into anyone that could also be out. He had considered the preserve, but with how dark it was now and the whole supernatural creatures, it probably wasn’t the best plan. He just wanted somewhere where he didn’t have to think.

Peter and Chris exchanged a glance, one that was filled with their own concern for the boy.

“Let’s go back inside,” Chris suggested. “We don’t have to talk. We can just eat.”

Stiles didn’t have the will to fight against them, not when Peter was still touching him. He found himself nodding, before being led back into the overly bright house. Once inside with the door closed behind them, Peter released Stiles, who frowned at the lack of contact.

Peter could hear the rise of Stiles’ heart as soon as he let go. That small change was not reassuring as the already fast rate had increased. Before he had chance to do anything, Chris had stepped forward and embraced Stiles, he didn’t hold tightly, letting the boy break free if he wished.

As soon as Chris’ arms came around Stiles, he sunk into the hold. Letting the tears overwhelm him as he broke. He cried for the first time in a while, so many mixed thoughts spinning around in his head. He hated how much effort that the two were putting into him and he hated how much effort he was using to seem ok. As all of the feelings came to the forefront of his mind, memories flashed behind his eyes and not for the first time that night, Stiles wished that he still felt barely anything. He wished that nothing bad had happened to him. He hated Peter for involving him in the supernatural. Mostly, he hated how weak he felt against everything.
Happy Christmas Eve! Or Christmas if you guys are ahead of me/reading this later on. If you don't celebrate it, I really hope you have a great weekend!
(Yes, I posted the exact same thing on Safe Space, I am that lazy but it still counts!)

As soon as the tears began, Chris tightened his hold around Stiles. He felt the weak hold on his t-shirt and Stiles buried his face into his shoulder. Chris didn’t offer any words, knowing that they would fall on unhearing ears, as he met Peter’s eyes. Both men knew how much this was needed, even though they both wished it wouldn’t happen.

Peter took a step forward, not leaving Chris’ eyes as he wrapped his arms around Stiles, tucking them in between the two men’s stomach’s as he plastered his back against Chris’ arms and Stiles’ back. Peter could smell the salty tears, along with Stiles’ pain and self-hatred. Peter buried his head into Stiles’ neck, letting Chris rest his head on top of his. He felt helpless, Stiles was hurting and neither of them could do anything to help.

Chris closed his eyes tightly when Peter whined deep in his throat. The sound was full of pain and it pulled at the bond around Chris' heart. Even through the weakened bond, Chris could feel the imprint of Stiles’ pain that Peter had echoed.

“I’m sorry,” Stiles managed to gasp through the tears that wrecked his body. He could feel Peter and Chris against him and it helped ease some of the pain but it wasn’t as much of a difference as it had been before when he had panicked.

“It’s ok,” Chris whispered as Peter rumbled in an almost purr. “We’re all going to be ok. You are going to be ok.”

Stiles didn’t have the energy to shake his head as Chris continued to repeat those words like a mantra. He couldn’t believe him, no matter how tempting the words were. He couldn’t trust the two of them enough to let them have such a large amount of power over his sanity. He couldn’t risk that, and that was painful to acknowledge. Yet right now, right in this moment where he was pressed between the two men, Stiles wanted more than anything, to let himself believe. He wanted to trust them. He wanted to have his happily ever after that he had been promised so many times as he grew up. He wanted to be happy.

Peter whined again, sensing how Stiles was only getting more and more worked up. He moved one hand until it was under Chris’ shirt and touching the man’s side, the feel of the skin helped Peter calm his own growing tension.

It was almost as though an actual lightbulb flashed above Peter’s head when he stepped back. Stiles’ whined protest only stopped when Peter came forward and touched Stiles’ back.

“We need to move him,” Peter murmured quietly, knowing that Stiles was too far gone to really understand just what was being said without focusing completely on it. “Skin-to-skin will help him calm down –”
“Peter!” Chris hissed. “We can’t –”

“I know, trust me,” Peter said, he met Chris’ eyes.

Chris could recall Stiles almost begging them to let him leave his t-shirt on, yet meeting Peter’s eyes showed no hidden agenda in the man. Chris knew that it would help, but he didn’t want to shatter what trust they had managed to build.

“Can you handle getting him upstairs or do you want me to?” Peter asked, aware that Chris was only human.

“I can do it,” Chris said firmly. Stiles had melted into him, he couldn’t just leave him and have him wonder why in the blurred thought process he undoubtedly had.

Peter watched as Chris spoke quietly next to Stiles’ ear, letting the boy know just what he was going to do. Peter anticipated Chris moving his arms down and hooking them under Stiles’ thighs before pulling the boy off his feet with a stifled groan.

“I can take him,” Peter reminded him, helping steady Stiles against him.

“I’ve got him,” Chris said.

Peter nodded, letting him lead the way. He stayed barely a step behind Chris, prepared to steady the both of them if need be. It made Peter realise just how young Stiles was when Chris had him held so close, muttering what he hoped was reassuring words into the boy’s hair.

“Three more steps,” Peter warned as Chris almost reached the top.

Chris didn’t respond, even though Peter knew that he had taken note of the information. Instead, Chris just continued to lead the way, letting Peter direct him to which room was Stiles’.

“How are we going to do this?” Chris asked, finally giving into the fact that Peter probably had a plan already in place.

“Take his hoodie off him,” Peter murmured quietly. “Hopefully he’s in a short-sleeved t-shirt and we can get as much contact as we can without making him uncomfortable.”

“It isn’t right,” Chris argued half-heartedly.

“It’s the best we can do at the moment,” Peter pointed out.

Chris sat Stiles down on the bed, keeping himself close by as Stiles continued to hold onto his shirt.

“Take it off,” Peter said lowly.

“What?” Chris asked, turning his head fast to meet Peter’s gaze.

“He’s not going to calm if you’re away from him,” Peter pointed out. “He needs something, your top is covered in your scent –”

“He isn’t a wolf,” Chris pointed out, his hands already having jumped to start unbuttoning the shirt.

“He isn’t,” Peter agreed. “Neither of you are, but you both still have such amazing instincts. You both would make magnificent wolves.”

Chris rolled his eyes, having unbuttoned his shirt, before slipping it off and letting Stiles’ hands drop
with the top still grasped in them.

“Now the hoodie,” Peter prompted, his eyes taking in every change that had occurred to Chris’ body. He made note of every new scar and the clearly defined muscles that were only beginning to show in the past.

“Peter,” Chris said.

“Christopher,” Peter replied, in the exact same warning tone. Having now gotten his fill of observing Chris, Peter had pulled his own t-shirt off as Chris slowly unzipped Stiles’ jacket. Slipping the boy’s arms out of the fabric was a task that required Peter’s aid, but Stiles did visibly calm when his flailing hand had made contact with Peter’s bare chest.

Once free, and both men had stepped back, another loud sob had broken free from Stiles, causing Peter and Chris to exchange their own concerned glance.

“Him in the middle,” Chris ordered, nodding at Peter’s own nod. Peter didn’t bother stating that his plan had been to do just that, but he let Chris have it.

Stiles had practically jumped on Chris when he had touched Stiles’ arm. Making quiet reassuring hushes, Chris climbed onto Stiles’ small bed and pulled the boy back towards his chest.

“He has the smallest bed in the world,” Peter groaned, not sure just how he would be able to fit into the remaining space.

“Come on you baby,” Chris huffed, running a hand down Stiles’ arm, glad that the sobs had turned into snifflies.

“If you get pushed out, I’m not going to listen to your complaints,” Peter warned, picking Stiles up as he laid down before moving the boy so he was sprawled across the two of them.

“And I’ll put a bullet in you,” Chris deadpanned.

“Now dear, no shooting anyone,” Peter mocked, mirroring the same thing he had said to Stiles.

“Shut up then,” Chris groaned.

Peter glanced over to Stiles, seeing the red rimmed eyes and the exhausted expression. Thankfully, the tears did seem to have stopped for the most part. Seeing the improvement, Peter pulled one of Stiles’ hands to his bare stomach and let his fingers wander over the boy’s arm.

“Talk me out of bringing him back and killing him again,” Peter prompted Chris, not moving his eyes from Stiles’ face.

“It wouldn’t be enough,” Chris said. “No matter how many times you managed it. He would still deserve more.”

The two fell silent as Stiles continued to battle his own emotions. Neither tried to bring him out of it before he was ready, it was something he needed to do on his own. They were just offering him whatever comfort they could whilst they stayed by his side.

“Is he going to be ok?” Chris asked, his voice quiet as if he was worried voicing the question would cause the world around them to shatter.

“Of course,” Peter said, so confident in his response that Chris calmed. “You told me yourself that he
was strong. You don’t need to add my thoughts to that.”

“It’s nice to be reassured though,” Chris pointed out, a wry smile on his face.

“He’s going to get through it and he’ll kick ass at the end of it all, I guarantee you,” Peter said.
“So why did you beg me to come and meet you without Scott?” Allison asked, leaning against her hand. She was sat at the café table, elbow on the table as she waited for her hot chocolate to cool.

“I needed to get out,” Stiles said, slowly turning his cup of coffee in his hands as he avoided meeting Allison’s eyes.

“What’s wrong?” Allison asked, and it was then that Stiles knew he made the right choice. As ruthless as Allison could be, she did care about her friends. He knew that she would keep what he said to herself.

“I keep messing things up with my soulmates,” Stiles admitted.

“So, soulmates?”

“I have two,” he explained.

“Oh, ok then,” Allison nodded, not letting her surprise last long enough to focus on it. “How have you been messing it up?”

Stiles avoided the question by taking a drink, aware that Allison was watching as he did so. He was tempted to keep the tale as half told, and only say the important aspects since one of the men were her father, but Stiles knew that he did need to talk to someone about it all.

“My soulmates are older,” Stiles said, putting his cup back on the table. “They were together when they were younger… there is so much history between them –”

“That’s them,” Allison pointed out. “Why did you need to get away from their history?”

“It isn’t just them,” Stiles admitted, he met Allison’s eyes and it was refreshing to see no judgement looking back at him. “I – I kept – I refused to talk to them for a long time,” Stiles said softly, knowing that this was the thing that most people would be horrified at. Stiles waited, knowing that Allison would have something to say with how she had tilted her head. He prepared himself for the worse.

“What were you scared of?” Allison asked with a frown.

Stiles released his breath, thankful that Allison seemed to understand that much at the very least.

“Thank you,” he whispered.

“For what?” Allison asked, seeming to grow more concerned as time grew.

“Not calling me crazy,” Stiles said.

“Did someone –”
Stiles cut her off, not wanting to dive back into that just yet.

“I – everyone says that soulmates are special. That they make our world worth living and it stops everything bad but they don’t keep in mind how bad it is when someone loses their soulmate,” Stiles said. “I would rather not have one than have one and worry about losing them,” he explained. He was relieved by the lack of confusion on Allison’s expression.

“Your dad…” Allison guessed before letting herself trail off.

“Losing mom broke something inside of him,” Stiles admitted, saying the words aloud for the first time. “He – he only made it due to alcohol and work. He couldn’t even look at me for the first year or two. I don’t want to lose myself like that.”

“You wouldn’t,” Allison said, sounding so sure of herself when she said it.

“I thought that about him,” Stiles said with a bitter tone.

Allison took a drink, letting Stiles stew in his sudden annoyance without battling him. It was clear that he was fighting against a lot.

“Soulmates are thought to keep each other strong,” Allison pointed out. “You are strong without them.”

“I’m really not,” Stiles said quietly.

“You’ve done so much Stiles,” Allison said sincerely. “You are stronger than you think and that is without them.”

“I told them that I didn’t want them,” Stiles admitted, thinking back to how devastated Chris had been after that. Stiles heard Allison’s slow exhale.

“How did they take it?”

Stiles shook his head in response as he took another drink.

“Ok,” Allison said slowly. “Is it really that bad?”

“I wouldn’t be surprised if they gave up,” Stiles said honestly. “I want them to because it would be easier but god, I want to hold them close and never let them leave.”

Allison reached over the table and held Stiles’ hand.

“Why are you fighting it so much? I know you’re scared but you must know that it isn’t all bad,” Allison pointed out.

“I know,” Stiles sighed. “I – I don’t even know anymore,” Stiles admitted, looking at their hands. “I know logically that it isn’t bad but… I just can’t let it happen in case something happens and I’m just left a shell of myself. That sounds so stupid.”

“It doesn’t,” Allison said gently, squeezing Stiles’ hand. “It’s the anxiety –”

“I know,” Stiles snapped before he thought it over. He sunk into his seat, pulling his hand away from Allison’s. “Sorry,” he muttered.

“It’s ok,” she said. “You aren’t stupid. No matter how much you’re telling yourself.”
“I feel it,” Stiles sighed.

“Do you want to tell me who they are?” Allison asked.

“Promise not to hate me?” Stiles asked, watching as Allison raised an eyebrow over her cup. “Fine, it’s your dad and Peter.”

If he weren’t so concerned, he would have found Allison’s reaction amusing. She had taken a drink when Stiles had spoken, causing her to splutter as she tried to swallow before spitting the contents of her mouth out.

“My – my dad?” Allison stuttered, eyes wide. “I thought – wait – Peter! You said they were together before! Oh my god –” Allison continued to gasp as her voice rose in volume. “I cannot believe it – how did – my – when?”

“Before the Hale fire,” Stiles offered.

“Oh my god, I knew he wasn’t but oh god,” Allison paled.

“Are you ok?” Stiles asked, concerned.

“My – Chris isn’t my biological father,” Allison said quietly. “But I didn’t know –”

“I’m sorry,” Stiles said.

“It isn’t your fault stupid,” Allison said with a shake of her head. “He would have been underage by a few years if he was,” she pointed out. “I just thought him and mom… I thought they were soulmates.”

“I don’t know what to say,” Stiles said. “He hasn’t talked about her but he did love her –”

“I know, it just – god, it explains why he’s been ok,” Allison shook her head again. “I wondered why… but Peter?”

“He isn’t that bad,” Stiles said weakly. “They both stayed over last night, my dad didn’t even say anything. Peter is still a dick, one that I threatened to set fire to again…” Stiles trailed off, noting Allison’s horrified face.

“You what?” she gasped. “Stiles! The man has burnt twice, he lost his family in a fire. That was so –”

“I know,” Stiles agreed pitifully. “I went too far. He was pushing me and I know it isn’t an excuse but I just snapped.”

“Stiles,” Allison sighed.

“I don’t want them near me –”

“No, you’re scared of them getting too close,” Allison pointed out. “You’re focusing on all the negatives and not even the relevant ones,” she added. “Peter is a murderer and my dad has his own list of issues, let alone being connected to the supernatural completely because of them but no, you’re focused on the fact you might not be strong enough to survive losing a werewolf and a hunter. It’s ridiculous and I know you know better than that.”

“Allison,” Stiles interrupted, knowing that she had a point even if he wanted to ignore it. “Peter… he only hurt the people that helped with the fire, Scott was – it wasn’t an accident but he wasn’t
completely sane then –”

“I know,” Allison nodded. “Just like my dad has his own problems, he gets too stubborn and sometimes he deals with things in the wrong way –”

“Just like Peter,” Stiles pointed out, a small smile.

“Just like you,” Allison added. She watched as Stiles looked away, focusing again on his drink. “Ignoring that you might lose them, would it be so bad to act friendly with them?”

“You know soulmates are more than that,” Stiles frowned.

“They’re what we make them,” Allison disagreed. “Now, answer.”

“They aren’t bad people,” Stiles relented. “They’ve been amazing actually.”

“They killed for you,” Allison added, smiling slightly at Stiles’ open mouth. “I’m not that dumb,” she added. “Ever since you disappeared, you were acting different and then they both helped killed Gerard and you were with them. It adds up, even if everyone else doesn’t see it,” she pointed out.

“I didn’t ask them to,” Stiles said quietly, knowing it sounded weak. “I didn’t think they would do anything,” he settled on.

“What did he do?” Allison asked hesitantly.

Stiles shook his head.

“Ok. They wouldn’t have done it if they didn’t care –”

“I makes it hard to hate them,” Stiles groaned, glaring as Allison sniggered.

“I’m sure they don’t want you to hate them,” she teased. “Please don’t try to act like you’re in charge of me,” she added with a smile.

“I’m not – we won’t end up like that,” Stiles stressed.

“From what I know of Peter, he won’t stop until he gets what he wants and from what Scott says, he is really keen on you,” she pointed out.

“Really?” Stiles asked, he did recall Peter being more eager to develop the bond.

Allison nodded, “My dad wouldn’t stick around if he didn’t care,” she added.

“Why would they care?” Stiles muttered. “I’m not exactly soulmate material.”

“Stiles,” Allison said softly. “You are an amazing person and anyone would be privileged to have you as their soulmate. You’ve done so much for Scott and imagine what you could manage for your soulmates if you needed to.”

“There isn’t much I can offer –”

“You totally can!” Allison said loudly, making Stiles hiss as people turned to stare at them. “You are a damn catch! Whatever they did to make you doubt that is all their fault!”

“They didn’t do anything,” Stiles muttered.
“Well pull your head out of your ass and see the truth!” Allison exclaimed.

“There isn’t anything to see,” Stiles complained.

“We’ll see,” Allison said, her eyes dancing in the light.
“Why did I let you talk me into this?” Stiles groaned.

“You wanted help,” Lydia pointed out.

“Not a makeover,” Stiles complained, sending a glare to Allison when she laughed.

“Are you complaining?” Lydia asked, her tone disbelieving as she raised an eyebrow at Stiles.

“I have to take all of this home!” Stiles pointed out. “It’s so much.”

The three of them were at Lydia’s house. Having just returned from their full day of throwing clothes at Stiles and having him act like a life-sized moving mannequin for them. After his chat with Allison, she had proposed a trip around some shops that Lydia had asked her to go along with. Stiles regretted agreeing as soon as the words left his mouth. Allison’s grin had widened and her eyes twinkled with mischief. She had explained the situation to Lydia with a ‘Stiles needs to impress his soulmate’, and Lydia had taken that with her own brand of torture as she dragged Stiles from store to store.

“So, what’s the plan?” Allison asked, ignoring Stiles’ ‘shut up’ glare as Lydia refocused her gaze on Stiles, waiting for his response.

“I don’t have one, you know that –”

“Oh honey, you need one,” Lydia sighed. “What is she like?”

"Not a she,” Stiles huffed, he sent a glare over to Allison when she sniggered.

"He?" Lydia asked, a slight hint of shock in her voice. "Didn't know you were serious about guys."

"He wasn't," Allison laughed. "I'm sure it was just as much of a shock to him."

"He did keep asking Danny if he was attracted to guys," Lydia said, seemingly speaking her thoughts. "So how are you planning on winning over your soulmate?"

"I'm not," Stiles protested.

"He is," Allison interrupted, sending a stern look over to Stiles. "He's got no idea and it isn't fair on them to keep pushing them away."

Stiles watched as Lydia's eyebrows raised, he mouthed 'them' to Stiles who looked away sheepishly.

"Wardrobe is sorted," Lydia mused. "Date?"

"Not planned as far as I know," Allison said.

"I am here!" Stiles snapped.

"Do you have a date planned?" Lydia asked him.
Stiles wilted until Lydia's glare, feeling less confident than he had in the past day. How could he explain just why he couldn't do that? He didn't want to explain to Lydia how Peter didn't seem as bad as everyone thought, not after he _used_ her to return to life.

"You don't," Lydia sighed. "What are they like? Any favourite places? Similar taste in films? Food?"

"Lydia!" Stiles snapped. "I'm not taking them on a date! It isn't like that," the words were forced.

"What is it like then?" Lydia asked, settling back in her seat and waiting for Stiles.

"I - it isn't going to go anywhere beyond friends if we even get _there_."

"Why?" Allison asked.

"They're too old," Stiles snapped, knowing that he had hinted as such to Allison before. She just stared back with an unimpressed look as Lydia turned curious.

"How much?"

"Fifteen years," Allison said simply, ignoring Lydia's head turning to her. "At least anyway."

"How - you know!" Lydia frowned.

"Enough!" Stiles snapped, glaring at both Allison and Lydia, neither of which seemed affected by it. "They were together, there is the age difference and the issue that I'm human when one of them isn't and I can't even begin to think of how long it would take before we all killed each other!"

"I don't know if I should ask," Lydia said with a shake of her head. "Just take them on a date."

"I'm not asking out two adults who probably don't even want a teenager involved in whatever the fuck they have going on."

"Are they really that bad that you don't want to be connected to them?" Allison asked softly.

"It isn't them," Stiles protested.

"He doesn't think he deserves them," Lydia rolled her eyes. "Just ask them separately."

"I'm not -"

"You said that you didn't want to push them away," Allison pointed out.

"You know what? I'm not going to sit here and take this," Stiles said firmly.

"Stiles!" Allison shouted when he stood up. "You don't need to leave."

"My life is _my_ business," he stressed. "If I don't want things to move further, then it won't happen."

"Ok Stiles," Lydia said calmly. "We won't pry."

"Thank you," Stiles said stiffly. He still planned to leave, granted on a slightly more positive note at the moment.

He bid his goodbyes to the both of them and thanked anyone who was listening that they had taken his jeep out to raid the shops, it made it slightly less awkward to leave without the addition of bags falling off his arms. He also thanked the world that neither of the girls had super-enhanced hearing
since he spent a minute hitting his head against the steering wheel.

He sat with his head rested on the wheel, staring down at his knees as he thought. He knew that he had gone too far beforehand, then he had a breakdown in front of them and Allison was right when she said he wanted them. He just didn't know what to do. Asking them out seemed too simple, too childish. They were grown men.

He had it with everyone telling him to take a more productive step to building their relationship, it wasn't their choice. There was a part of Stiles' mind that considered driving and not stopping. He could leave. That would stop his conflicted feelings. He would be far enough away that any relationship wouldn't work. They wouldn't be able to find him and appear out of thin air.

He would be alone.

Just like he wanted.

So, why did the thought hurt? Why did Stiles feel his heart break when he considered neither man being close to him?

Stiles grabbed his phone out of his pocket, not knowing exactly who he was hitting the call button on until the voice rang out.

"Stiles? Are you ok? What's wrong?"

"Chris," his voice was soft when he spoke. Stiles wanted to hit himself, he sounded like a child asking to spend the night with their parent.

"Are you alright?"

"Are - are you busy?" Stiles asked, ignoring the question completely since he didn't know how to answer it. "If you are it's ok," he added quickly.

"I'm not doing anything that couldn't wait," Chris said after a second, he sounded so earnest. It made Stiles knock his head into the wheel again. "Do you want me to get Peter?"

"No!" Stiles protested quickly. "No," he repeated at a calmer volume. "I - I just - fuck, can we just talk?" Stiles asked.

"Of course," Chris responded, his tone hesitant over the phone.

"It's nothing bad," Stiles assured him, wincing as he did so because he knew it didn't sound good either way. "I just - coffee, I need a drink and I thought..." he trailed off, feeling even stupider as seconds passed. He hated Lydia and Allison with a passion, hating how he went with their idea even though he knew it was a bad idea.

"Coffee sounds good," Stiles could hear the confusion in Chris' tone and it made him want to take back the offer.

"You don't have to," Stiles said, wanting Chris to know that it didn't have to happen.

"No, of course, I want to Stiles," Chris said it so honestly that Stiles couldn't help but believe him. "Where do you want to meet?"

Stiles licked his lips before naming one of the cafes that he had found not too long ago. It was relatively unknown, so the two of them being together shouldn't cause any problems with how
unlikely it was to run into someone judgemental there. Chris agreed, suggesting they meet in an hour, giving Stiles enough time to drop the collection of shopping bags at home before heading back out.

Chapter End Notes

Up next is the coffee 'date'
Coffee

Stiles had been running late. He had miscalculated just how long it would take to unload everything from the jeep, he had barely got them all into his room before he had to leave. Then, the added traffic had been a pain which held Stiles up even more. If he felt bad about the confusion he had clearly given Chris, it was nothing in comparison to arriving to find the man seated with two steaming mugs in front of him.

"I am so sorry!" Stiles gasped, not catching Chris' amusement as he continued to babble. "There was an accident and I left later than I planned to and Allison keeps messaging me to apologise and all the cars were going in the same direction so I was stuck behind them while the traffic was redirected and then I was pulled over because my dad is worried and he's told everyone to watch out for me because he's so overbearing -"

"Stiles," Chris interrupted with a smile on his face. "Take a seat and take a breath."

"I'm sorry," Stiles groaned again, sinking into the padded seat.

"It's ok, you aren't that late," Chris added.

Stiles narrowed his eyes, pulling out his phone to check the time before groaning.

"It's fine," Chris repeated. "Really," he added, smirking at the disbelieving look Stiles show at him.

"Have you been here twenty minutes?" Stiles demanded.

"Thirty actually," Chris said before laughing at Stiles' outraged face.

"Why didn't you text me!" Stiles asked. His annoyance coming right back at the thought of Chris just waiting for him. "What if I stood you up?"

"Did you plan to?" Chris asked, his smirk still visible.

"Of course not!" Stiles snapped. "I called you, didn't I? Why would I have bothered if I didn't plan on showing up?"

"That's exactly why I wasn't concerned," Chris said simply. "I got the drink about five minutes ago," he added, nodding towards the steaming cup before Stiles. "It's plain, no milk or sugar but they will add -"

Stiles cut Chris off when he picked up the cup he had gestured to and took a swig from it. It burnt his tongue, the roof of his mouth and he greedily took deep breaths to soothe the burn as it travelled down his throat.

"It's hot," Chris said, holding back his laughter when Stiles looked at him with a 'no shit' expression. "So, tell me how you found this place?" Chris requested.

"A few friends told me about it," Stiles shrugged, putting the cup down but keeping his hands wrapped around it.

"It started out as a safe space," Chris mused when Stiles didn't offer anything more. "One that promised to be accepting to anyone, no matter what."

"It still it," Stiles said automatically. "Miricle knows the owner."
"Miricle?" Chris repeated.

"Yeah, she is a drag queen," Stiles blushed slightly realising just how that sounded. "I met her and a few others at the Jungle, it wasn't anything weird!"

"I never said it was," Chris said, a smile on his lips as he observed Stiles' pinkened cheeks. He watched as Stiles' tongue swept across his lips. How Stiles lowered his eyes as he had blushed, focusing on the steaming cup that his hands were wrapped around.

"It sounds stupid," Stiles said as he shook his head slightly. "It was when we were all there to watch Jackson," Stiles explained. "They were lovely people, they even came to Lydia's party when we needed them."

"You needed them?" Chris asked, his eyebrows raised as he sat back.

"No one showed up," Stiles shrugged, "We knew they would if people were around so I called in a favour."

"How did you even have their numbers?" Chris asked, his smile making Stiles smile in return.

"They fell in love with me. Apparently, I'd make a great queen if I wanted," he smirked.

"You shouldn't tell Peter that," Chris said quietly as he leant forward, his eyes darkening in the dimmer light as he looked into Stiles' eyes.

"Why?" Stiles' mouth felt dry.

"He wouldn't stop until you tried it, and that isn't something anybody could withstand."

"Me in drag? Or Peter being pushy?" Stiles questioned, his voice huskier at the thought of someone being so forward about it. His blush returned as Chris visibly thought over the question.

"Both," he settled on.

"I told Allison!" Stiles forced out, reddening further at Chris' shellshocked expression at the sudden topic change.

"You..."

"I needed someone to talk to and I thought... she took it well - about you, I mean," Stiles rambled.

Chris lifted a hand, "you don't need to explain yourself," he said softly. "You are allowed to tell whomever you wish to." Stiles relaxed back, feeling better now he knew Chris didn't seem outraged by the fact.

"I didn't even think about you wanting her to know until afterwards. If you wanted to tell her -"

"It isn't an issue Stiles," Chris said gently. "I'm actually glad I don't need to explain it all to her, I wasn't looking forward to the inquisition."

"She - she told me you weren't..." Stiles trailed off, suddenly unsure of just why he wanted it confirming.

"That she isn't my real daughter?" Chris asked, waiting for Stiles' nod before continuing. "She was young when I met Victoria, she was from another hunting family and we were pushed together a lot. We made it work," Chris summed up.
"Allison thought you were soulmates," Stiles said quietly.

Chris offered Stiles a tense smile.

"There were times I wished she was," Chris admitted. "Life would have been so much easier."

"I know what you mean," Stiles said, realising just how it must have been for Chris to lose Peter. "How - how did you manage when Peter..." he trailed off when Chris took a deep breath. "That was rude," Stiles realised.

"I did say anything," Chris said, his tense smile back in place. He paused for a second before taking another breath, he dropped his gaze from Stiles. "It wasn't easy," Chris sighed. "I didn't think I would be ok, but with Victoria... with Allison... I had something to keep me around."

"That doesn't always work," Stiles frowned.

"I would say it is different for everyone," Chris pointed out. "Plus, Peter wasn't dead. Now, when he did die... it was Victoria that kept me, me."

Stiles took a drink again, the temperature a much more reasonable one. It didn't cause the same burning sensation. He thought over just what Chris said. He managed to stay sane, purely because of him family. He was able to be himself with his wife and his daughter.

Stiles started to tap on the table, his thoughts of driving until he got somewhere else came back. Before he truly began to plan out his escape, a warm hand covered his and stopped the fidgeting.

"My dad used work," he didn't know why he said it. He felt Chris squeeze his hand. "Work and alcohol."

"That must have been difficult," Chris said quietly.

"It wasn't too bad," Stiles muttered, quickly feeling ridiculous for bringing it up. "We knew he would struggle, he had prepared to go to therapy before she died. After... it was me that went."

"Your dad didn't go?" Chris asked.

Stiles shook his head.

"It doesn't matter," Stiles said with a shrug. "It was a long time ago. He's sane, he can look at me without seeing what he lost and he doesn't drink as much."

Chris squeezed Stiles' hand again.

"Why did you want to get a drink?" Chris asked, sensing how a change of topic would help Stiles.

"Lydia and Allison suggested it and I didn't have anything to lose," Stiles said. "I thought about running," he admitted. "It scared me enough that I rang you."

"I'm glad you didn't run," Chris said honestly.

"So am I, I think," Stiles replied. "I don't want to push you away but I don't know if I can stop it."

"You've done really well so far," Chris smiled, finding Stiles returning one back to him. "You haven't pushed me away yet."

"Peter wouldn't let me push you both away," Stiles pointed out.
"He would fight it," Chris agreed. "He likes you. We both do," he added, seeing Stiles' raised eyebrow. "If you truly don't want anything, we will respect that. Peter is only pushing so much because he knows your reasons are based on fear."

"It isn't -" Stiles cut himself off, knowing the lie would be obvious if he finished it. There was something about Chris' earnest face that made Stiles want to be honest. "I don't want to lose myself," he finished with a whisper. "I've seen too many people break and I can't - I don't want that. I need to be myself," he stressed, trying to explain it.

"I can't guarantee that nothing will happen to any of us," Chris pointed out with a squeeze to Stiles' hand again. "You wouldn't face anything alone. Even if something were to happen to both of us, you have people around to keep you, you."

"It isn't the same," Stiles protested. "They aren't - I wouldn't be able to do it."

"Stiles," Chris said softly.

"No!" Stiles snapped. "I'm not strong enough to survive it. I don't want to put myself through that, I know I would - I would rather die than be like that."

"You won't need to die," Chris said firmly. "We both know Peter, he's come back from death once already."

"It took months," Stiles whined. "I wouldn't - I barely made it before."

"But you did," Chris pointed out. "You were able to live -"

"It wasn't a full bond," Stiles protested.

"No, it wasn't," Chris agreed. "You made the choice to fight it. You had enough strength to fight it, for so long," he added. "That was all you."

Stiles looked away from Chris, feeling slightly more conflicted. He had felt the urge to complete the bond every time he had been around them. Yet, he didn't. He had fought the urge, even to the point of panicking.

"You really think I could..."

"I have no doubts you could keep yourself sane," Chris said surely. "Through sheer stubbornness alone," he added with a teasing light.

Stiles smiled. It wasn't a full smile, but a thankful one. One that tried to express just how glad he was for Chris' firm and sure words.
"You smell like Stiles," Peter commented once Chris had closed the door behind him, not phased at all by the gun that was pointing at him. "Just what did I miss?"

"For fuck sake Peter," Chris hissed. He let his arm drop, Peter not being a threat to him. "Why are you here?"

"I got bored," Peter shrugged, glancing down to his nails as he did so. He heard Chris' sigh and it put a smirk on his face, it was always such fun to rile the man up. "What did I miss darling?" Peter purred.

"He wanted to talk," Chris sighed. "Jesus, Peter, I don't know how this is going to work."

Peter had no response, he just moved closer and pulled Chris to him.

"He thought about running away," Chris said into Peter's shoulder. He relaxed as Peter growled and clutched him tighter, glad that he didn't seem to have been overreacting in his own horror at the thought. "He's terrified of this."

"We knew that much," Peter said, his tone forcefully calm.

"No," Chris said, pulling away so he could convey to Peter just how bad it was. "He said he would prefer to die than to - he's already thought about what would happen if we died. His dad didn't cope well, he doesn't think he would."

"That's ridiculous," Peter frowned.

"He doesn't think so. He even sounded terrified to ask me out," Chris said with a sad smile. "Kept telling me I didn't have to meet him for a drink."

"You... you went out with him? Not just talked?" Peter asked stiffly.

"Whatever you are thinking, stop it," Chris sighed.

"No, it's fine," Peter huffed. "I thought I'd be the first to woo him but you beat me to it."

"He called me," Chris rolled his eyes.

"I see," Peter huffed. "Where did you go?"

"I'm not doing this Peter," Chris snapped. "This is not a competition."

"Of course not," Peter shot back smoothly. "You'd lose if it were."

"I swear, if you undo everything that boy has already managed to do, I will shoot you," Chris hissed. "You know I love your threats," Peter purred. "I won't do anything to risk our boy," Peter said with a roll of his eyes. "I merely want to even the playing field again."

"It isn't a game!" Chris yelled, watching as Peter turned and left out of the front door that Chris had only just closed. He felt like hitting his head against the solid wood, only realising that Stiles was left unprepared for what may arrive.
Peter found out about earlier. He might be scheming a way to 'even the playing field'. If he shows up, you can tell him to leave. If he doesn't, let me know and I'll shoot him in the leg.

Stiles sniggered at the message, hearing Chris’ unimpressed tone clearly through the words. It made him curious as to what had just happened between the two men, even if the thought left him with a heavy heart.

Focusing solely on his homework again, Stiles pushed the message from his mind. He had let the workload grow with everything that had been happening, so he really needed to get back on top of it all.

Almost two hours later, Stiles paused, hearing the knock on the door. He debated on whether or not to even entertain the idea of Peter wanting to do his own thing. Then again, Peter was the type of man that would just climb through a window if he didn't get his own way.

So, Stiles went to open the door. He didn't know what he expected, but it wasn't Peter dressed in loose clothing. The baggy t-shirt and low-hanging jogging bottoms were completely out of the norm for Peter's usual attire. In one hand, there were two bags, one paper and one plastic.

"What do you want?" Stiles asked, sending Peter an overly curious look.

"I propose our own date," Peter said with a charming smile. "I have food and films," he added, lifting his hand with the bags in.

Stiles smiled against his own will as he looked over Peter once again. The man had clearly decided that they would be staying in with the goods that Peter had fetched. Stiles shook his head, his smile growing as he walked to the kitchen to get two plates. He heard the front door close with a soft click.

Stiles looked up when Peter had followed him into the kitchen, raising his eyebrows slightly at the sight of Peter's socked feet on the tiled floor. Peter offered him a large smile as he put the paper bag onto the table.

"Fries and burgers for us," the wolf said. "Nothing too special but I have it on good authority that you like them."

Stiles tried to fight back his grin, he felt ridiculous for feeling so happy.

"I have the Star Wars trilogy as well," Peter said, "Heard it was a favourite of yours."

"It is," Stiles said softly. He watched as Peter began to unbag the paper bag, pulling out the wrapped trays and opening them to dish it all up.

"Go put it in," Peter said with a nod towards the living room. "I'll bring these in."

"Don't poison it," Stiles commented half-heartedly as he went to follow Peter's suggestion. He heard Peter's amused huff from behind him.

"Hurry up!" Stiles called once he had managed to set up the DVD, already wriggling on the couch to get comfy.

Peter slunk into the room, a plate in each hand, holding one out to Stiles, who reached forward with grabby hands. Stiles hit the play button, taking the plate and waiting for Peter to join him on the couch. Peter sat next to him, his arm moving around Stiles' shoulders whilst he put the plate on his own lap. The man used his free hand to pick up the fries before moving them to his mouth, half watching the introduction to the film, and keeping an eye on Stiles.
Unlike Peter, Stiles had started eating the burger first, leaning back against the couch, and Peter's arm. The boy kept his attention focused on the film, not wanting to lose the easy feeling that had flowed since Peter had arrived. As the film progressed, Stiles felt himself relax even more, pressing more into Peter's side as he slowly ate his fries.

Peter bent his arm slightly, letting his hand rub against the boy's neck, smiling as he almost melted into the touch.

"Chris was worried about you," Peter said, noticing how Stiles had almost finished with his food.

"Why?" Stiles questioned around a mouthful of fries.

"He was concerned," Peter said, weighing his words. "He said you seemed scared, but not of us." Peter glanced over to Stiles, seeing how the boy was focused solely on his plate with the few fries left.

"It isn't you, either of you," Stiles stressed. "I just - it's fine, I know I'm being silly," he sighed.

"There is nothing silly about you, my dear," Peter promised softly. "Not one single thing."

"My therapist called me stupid," Stiles breathed the words, barely any sound with them. He felt Peter's hand tighten slightly on his neck. "He said I didn't deserve to meet my soulmates..."

"Why not?" Peter asked, his tone stiff as he fought back his anger at the unknown man. Getting no response, Peter moved his plate from his lap before moving Stiles'. He pulled the boy closer, lifting his head until their eyes met.

"After - after my mom... I told him it was all stupid, that nothing good came from soulmates. He thought that our sessions were just about changing my mind," Stiles shrugged. "He tried to remove the marks once," Stiles added in a softer voice, shrinking back at Peter's threatening growl.

"Who was it?" he asked.

"It doesn't -"

"It matters," Peter gritted out through his clenched teeth.

"It was Jay," Stiles shrugged. "I don't remember his last name. Just what happened."

Peter let go of Stiles, moving his hand slowly around to Stiles' cheek.

"How did he try to get rid of the marks?" Peter asked gently.

"It's nothing, I didn't go back after that," Stiles muttered. "Just forget I said anything."

"Darling," Peter murmured, letting the whole issue go for a second. "You are not anything that man could have possibly said. I promise," he added softly, brushing his thumb against Stiles' cheek. He watched as Stiles' eyes fluttered as he turned into the touch. "May I?"

"What?" Stiles asked, his eyes opening to stare at Peter. He blinked rapidly, watching as Peter's face drew closer, his eyes darting between the man's mouth and eyes.

"May I?" Peter repeated, his voice a velvet whisper.

Stiles licked his lips, his eyes on Peter's who followed the action with his own eyes. It was a small nod that made Peter close the gap between them, pressing the briefest of kisses against Stiles' lips.
before retreating.

"Thank you, my darling," Peter purred.
This chapter was a bit of a bitch to write, but hey ho! So, I am in the process of writing a one-shot about the therapist, because I went overly deep in the backstory of him and he isn't going to be a huge part but it's still interesting (I think). I'm not sure when that'll be done but I'll add it as a part of this series when it's done. If that is something you're interested in anyway.

Peter heard the car pull up, he opened his eyes, not remembering having closed them. A glance at the television screen showed that the film had finished, leaving the title screen showing on the film had finished. Another look down, Stiles was resting against him, eyes closed and breathing steady. He looked calm, relaxed more so that Peter recalls ever seeing him.

Peter heard the door opening, signalling the Sheriff’s return.

Peter hated that man in that second. It said a lot that he hadn’t thought of tearing the man’s throat out, instead, he merely cursed his existence. Peter wanted to hold onto the illusion that everything was ok, he wanted to look down and see Stiles’ at ease expression. The only thing missing was Chris. Peter’s mental note of making the most of it when Stiles finally felt comfortable was underlined in his to-do list.

He heard John’s footsteps pause.

He heard the sigh before they resumed.

“I don’t want to know,” he heard the Sheriff’s mutter. “It’s his life. It’s his soulmate. It’s good that they are spending time together.”

Peter closed his eyes, he was reluctant to move, yet he knew that this was probably one of his only chances without tracking the Sheriff. Gingerly, he moved Stiles body, taking care not to rouse the boy. It took him a second longer to pull himself from the couch, more reluctant to let the sleeping boy out of his sight.

He made his way to the kitchen, hearing John puttering around with the cupboards. He heard the kettle begin to boil. The older man oozed exhaustion, it was obvious in how he moved.

“Question,” Peter said softly, drawing the Sheriff’s attention to him as he watched from the door. “What was Stiles’ therapists’ name?”

“You’re a little old to go to someone specialised in traumatised grieving children,” John pointed out.

“Stiles mentioned him and I was curious,” Peter said simply, not lying but at the same time, not telling the man everything.

John sighed, “His name was Jay Myer, he was a well-known guy for dealing with younger children. One of Cla – one of the doctors recommended him,” John sighed again.

“What do you remember about him?” Peter asked, staring at John hard.
“Why?” John asked, turning his full attention onto Peter again, regarding the man. Peter didn’t show too much visible to the Sheriff, only letting his curiosity show.

“Stiles mentioned him,” Peter repeated. “Said that the man had said some things and I wanted to know if I was overthinking it, I guess,” Peter explained. It was a lie and Peter had a feeling that John knew that much but he didn’t press it.

“He was qualified,” John shrugged. “Respected the patient confidentiality, I think I spoke to him three times in the two years that Stiles saw him. I didn’t think too much of him really,” John continued. “Towards the end, Stiles started to act out more, I assumed it was the therapy working, then he just rebelled, going as far as to run away when I tried to take him for his next appointment.”

“Did he ever say why?” Peter asked, his eyebrows furrowing as he made a mental note.

John shook his head, his own frown in place, “He refused to,” he explained. “He refused to talk for a while. Then he just started acting like normal, as if nothing had ever happened. I cancelled the rest of the appointments, Jay had said that he had seen an improvement but to be prepared for a calm before the storm situation. I assumed his acting out was just that. He’s refused to talk to anyone since then, no more therapists but he sticks to his medication,” John shook his head again. He regretted not pushing the issue more before, but there was little he had felt able to do to help his son.

“Myer, you said?” Peter clarified.

“He has a clean record, or he did back then,” John sighed. “I checked when Stiles refused, just in case.”

Peter nodded, accepting the words. He pulled out his phone, typing out a message to send to Chris.

*Jay Myer, research him, I’ll be over in half an hour and I want information*

“You aren’t pushing Stiles, are you?” John asked, his voice firm.

“Far from it,” Peter mused, taking a second to meet John’s eyes. There was no hint of the normal manipulative glint that tended to hint knowingly, Peter knew that even joking about Stiles would work against him.

A buzz pulled Peter’s attention away from Stiles’ father.

*Do I want to know?*

*I’ll explain later*

“Dad!” Allison’s voice tore Chris’ attention from Peter’s text message. She was stood to the side, arms crossed as she waited to be acknowledged.

“How long have you been back?” Chris asked, running a hand over his face.

“Not long,” Allison admitted. “What’s wrong?”

“It’s just been a long day honey,” Chris sighed.

“Did Stiles talk to you?”

“We aren’t talking about it,” Chris said firmly.

“He told me,” Allison said, lifting her head slightly. “I know you killed Gerard because of him. He
told me you and mom… I know ok,” Allison said, her voice faltering slightly at the end. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“I should have,” Chris sighed. “I never thought it would be an issue, the whole thing between your mother and I… just because we weren’t soulmates doesn’t mean we didn’t love each other. She did so much for me you know,” he said lightly.

Allison took a step forward, needing to hear more. She sat next to Chris, still keeping her body tense.

“I had known Victoria since we were young, she was normally left with the task of watching myself and Kate. Your father was her soulmate, I don’t know who he was, only that Vicki couldn’t stay with him. When I met… when I met my first soulmate –”

“Peter,” Allison interrupted. “I know, just say it,” she rolled her eyes.

Chris shook his head, a smile on his face as he remembered Victoria’s own frankness.

“When I met Peter, things got out of hand. We knew that there would be no chance of anything happening. Vicki, she cornered me about a week later. She noticed that I had been disappearing and demanded to know why,” Chris exhaled slowly. “I didn’t tell her who he was, but I let her know that my soulmate was someone I could never really have in my life, not as a hunter. She suggested the ruse, she was always a smart one.”

“That’s what your relationship was?” Allison asked, suddenly hurt.

“To start with,” Chris admitted. “Our families accepted it, having thought we would end up together for a while. She covered for me while I was with Peter and offered me a place to stay away from my own father. I think Peter suspected something towards the end, what had started as nothing between Vicki and I became much more. The three of us, you included, were a family. Peter… we knew it wouldn’t last,” Chris said. He still hatred himself for not fighting harder for their relationship but he didn’t regret his life with Victoria one bit.

“The fire was the last thing. Peter – he wasn’t responsive. I had seen him and he was just… he might as well have been dead. It would have been more humane for him to be dead,” Chris shook his head. The sight of Peter's burnt body lying motionless still haunted him at times. “I stopped denying what I felt for your mother, we left Beacon Hills and made our own family.”

“You came back here,” Allison said. That was one thing she didn’t understand. After everything that had happened, why would Chris have come back with those memories. She watched as Chris exhaled again.

“I knew Peter was getting stronger,” Chris said. “There was an unknown werewolf around and Peter was… I can’t explain it,” he smiled. “I just needed to be back. I don’t know what I expected, if I wanted Peter to still be in the coma or if I wanted him to be the werewolf running around. Then… Kate happened. Peter was alive again, older but still himself. I have no doubt that Vicki knew, especially when Peter was killed. Your mother was an amazing woman,” he told Allison honestly.

Allison threw herself against Chris’ side, letting him move his arms around her and just hold her steady. It was something that neither of them had allowed for a while, Allison having grown to dislike him due to the hunting business. In this moment, she felt a lot younger than she was. She missed her mother more than she had, she wanted her around to hold. To apologise.

“He wants you to leave because he’s scared,” Allison explained, not needing to say who she was talking about. It was her way of offering something in return for what Chris had just given her.
“I know.”

“He doesn’t want you to give up, you need to prove that you’ll be there,” she added firmly.

“I’m not going to push something that isn’t going to work honey,” Chris pointed out softly.

“He doesn’t think he’s worth it,” Allison snapped, pulling away from his embrace. “He wants it but he’s scared. If you hurt him…” she trailed off, not knowing what she would be able to threaten him with.

“I won’t hurt him,” Chris promised sincerely.

“He thinks there is too much history between you and Peter, that neither of you would ever want him because you have each other.”

Bingo, thought Allison when she noticed Chris’ tense posture. She knew that those words were a shock to him, clearly he hadn’t considered that thought process.
I will warn you now, this has talk of a very messed up therapist in. I don't think it's too much to read, whereas the one-shot I added to this series is a bit much (in my opinion). Speaking of which, that is up and viewable now, so if you want a little bit of an inside look into what happened between Stiles and the therapist, it should be linked to this story in the series thing. It is something though. It took a lot of my energy to write and I felt horrible doing so because of just how messed up it was.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

My son was young when we first met him. Charming, charismatic, smooth, all of these have been used to describe him by my family. He was recommended to us by a doctor, specialised in children who had been through traumatic experiences. We thought he would help. He was meant to help.

My son showed the normal recovery pattern, he had his ups and downs you see. We weren’t concerned. We let it continue because he did need the help and Dr. Myers was the best around.

One day, my son came home with tears in his eyes, his face white and his eyes red. Alarmed I asked my eldest what had happened. A panic attack. That was the explanation, Dr. Myers had told my eldest that my son had a panic attack, something that he had never shown signs of before.

Following the doctors’ orders, we kept an eye on my son, making sure he was ok and not falling into another panic attack since it came out of nowhere and made him faint in the middle of a therapy session.

It was about a week later that we noticed. His soulmate mark was gone. I had never even heard of such a thing! We went to our normal doctor, she seemed as baffled as we were. Now, my son was silent the whole time, not looking at us and not offering any reason why this had happened.

I had a talk to Dr. Myers at the next session. He seemed regretful when he told me that he had seen this happen before. According to him, there were a few cases of children rejecting their soulmates so strongly that their mark disappeared!

I know it sounds paranoid. I believe this man had something to do with it. There is little I can do but share what I know. I am terrified for the fate of my son. We stopped all meetings with Dr. Myer. I just don’t understand how this could have happened.

Chris let out a long breath, this was one of the first things he had found with the name Peter had told him to search. It didn’t really answer any of the questions Chris had, nor did it do much more than make other questions appear.

Why did Peter need to know about a child psychologist? That was the man’s job. There were a few references on where the doctor had been and none seemed to make any sense either. There were no signs on where Peter had even got this name.
As for the questions around a few of his clients…

Chris stopped himself from going too far down *that* hole. He had heard rumours of people finding a way to remove soulmate marks but they were talked about in hushed tones when no one was looking, no real information being produced other than the rumours.

Scrolling through the woman’s blog, he found a link with one word before it; *update*. He pressed it before he had even fully thought about it.

*We can’t trust the police. My son talked to me about what happened, about what that man did to him. The police told me that it was probably a lie, they know about the other kids bullying him and they think he made it all up to put the blame off him.*

*What child makes up being strangled? Why aren’t they looking into this?*

Chris would be lying if he said that the smaller post didn’t fill him with dread. He could sense the woman’s desperation. He agreed, no child would even *think* about making such a thing up, or rather, very few children would.

The woman had posted another update further down the page, once again, Chris clicked it without thinking.

*This will be my last update on this story…*

*It is far from over but I feel like the rest if more private. I know a lot of you have sent me and my family well wishes but now we need more. My eldest went to talk to Dr. Myers, he didn’t come home to me.*

*I received a call from him, asking me to meet him at the police station. He didn’t explain what had happened, only that he wanted to tell me himself before the police ruined it.*

*He told me about how Jay Myers was exactly like we thought, how the man had been fooling everyone. My son had managed to get the full story from him, I don’t know how and I couldn’t bring myself to ask.*

*From what he said, Jay Myers had been torturing the children in his care. He had been manipulating them and then, when he was satisfied, he would get rid of their soulmate marks.*

*This monster would hold children down, choke them until they were unconscious and then smoother them until the marks disappeared.*

*My eldest son is being charged with murder. A sentence he says he will plead guilty to. One that he doesn’t regret.*

“Fuck,” Chris exhaled, running a hand over his face once he finished reading. It still didn’t answer his questions, in fact, it only made a few of them worse.

“What is Jay Myers?” Allison asked. She was stood behind her dad, looking over his shoulder at the information on the computer screen.

“Did you find anything?” Peter asked, stepping closer. Allison had answered the door to him, merely raising an eyebrow before leading him to where she knew her father was huddled.
“He’s a therapist,” Chris said stiffly. “A dead therapist.”

“Dead?” Peter repeated, slightly shocked as he did.

“I found an article about the murder but this – Jesus Peter, why did you need to know about him?” Chris asked, his voice hitching slightly over Peter’s name.

“Stiles saw him,” Peter murmured, stepping even closer and resting a hand on Chris’ shoulder. “He mentioned that the man said things and tried to remove –”

“His marks,” Chris finished. “Shit, how did – he’s ok?” Chris settled on, not wanting to finish the ‘how did he get away’ question.

“Did you find out how he tried to remove them?” Peter asked, not bothering to offer empty reassurances, even though he knew that Chris knew better than to ask such a silly question when Stiles had been around him not too long ago.

“He choked them?” Allison asked, her voice faint as she read the last few paragraphs of the blog post. “Children?” she clarified.

“Until they were close to death I assume,” Chris nodded, his tone emotionless. “I don’t know how it worked. Death doesn’t get rid of the marks –”

“He was a therapist, so it was traumatised children, ones that probably didn’t want to meet their soulmates,” Peter pointed out.

“You think that was what made it work?” Allison gasped.

“It makes sense,” Peter shrugged. “Stiles is against the idea of soulmates, no doubt other children were the same and he has – had,” he corrected with a slightly feral grin, “access to children like that.”

“He was strangled to death, by a client’s older brother,” Chris added. “I guess the kid talked and the brother wanted to get even. Didn’t even try to hide what he did.”

“How did he manage to get away with it? How did Stiles get away without his marks disappearing?” Allison asked softly.

“You can asphyxiate someone without leaving visible evidence,” Peter explained. “It leaves internal damage but sometimes external damage isn’t there. I’m more curious as to how he explained the weakness in the children to the parents.”

“Panic attacks,” Chris supplied. “Strong ones that made them faint, that way the parents were meant to keep an eye on the children to make sure they were ok –”

“Avoid them dying from panicking alone with a swollen throat,” Peter interrupted. “He was smart.”

“That doesn’t explain how Stiles got away,” Allison pointed out.

“You’re not going to ask him,” Chris said firmly, turning his full attention to Allison, his eyes hard. “You don’t know any of this. Do you understand?”

“I wouldn’t –”

“Do you understand?” Chris repeated, cutting her off.

”
Allison nodded, her jaw locked as she fought back what she wanted to say.

“Good,” Peter said, squeezing Chris’ shoulder and feeling the man relax into the touch somewhat. “Now, I am going to take your father to get some rest. Please, do behave yourself.”

“Ew,” Allison said half-heartedly.

Peter ignored her, as well as Chris’ grumble when he turned the computer off. His main focus at the moment was to get Chris into his bed and under the blanket before his emotionless exterior wore off and he worried about Stiles. It was going to happen, but perhaps with Peter next to him, it wouldn’t be as intense. Plus, Peter had the upper hand with his strength, able to wrestle Chris back into the bed if he thought of sneaking off to check on Stiles.

Chapter End Notes

Just focus on Peter forcefully snuggling Chris so he doesn't sneak out of the bed, that's a nice thought.
“Your phone’s ringing son,” was what Stiles woke to. He groaned loudly, rolling over to bury his face into his pillow.

“It’s the third time it’s rung,” his dad said with amusement, stood at the door watching Stiles groan and wave him away. “You should get it.”

Stiles groaned again, hitting the bed beside him until he found just where his phone was hiding. He knew that his phone shouldn’t sleep on the bed with him, but it was just easier to have it close by for his alarm, plus it wasn’t like he shared his bed with anyone else all that often.

John smiled at the spectacle his son was making, clearly he hadn’t recalled just what had happened the night before. He took a few steps into his son’s room, let the mobile drop on the bed where Stiles was fumbling before heading back out.

“You left it downstairs,” John pointed out, only getting a grunt in response. He shook his head, even if Stiles didn’t answer it now, he would be the one dealing with the vibrations rather than John.

Stiles sighed in happiness when the noise stopped, *sleep was good, lots of sleep was good*. His happiness didn’t last long. Almost instantly, the incessant ringing began once again.

“Nooo,” Stiles whined, his voice full of sleep. He managed to grasp his phone, accepting the call and pressing it to his cheek as he hummed as a greeting.

“Finally!” a much too chipper voice replied. “What have you been doing?”

“Sleep,” Stiles whined again, still not having opened his eyes. He could almost hear the eye roll that his correspondent gave him.

“Stiles,” she sighed. “It’s almost ten.”

“Shhh,” Stiles begged, wanting to go back to sleep.

“Not going to happen,” Allison said, still sounding too alive for Stiles’ liking. He entertained the idea of just hanging up and turning his phone off. It would have been so much easier, although that would require opening his eyes, which he really didn’t want to do. “I was woken up hours ago you know,” she said, as if Stiles cared.

“Allison, the love of Scott’s life, please just let me go back to sleep,” Stiles huffed.

“Hurray,” she deadpanned. “He speaks in more than single words.”

“I hate you,” Stiles groaned, accepting the fact that sleep would not be an option on. “What do you want? If no one is dead, then you will be very soon.”

“Someone isn’t a happy waker,” Allison noted. “I only wanted to let you know that Peter spent the night here -”

“What?” Stiles frowned, feeling suddenly much more awake.

“Yes,” Allison said, probably nodding along with her words. “You don’t even know the half of it,” she chuckled. “I was woken up a few times by Peter pretty much yelling at my dad, and that is something I never thought I’d say.”
“Why?” Stiles asked, turning so he was on his back, looking up at the ceiling. He wasn’t concerned, that would be silly. They were adults. It was fine they spent the night together… being loud enough to wake Allison. There was no reason Stiles should even need to know about it. They were soulmates, hell, they were old enough to make responsible choices about who they slept with. Why did he need to know anything about it? Why was Allison telling him this?

“I only caught bits of it,” Allison admitted. “The last time in particular, Peter kind of just snapped, ‘it’s the middle of the night and if the Sheriff finds either of us sneaking in we’ll be shot.’” She tried to imitate Peter’s tone but it fell very short. Stiles could almost recreate it in his mind, the exasperated way that Peter would have said it, probably with that annoyed look that he seems to be prepared to show whenever he didn’t get his way. No doubt he would have that hint of condescension as well, he was a master at that.

Stiles could almost imagine the next words the wolf would utter, something like ‘I can survive that but you - you would be stuck in the hospital and if you think I’m going to be visiting you, you have another thing coming because I was there for a long time and I’m not going back. Not to mention the sickness there! I’m immune to it all but it still makes me feel disgusting!’. Perhaps that was slightly exaggerated, but Peter probably would make it sound a lot worse.

Through all of his thoughts, Stiles missed the fact that Allison had told him that Chris wanted to sneak into his house. That Peter had warned him about the Sheriff.

“You should get here because I cannot handle hearing them argue again over seeing you,” Allison huffed, having realised that Stiles hadn’t taken the bait in the first place.

“What? Why are they - they aren’t -”

“Why else would the Sheriff shoot them? It isn’t to check on him!” she snapped.

“That makes no sense,” Stiles argued.

“They were worried, ok?” Allison sighed. “Just… it would be nice for them to have you around today. I swear I heard Peter growling for half of the night.”

“They don’t want me around,” Stiles argued half-heartedly. He did want to be there. As much as he felt like he would be walking into some private moment between the two men, he did want to be a part of it.

“If you don’t come, they’ll probably be sat on your doorstep until you accept that they want you,” Allison pointed out, drawing a reluctant smile from Stiles. He could picture it, Peter more so than Chris. They would probably wait until his dad got back from work, he would probably let them in, just to try and make Stiles admit that he hadn’t accepted them fully.

“I can’t,” Stiles said softly.

“Why not?” Allison asked, not at the point where she was trying to push but also prepared to point out how ridiculous Stiles was being if the excuse wasn’t up to her standard.

“Just - no offence Al, I’m just not going to your house,” Stiles said, trying to keep calm as he did since Allison would probably pick up on any intenseness in his voice.

“Wha - did something happen here?” Allison questioned suddenly, her tone protective and stern. It made a lump form in Stiles’ throat.

“Don’t worry about it,” he managed to force out.
"That's why you didn't - and why he was -" Stiles heard Allison sigh over the phone. "I won't push it," She promised. "You don’t have to come here but I meant it Stiles. They would be a lot calmer if they saw you today, plus I think it would be good for you as well."

"They’ll be fine," Stiles protested. "They spent the night together -"

"For crying out loud!" Allison snapped, hearing the bitterness in his tone. "They didn’t fuck, Peter was just making sure my dad didn’t harass you!"

"What?" Stiles asked, his brain pausing. Why would Chris harass him? Chris had been the one to accept that Stiles wanted some distance.

"Stiles…"

"Tell me," Stiles demanded, hearing the hesitance in Allison’s tone.

"They’re just worried Stiles," she said slowly, letting Stiles know she knew more that she was letting on.

"About?"

"I... Stiles I can’t tell you," she sighed. "I promised."

"Is it bad?" Stiles asked, wanting to prepare himself for the worst.

"No! Not at all. It isn’t anything bad, not like you’re thinking. It’s just - Peter mentioned something and my dad got worried, it’s nothing really - well it’s something but it’s not - I should just shut up," she finished with another sigh, her tone regretful.

"Peter mentioned something," Stiles repeated. He couldn’t really remember anything that had happened that would cause any amount of worry, well, Peter kissed him but that was it? It wouldn’t surprise Stiles if Chris was freaking out about that, Stiles knew that he would have freaked out about it before. He still didn’t quite believe that he had let him do that. "About the kiss?" he added, just wanting some hint on what it was.

"THE KISS?" Allison repeated loudly. "Did you - did Peter - tell me everything!" She demanded, at a much more reasonable volume.

Stiles chuckled, making a note to talk to Chris and Peter later on to see just why they were worried, but for now, he wanted to indulge and just talk about what was happening and Allison, well she was easy to talk to sometimes.

"There isn't much to tell," Stiles laughed. "Peter asked if he could kiss me and -"

"You let him!" Allison finished, cutting Stiles off. "How was it? What was he like?"

"It - it wasn’t anything special," Stiles said, ignoring the fact he had blushed at her excited tone. "It was basically a kiss that a five-year-old gives, nothing to write home about."

"Stiles," Allison whined.

Stiles smiled, he didn't respond back to her, even as her whines continued. He figured he might as well use his good mood, he minimised the call, letting Allison's voice fade slightly into the background. Stiles considered it for a moment, he could text either of them, or both. He had the feeling that if he messaged Peter, he would get an instant response, whereas Chris would probably be
preoccupied, or even still stuck away from communication methods like Allison had hinted.

I hear you had a house guest sleepover

Stiles frowned at his phone, realising that no matter what he typed, even if he blamed Allison, it would sound stalkerish.

Want to get breakfast? Peter can come along as well

He settled on. That way it didn't seem as though Stiles was keeping tabs on them, plus it offered a way for them all to be together. It was also casual enough to be ignored since it was getting late now, so there was no pressure. Grinning, Stiles hit send.
“So nice of you to invite me along this time,” Peter teased once the door opened to reveal both him and Chris.

“I can take it back,” Stiles pointed out, letting his eyes run over the two men. He bit back the urge to smile, they were both wearing almost the exact same thing. A black V-neck t-shirt, Peter obviously in a lower-cut one and a pair of sunglasses folded on the neckline.

“Oh no dear,” Peter smirked.

“Is there a dress code I should be aware of?” Stiles asked, noticing that they both even had worn similar jeans.

“Of course not,” Peter scoffed lightly.

Stiles frowned over to Chris. The man looked weary, like he was ready for the worst to happen. He met Chris’ eyes, trying to question what was wrong without saying the words, he guessed that it was related to what Allison had been talking about. Stiles wasn’t sure if he wanted to ruin this moment just yet.

“So I don’t need to change?” Stiles asked, aiming for teasing.

“Spin for us,” Peter prompted.

“Perv,” Stiles grinned. He felt lighter than he had for a while and he didn’t know why, but he wanted to be near them. He wanted to forget what was wrong and just enjoy the moment.

“You caught me,” Peter faked a sigh. “I only wanted to look at your ass.”

Stiles spared another look to Chris, realising that Allison had been onto something with how distressed he seemed. It was hidden well, the hunting exterior made sure of that. Stiles could see it in his fisted hands, his tense stance, and his stoic face. It was such a sharp contrast of the controlled but eased posture the man normally had around Stiles.

“You can drive?” Stiles turned his attention to Peter, already plotting.

“Of course,” Peter scoffed. “Keys darling,” he prompted Chris. “Our boy is hinting at it.”

Stiles may have blushed at the casualness of Peter’s words, at how easy it was for him to suggest Stiles was theirs.

“It’s my car,” Chris pointed out.

“And you’re going to sit in the back,” Stiles said firmly, not budging under either of their amused looks.

“You heard the boy,” Peter smirked, his hand out and waiting for Chris to place the keys in them.

“Fine,” Chris snapped, forcefully giving up his keys.
“So where are we going?” Stiles asked, looking over to Peter.

“Back to Sanctuary,” Chris mumbled, gesturing with his head for them all to head over to the car.

“For food?” Stiles pointed out, knowing that they had been there the previous day.

“Exactly,” Chris agreed.

“You did leave me out of the coffee date,” Peter piped up, leading the way. “I wanted to see what the fuss was about.”

“We’ve been there before,” Chris pointed out.

“That was a while ago,” Peter noted. “They could have changed.”

Stiles levelled Chris with a glare when the man moved to open the passenger side door. Chris just raised an eyebrow in response, his hand still on the handle.

“If I have to put you both in the backseat, I won’t be impressed,” Peter said lightly, causing the two to break eye contact.

Stiles just rolled his eyes and climbed into the back, making sure he was sat behind the driver’s seat, that way he could annoy Peter at the very least by nudging the seat if he needed to. Stiles expected Chris to have climbed into the front, even if Stiles thought he had been obvious enough about wanting the man in the back with him. He wanted to stop whatever was going on with Chris, the tenseness was unsettling.

It was a shock that Chris opened the other backseat door and slid in. He stayed behind the passenger seat, which made Stiles frown but it was something. He waited until Chris had done his seatbelt and Peter had started the drive before he reached over and took Chris’ hand in his. He didn’t look, but he felt Chris’ surprised gaze on the side of his face.

Stiles let himself smile when he felt Chris rub his thumb along the back of his hand. It was grounding to have just the smallest touch.

“So, Allison mentioned you two were a bit tense last night,” Stiles said, not entirely sure why he was bringing it up now.

“It was a long day,” Peter said, without looking back.

“We’ll talk about it later,” Chris promised, squeezing Stiles’ hand briefly. “Let’s just enjoy now.”

Stiles paused, Chris’ words pulling at something within him. Almost every single thing he had done lately had not been enjoyable. Stiles had forced himself away from enjoyable things more often than not. Perhaps it wouldn’t be so bad to just enjoy now.

Making sure not to look over to either of the men, Stiles unbuckled his seatbelt and slid closer to Chris, letting go of the man’s hand as he did so.

“Don’t crash,” he said to Peter, not bothering to speak loudly as he let himself lean into Chris’ side.

It was almost like being touch drunk, being so close to Chris. The feeling only intensified when the man shuffled and moved an arm around his shoulder to hold him closer.

“Too bad this isn’t a Rover,” Stiles mumbled before he could really think over what he was saying.
“Hmm?” Chris hummed.

“Baby pull me closer in the backseat of your Rover?” Stiles offered, groaning when Chris still seemed confused. “It’s a song. How am I meant to be tied to two old men?”

“Watch it,” Peter growled half-heartedly.

Stiles just smiled in response. He sunk more against Chris, just enjoying the moment.

It feel much too soon when they arrived at Sanctuary, Peter pulling the car to a stop and Chris trying to pry a protesting Stiles away from him. Still slightly touch drunk, Stiles lead the way into the half-filled cafe.

“Stiles!” a deep voice called when they walked in.

Peter growled slightly as Stiles spun towards the voice. Chris lightly touched the other man’s arm when Stiles grinned.

“Don!” he called. “You look amazing!” Stiles gushed, making the older man laugh deeply.

“Oh sweetheart, you know it,” the one Stiles had called Don replied. “We haven’t seen you around lately.”

Stiles bit his lip, shaking his head.

“The parent didn’t take it too well when he found me about,” Stiles shrugged. “Apparently I’m not gay because of how I dress,” Stiles repeated the words his father had said when he was caught at the Jungle.

“You do have a unique style,” Don laughed. “Who are your friends?” he added, looking over to where Chris stood, his hand on Peter’s wrist to hold the glaring wolf back.

Stiles floundered for a second, not knowing how to respond to that. Stiles was tempted to lie. Both Chris and Peter were older than him and clearly close. It would have been easy to lie.

“Soulmates,” Stiles finally offered, a small smile on his lips as he kept his eyes on Don, knowing Peter had heard him loud and clear.

“Ahh, that would explain why Goatee looks ready to murder me,” Don nodded, sending Stiles a wink before he took a drink from the cup in his hand.

“He’s possessive I guess,” Stiles shrugged, making sure to say his words louder than the rest of the conversation had been.

Don hummed as he looked back over to Peter and Chris.

“You should bring them by sometime soon,” he said. “The girls would love to meet them,” there was a gleam in the man’s eye that made Stiles smile. He knew that he would be throwing Peter and Chris to the not-so-real wolves if he did do that. “They have missed you as well.”

“I would rather avoid the makeover,” Stiles pointed out.

“Each to their own,” Don agreed, his easy going smile back in place. “Now, go have fun before I end up as a corpse on the side of the road, that wouldn’t be a good look for me.”

“Tell them all I said hi?” Stiles asked.
“Of course, now shoo,” Don laughed.

Stiles gave him one last smile, nodding his head before he turned back. Peter wasn’t glaring as much now, seeming to have calmed over the not-threat that had spoken to Stiles.

“One of your friends?” Chris asked once Stiles got back within talking distance, keeping his voice soft.

“Yeah,” Stiles smiled. “He’s the bodyguard for the girls,” Stiles explained. “When they kidnapped me he was tasked to protect me from harm - dude, they didn’t actually kidnap me,” he huffed when Peter growled.

“Girls… like Miricle?” Chris questioned.


“He seemed overly happy to see you,” Peter finally ground out, sitting down at one of the few booths.

“I didn’t get his number,” Stiles shrugged. “Plus I haven’t been back to the Jungle since that first time. He wasn’t around for Lydia’s party either.”

“I am honestly concerned about what you do in your spare time,” Chris shook his head with a smile.

“Befriend drag queens and members of the LGBTQ,” Stiles shrugged.

Peter huffed, finally having enough and pulling Stiles down next to him, keeping one hand on the boy’s wrist.

“Come on,” Stiles groaned. “I didn’t even lie about who you were,” he pointed out.

“Didn’t stop him wanting you,” Peter muttered.

“He didn’t!”

“I could smell it,” Peter huffed again, glaring over at Chris’ smirking face.

“You were right with possessive,” Chris pointed out. “Jealous too.”

“I will kill you,” Peter grumbled.

Chapter End Notes

I'm not even going to try and hide it, next part will be angsty. I was going to do it in this part but it went on too long. Plus, I am aware that today isn't a good day for a lot of people, a lot of people are scared and just worried. So, I will say it once again. I don't know what is going on, but what you feel is valid, any fear you feel is valid. Hopefully (and I know how empty this can sound) nothing bad will happen. If it does, we will continue because we are strong af! Plus, there is always the fantasy world to get lost in if the real world gets too much.
Stay safe out there!
Breakfast was uneventful, the three males just sat around the table talking about trivia. Their favourite colour, their favourite season, the best memory they had. Stiles had noted that they were pretty much playing twenty questions but it didn’t seem to stop either man. Stiles couldn’t hold back his smile as he learnt that Chris favoured blue whereas Peter favoured red as colours. Both men preferred Fall out of every season. The memories were ones that Stiles promised to keep to himself. The honest joy that they both showed when retelling the tales had been enough for Stiles to mentally make that assurance to himself. He wouldn’t break their trust.

On the journey back, Peter had demanded to have his own time in the backseat with Stiles, since Chris had his moment on the way there. Feeling lighter than he had since the previous day, Chris merely raised his hands and indicated with his head that Peter should get in the car.

It was easy for Stiles to fall into Peter’s side, as he had done with Chris. There was the obvious different between him and Chris. Peter did run at a warmer temperature, one that was noticeable when pressed so close, even with clothes separating them. Stiles found himself yawning as he pressed closer, his hand resting on Peter’s stomach when his eyes closed.

“Don’t fall asleep,” Peter suggested, his voice soft and rumbly in a way that made Stiles sink a little further into his peacefully relaxed state. The purr of the car, along with the gently movement of Peter’s body with every breath threatened to pull Stiles into sleep.

It almost seemed too soon when Peter was slowly pushing him upright and murmuring about how they were here. It was a gently hit to the chest that made Peter laugh. Lazily blinking, Stiles wanting nothing more than to just go back to bed, and Peter wasn’t a half-bad pillow substitute.

“Let’s get you inside before someone thinks we did something unsavoury to get you in this state,” Peter chuckled.

Stiles groaned, pushing himself away from Peter’s warmth. He rubbed his eyes before groaning again. He shouldn’t be as tired as he was.

Stiles bolted upright with a squawk, earning a confused look from Chris as Peter smirked smugly, letting Stiles’ keys dangle from his finger.

“I’ll see you inside darling,” he purred, pressing a kiss to Stiles’ temple because leaving the boy open-mouthed.

“What just happened?” he asked Chris, who had no good words of wisdom to off, only a head shake.

“You got pickpocketed,” Chris finally offered before climbing out of the car and leaving Stiles alone in a daze.
“Hey!” the boy finally snapped, stumbling out of the car himself. “Peter kissed me you know,” he said, a small grin on his face as he saw Chris’ eyes narrow.

“He did?” he asked, his tone pleasant even as his eyes disagreed.

“Mhmm, he did,” Stiles nodded. He closed the car door behind him. “Wanted to beat you to it,” Stiles made up. “Bragged a lot,” he added, knowing that it was becoming a lot more unrealistic.

“I’m sure he did,” Chris replied, leaning against the car as he glanced over to Stiles. “Sounds like the mutt.”

There was a faint ‘Hey!’ from inside of the house that made Stiles snicker before it died.

“I - ah shit,” Stiles muttered. “It isn’t fair you know,” he offered, the bravado from before gone.

“It isn’t fair?” Chris repeated slowly, a smile on his face as he looked beyond Stiles and towards the house behind him.

Grumbling to himself, Stiles pushed forward, curling a hand in Chris’ top before pressing their lips together for a second.

“There,” he said in annoyance. “Even -”

Chris’ lips were back on his, a hand on the back of Stiles’ neck. Surprised, Stiles let out a gasp just as their lips reconnected. There was a slight moment of hesitance before Stiles felt Chris run his tongue along his bottom lip, coaxing his mouth open slightly more. Both of them moved closer, Stiles bringing a hand to Chris’ shoulder as his other stayed curled in the t-shirt.

When Stiles finally pulled back, he watched Chris’ eyes open, focusing on his face before looking beyond him once again as a wicked grin pulled on his lips.

“I think I just annoyed our wolf,” Chris mumbled, refocusing on Stiles.

Stiles glanced back, looking over his shoulder to see Peter stood in the doorway watching them. He couldn’t stop his own grin at the sight, noticing how tense Peter was.

“We should go in,” Stiles said, his voice soft as he spoke barely above a whisper.

“We should,” Chris agreed, his hand moving from Stiles’ neck as he let the boy step back. “Before he gets the idea to drag us inside,” Chris added.

Stiles led the way, grabbing Chris’ hand and pulling him over to the house. He ignored Peter’s sulky expression as he fought back his grin.

“I hate to be the bearer of bad news,” Peter sighed, his sulkiness disappearing before Stiles’ eyes as he led the way to the dining room. “Chris and I have something to tell you.”

Chris tensed, already partially regretting telling Peter that they needed to do this. It seemed wrong to do so at such a time, when Stiles seemed happy.

“Should I be worried?” Stiles asked, sitting on one of the chairs at the table without being prompted. “If this is an intervention then shouldn’t I know what…” Stiles’ amused grin fell at the serious expressions on both Peter and Chris’ faces. His good mood shrivelling and leaving a puddle of worry in his stomach. “What is it?”

“Do you remember what you talked to Peter about yesterday?” Chris sat next to him, taking one of
Stiles’ hands.

The puddle turned to stone, sitting uncomfortably in his stomach as Stiles glanced from Chris’ guilty expression to Peter’s slightly murderous one.

“Stiles,” Peter interrupted. “You mentioned your old therapist, Jay Myers -”

“I didn’t tell you his full name!” Stiles pointed out, pushing his chair backwards but being stopped from standing by Chris’ hand. Even though Stiles had said so, he never forgot that man’s name. He had never had the strength to do anything with the knowledge of his name, but it was something he wouldn’t forget. Stiles could feel his free hand shake, he could hear his breath coming faster.

“I talked to your dad,” Peter explained.

“You - when - why?” Stiles gasped. Stiles pulled his hand from Chris’, slightly surprised when the man allowed it.

“You mentioned that he tried -”

“That doesn’t mean you ask about him!” Stiles snapped. He didn’t know what hurt more, that they knew, that they had clearly looked for more information, or that his own dad had given such key information out.

“I wasn’t just going to let it go,” Peter was calm, too calm for Stiles’ liking.

“You should have! It isn’t any of your business!” Stiles almost yelled. He pushed himself up until he was standing. His hands grasped the table edge firmly as he tried to keep his breathing steady, he would not fall apart in front of them. He refused.

“You are our business,” Chris interrupts firmly.

“Fuck you, fuck both of you. I cannot believe -” Stiles shakes his head as he took a step backwards, putting some distance between them. “Get out.”

“Stiles -”

“Get out!”

“We aren’t going anywhere,” Peter said firmly. Not looking at Chris as he said it.

“You don’t get to - I don’t want you, I don’t want either of you - not - not after this. I don’t want to see you ever again,” Stiles hissed, the anger wasn’t there to provide any more yelling. Not when they were so close. Not like this.

“You’ll go crazy,” Peter snapped, feeling slightly ashamed with himself when Stiles and Chris both flinched back.

“Stiles, we’ll give you space but we aren’t leaving completely,” Chris settled on, knowing how much fear the boy had towards being alone. It was almost as overwhelming as those that didn’t want to go back to someone.

“I don’t want either of you in my life,” Stiles said blankly, his anger fading into numbness.

“What is going on?” John asked, having watched into the house as Stiles had deadpanned how he wanted his soulmates gone.
Stiles took one look at his dad, he shook his head, not ready to face all three of them. He pushed past John, heading upstairs until he can calm.

“What happened?” John demanded, glaring at the two men.

“We may have messed up,” Chris admitted. “We -”

“He’s overreacting,” Peter cut in smoothly, ignoring the kick to the shins Chris gave him.

“Tell me what happened,” John sighed. Wanting nothing more than to kick them out of the house, but he needed the full story.

“Jay Myers is dead,” Chris said. “He was murdered by one of his patients' siblings.”

“What does this have -” John started.

“It was revenge for what he did,” Peter cut in. “Payback if you will.”

“Payback?” John repeated.

“We learnt that he had a history of hurting his patients,” Chris said carefully. “We think -”

“We know,” Peter interrupted.

“We don’t know for sure,” Chris pointed out. “We think he may have tried to hurt Stiles.”

John’s reaction to those words were to turn stoic. The man grew rigid, his jaw tense and the hate glowing in his eyes at the threat of what may have happened.

“You heard my son,” he spoke calmly.

“We aren’t leaving him,” Peter said firmly.

“Enough,” John snapped, not raising his voice. It was calm, almost deadly as he continued, “I trusted you, and you have hurt my son. I suggest you listen to him and leave him alone until he wants - if he ever wants you back in his life.”

“Of course,” Chris agrees

“You want to put him through more pain?” Peter asked incredulously.

“You being around is putting him through more pain!” John pointed out. “You both did something you shouldn’t have. He has the right to be the one to start the next contact, so you will leave him alone. Do you understand?”

“Peter, enough,” Chris warned. “We’ll stay away,” he promised the Sheriff, receiving a nod in return and the instruction to leave and wait. Then, if they were lucky, find a way to apologise.
Talk About It

Stiles could feel the tears building. He didn’t know how long he would be able to hold them back but he didn’t want to cry. He didn’t want to cry because he was right. He had known.

It wasn’t even anger at the moment. He could feel the pain in his chest, the urge to scream until his throat bled. It would be so much easier if he hadn’t said anything. Sure, he would still be scared of running into someone from the Argent household but he wouldn’t be in this much pain.

Stiles scrubbed at his face, wiping the tears away before they could fall. He refused to cry. Not over them. Not when he knew he was right. He should have just stayed away. He should have kept himself quiet. He shouldn’t have listened to Allison. The want to build a relationship between the three of them was just a want, there was nothing that meant he had to work on that. The ache in his chest was manageable, more so than the pain.

“You just going to stand there?” John asked, stood in the doorway as he watched Stiles.

A shrug.

“Take a few breaths, then come back downstairs, ok?” John said. “They’re gone, but I think we need to talk about what just happened.”

“Nothing happened,” Stiles’ voice was rough.

“I don’t know if they had a chance to tell you, but he is dead,” John said. “I don’t know what happened between you and him, but he’s dead.”

Stiles exhaled slowly, his eyes closed.

“I stopped them telling me everything,” John pointed out. “He was murdered. So, I would like to know what happened. Why you reacted like this. Why you always changed when he was mentioned.”

“He’s dead,” Stiles said blankly. “No point talking about it.”

“You know that isn’t true,” John sighed. “If something happened - something you didn’t feel able to talk about before -”

“They said something else,” Stiles pointed out, his voice shaking as he looked to his dad. There was a chance he knew everything, Stiles didn’t know how much about Jay was online, or how they had even found their information but they knew something.

“Not much,” John said, not disagreeing with Stiles’ observation. “Come downstairs and we’ll talk.”

John waited for the nod before he turned. He resisted the urge to sigh. The likelihood of Stiles actually talking about anything was slim but he had to give him the chance. He made his way downstairs, debating on whether this was a good idea, Stiles was stubborn. There was no way to force him to talk, but it was clear that he needed to talk.

Strangely enough, John barely had to wait for five minutes before Stiles was making his own way downstairs. He had gotten himself a baggy hoodie before coming downstairs and he had seated himself in the armchair, leaving John to the couch.
The silence wore on for a few more minutes.

“He said he had a way of getting rid of soulmates,” Stiles said, not looking over as he spoke. “I begged him to tell me for a while but he didn’t… he said a lot of things - please don’t,” Stiles begged when his father had tried to stop him. “I - I need to - I was too scared to let him do it,” Stiles admitted. He pulled his legs up onto the armchair as he wrapped his arms around them. “I ran and didn’t go back.”

John waited for a second, not sure if Stiles was going to add anything more. For the first time in a while, he saw the boy who had found his way home, red-rimmed eyes as he waited for John to get back from work. He hadn’t said anything, only run to his father and let himself be pulled into a hug as his tears fell.

“What did he try to do?” John asked quietly.

Stiles shook his head.

“Do you know what he was planning?”

“He - he told me,” Stiles admitted. “The session before. He told me and said I should think about it but I didn’t - I didn’t think he was serious,” the words were soft, almost suffocating.

“Ok,” John said. “Did he hurt you?” It broke his heart to watch as his son tensed, burying his face into his knees for a second. “He did,” John assumed, hating that Chris had been right when he said it.

Stiles unwound one hand from his legs and lets his fingers rest on his throat. Every swallow he did feeling as harsh as they had after he had escaped.

“He didn’t get as far as he had with the others,” Stiles pointed out.

“That doesn’t mean you weren’t hurt,” John said firmly.

“I should have said something, who knows how many - I let him - he was a bad guy,” Stiles settled on, not ready to admit how guilty he felt over letting the man continue his practices.

“The world is full of bad people,” John pointed out. “Some of them prey on more vulnerable people.”

“I wanted it,” Stiles stressed. “I begged him to get rid of the marks… I - I got scared ok, I didn’t want to die and it felt like I would.”

John let the silence fall. He had a number of questions but he didn’t want to know the answers. He wanted to know just what had happened, why Stiles felt as though he would have died, why he wanted the marks gone so badly.

“I don’t know why he messed up,” Stiles said bitterly. “He had done it so many times without messing up and he couldn't even get me unconscious…” Stiles trailed off, shaking his head slightly. “Sometimes... sometimes I wish I didn’t run.”

John swallowed, knowing that Stiles was admitting more in that small statement than how much he had wanted to get rid of the marks.

“I am glad you ran,” he settled on. “I’m so proud of how strong you’ve been, really,” he stressed when Stiles laughed.
“I’m not strong,” Stiles disagreed. “I wouldn’t be like this if I was.”

“Emotions don’t make you weak,” John pointed out, echoing the words Claudia had said to a much younger Stiles who had tried to hide his fears.

Stiles’ lips twitched, seeming to have recalled the same memories as his dad.

“Why did you want them gone?” John asked, trying to focus more on Chris and Peter than the dead therapist.

“They didn’t listen to me,” Stiles sighed.

John was reminded of when Stiles had first spoken to him about the two men, how he was sure Peter would listen, whereas Chris was an unknown factor. From John’s short experience earlier in the night, it seemed the other way round, Peter had been forceful, not willing to listen whereas Chris was more open to it.

“What happened?” John asked.

“I mentioned Jay last night,” Stiles began. “I told him to leave it, to just forget I said anything and - and -”

“He asked for his full name,” John finished, remembering Peter coming to him.

Stiles nodded.

“He told Chris and they just ignored that I didn’t want them to know,” Stiles snapped. “Who gave them the right?”

“You would have done the same thing,” John pointed out.

“I -” Stiles couldn’t even try to defend himself. “I would have tried to get them to tell me first,” he decided. “I wouldn’t have -”

“Stiles,” John sighed. “If it wasn’t about Jay, would you have minded?”

“That - you can’t just - that isn’t fair,” Stiles managed to say. “That was - that is my own issue. They didn’t need to know.”

“They were worried,” John pointed out.

“I know!” Stiles snapped. “Doesn’t mean they can act like I’m three and unable to make my own choices.”

“Tell them that,” John advised. “They are older than you, which makes this harder, especially for you,” he added. “You need to be able to use your own senses without relying on them to take over.”

“I’m trying!” Stiles snapped.

“Are you?” John asked, no hint of judgement in his voice.

“I - I don’t want to worry about it.”

“You’ve had a lot going on,” John pointed out. “I’m not blind, you’ve been struggling with something and lately you’ve been acting more like yourself. You know that nothing has to happen between the three of you, I would rather nothing happen. You are still a child -”
“I’m -”

“Underage,” John pointed out, cutting him off. “I know you though, and I won’t stop you from making your own choices, you should just think about what is happening and if it is the best for you.”

“I don’t even know what’s best for me,” Stiles said with a small smile. “I - I just - I don’t want to push everyone away,” Stiles said softly. “I don’t want to lose them and push everyone else away.”

“Stiles,” John said back as equally soft, trying to find the nicest way to say what he needed to. “You’re pushing everyone away right now.”

Stiles bit his lip to hold back the retort he wanted to say. He didn’t want to put that guilt on his father. At least he wasn’t drowning himself in alcohol and ignoring his family. Stiles wasn’t that mean, he knew that his dad didn’t mean it, it had just happened and it was a coping mechanism. He didn’t need to make the rest of the night awkward, or the rest of their lives.
Stiles waited until he was alone in the house again. It was the following day, but he got to spend time with his dad. They both barely spoke after the heavy conversation, but the words weren’t needed. Stiles knew what his dad was trying to say. He knew that there was no way to continue the conversation without it turning ugly, so they focused their attention on the television, some sports programme that Stiles ignored in favour of thinking.

So, once Stiles was alone, he climbed into his jeep, a bag in hand and started to drive. He wanted out. He wanted to leave the town behind. It would be easy. He wouldn’t, he couldn’t just leave everyone behind, no matter how tempting it was. This was short term, just to think. Stiles promised himself that.

The further out of town he got, the more his chest ached but the clearer his head became. Part of Stiles liked the ache, it meant he was still in control, he could do what he wanted. It also distracted him.

Stiles heard his phone ring, his breath catching for a second as he debated throwing it out of the window and speeding up to lose whatever was going to happen. Shaking himself at his stupidity - this wasn’t long term - he pulled to the side of the road, waiting until the ringing stopped. Reaching over with a shaking hand, Stiles himself for the worst possible situation. As his fingers wrapped around the phone, it buzzed once again.

*Dude, you’re not home, where are you?*

*Scott*. Scott he could handle. Scott didn’t know anything. Scott was safe. He probably wouldn’t even notice anything. As much of a werewolf he was, he still didn’t use his senses as he should. He fought them, and Stiles knew how to use that in his favour.

“Scott, hey,” he said into the phone, putting it on speaker and setting it on the dashboard. “I’m running a few errands.”

“Need any help? I wanted to get out of the house and Allison isn’t around,” Scott said.

“Already mid run bud,” Stiles said softly, knowing that his heart would have already given him away if Scott was nearby. “How about the pack?”

“I wanted to hang with you,” Stiles could almost see the pout. “I miss you man.”

It took Stiles a second to stop himself laughing, or crying, he wasn’t sure which it was.

“I miss you too,” he finally said. “We can hang out soon, I promise.”

There was a beat of silence after Stiles spoke.

“Are you ok?” Scott asked quietly.

“You know me man,” Stiles smiled. “When would I ever answer that truthfully?”

“Where are you?”

“It doesn’t matter man,” Stiles said. “I just need to think you know. Some time away from people.”
“My house is -”


“Code Nemo?” Scott repeated. There was another second of silence as the boy had cursed quietly. “Should I expect the whole town coming to my door?”

“You rang me,” Stiles reminded him. “Just - we didn’t talk alright? I’m not going to be too long, I’ll probably be back later but…”

“You need to breathe,” Scott finished.

“Yes,” Stiles sighed in relief.

“If anything changes -”

“I’ll let you know,” Stiles said.

Reluctantly, Scott had said his goodbyes, making Stiles promise once again to call him in another hour.

Code Nemo was something that they had come up with as children, once Stiles’ dad had begun drinking and after Scott’s had disappeared, they both had wanted to leave. As naive as they were, they had hoped that running away would cause their parents to realise something was wrong and to search for them. All inspired by the film, of course. It hadn’t worked. As years passed, it changed from a plea for attention, to a plea for space. A brief moment out of the sea and in the small fish tank. They had rarely used it, but they had both been willing to cover for the other when they needed it.

Stiles continued to drive. Not knowing exactly where he was going, he stuck to less populated roads, not wanting to be easily trackable.

Stiles turned his radio on, not wanting to be in the silence any longer. He wanted time away from his own thoughts. He wanted to be free from the weight of everything around him.

It wasn’t too long before Stiles started to regret this. He wanted to turn around but he had committed. He did need that space - he needed to be away from them. He just couldn’t afford to drive forever.

Eventually, Stiles found himself pulling into a service station. Deciding to forgo getting more fuel, he sat in his jeep and pulled out his laptop, grinning at the fact the wifi was unprotected and reached to his car.

Stiles opened Skype and called Scott.

“It looks like you’re going to get murdered,” Scott frowned when he answered.

“Thank dude,” Stiles rolled his eyes.

“Seriously. I want updates to prove you’re alive,” Scott said, his frown deepening as he scanned the screen. “I don’t like this.”

“I Skyped didn’t I?” Stiles pointed out.

“Why did you pull a Nemo?”

Stiles looked at Scott, the quality of the webcam wasn’t great, but he could make out the genuine concern on his friend’s face. It was a stark difference from the person who suggested talking to
Gerard, who was so disgusted at the fact someone who had been such a threat had been killed. Instead, it was the concerned friend, the person who swore to do whatever he could to help Stiles through his emotional trauma. The one who had let Stiles scream, yell, and even cry when they had been alone.

“Stiles, tell me,” Scott said.

“You’ll freak out,” Stiles pointed out, he held up a hand to the camera. “I freaked out,” he added.

“Just tell me,” Scott sighed.

“Met my soulmates,” Stiles said, the words came out easier than he expected. They didn’t get stuck in his throat, they didn’t make him want to scream. It was just a fact. One that scared him but that feeling didn’t stop the words from leaving.

“Ah, I would say congrats but… how did you take it?”

“I pulled a Nemo,” Stiles pointed out dryly.

“That doesn’t mean anything,” Scott pointed out. “Did you murder them on sight? Did you jump them? Who are they?”

“I’ve known who they were since - since before Peter died,” Stiles said.

“Shit, why didn’t you tell me?”

“I didn’t tell anyone,” Stiles stressed. “They didn’t even know.”

“Talk to me,” Scott demanded lightly. “How didn’t they know?”

“They spoke first - I felt it Scott,” Stiles smiled. “Even without knowing what was on me, I felt the words when they said them. It - Jesus Scott, I didn’t know and I just couldn’t talk.”

Scott gave his friend a sympathetic look.

“Don’t do that man,” Stiles groaned.

“When did you say something?” Scott asked.

“Remember when Chris came to the pack meeting?” Stiles asked. “That day.”

“Shit, you waited months. Why?”

“You know why,” Stiles forced out. “Plus one of them being dead means I couldn’t talk to him,” he added bitterly before pausing.

“Peter?”

Stiles looked up in confusion at Scott’s tone. There was no outrage, no demands of how or why. It was resigned.

“Who’s the other?” Scott asked with a sigh.

“Chris -”

“What makes you think -”

“Nemo ,” Scott said, interrupting Stiles.

“They researched Jay,” Stiles admitted after a second.

“Jay ?”

“Old therapist,” Stiles offered. “It’s stupid but it just hurt, needed time away where they couldn’t find me.”

Stiles expected demands on why they researched his old therapist. He expected Scott to remind him of how different he had acted when he stopped seeing him. How the mere hint of him had sent him into panic attacks that would always wait until adults were out of sight.

“Okay ,” Scott said, shocking Stiles once again. “Nemo away. I’m here if you need to vent ,” he added.

“I know,” Stiles agreed. “Like the good old days.”

“Hopefully not like that ,” Scott said. “There is only so much I can handle. I would rather not hear all the scary thoughts, but if it helps I am here to listen. You know this .”

“And you know I won’t do it,” Stiles pointed out, expecting Scott’s sigh.

“I wish you trusted me ,” he sighed.

“I do. It’s just something that I shouldn’t burden other people with,” he pointed out, checking the time. “I’m going to head back soon, maybe drive the long way round.”

“Come over to mine ,” Scott offered. “We don’t have to talk, but I’d rather you not suffer alone .”

“So you want me to make you suffer with me?” Stiles asked humourlessly.

“No, I want to see my bro and make sure he isn’t spiralling again ,” Scott said honestly. “Plus, we have been lacking on the bro time .”

Stiles offered Scott a smile over the webcam. Maybe some time with his friend would be a good idea, it would stop him being alone and getting too lost in his thoughts. Plus, Scott would be willing to listen if all else failed.

“Ok, I’ll see you in a few hours then,” Stiles nodded.
Scott was waiting for Stiles when he pulled up. He looked battle ready, an empty expression and stood calmly as Stiles made his way over.

“Mario?” Scott asked, clapping Stiles on the shoulder.

“Not just yet,” Stiles shrugged.

“Fort?” Scott asked.

“Fort,” Stiles agreed with the smallest smile he could muster.

Scott lead the way into the house. He told Stiles to go straight to his room as he gathered all the supplies they needed. He pulled the cushions from the couch and the blanket from the closet before he made his way behind Stiles. It had been years since they had done this, it was something that Stiles’ mother had started when they felt overwhelmed. Contrary to popular belief, Stiles did have anxiety before his mother passed, it had never been to the extent that the panic attacks he started having after her death, but it was enough that Scott knew a small amount to help.

Stiles helped Scott with setting the fort up, using the desk chair and the bed to make the best structure that they could both sit under without too much trouble.

“God, we’re gotten big,” Stiles muttered, finally settling down in the cushion and blanket fort that they had made.

“That’s all you,” Scott joked, leaning against his friend.

“Remember the first time we did this without them?” Stiles asked, unable to stop the flood of emotions.

“You mean when you screamed and almost decapitated me?” Scott snorted.

“Eh,” Stiles shrugged. He had reacted badly to finding Scott all ready with a fort. “It felt like we were betraying her.”

“I know,” Scott agreed.

Scott had seen Stiles falling deeper into despair. It was one of the days that they were alone, both parents working and Scott had planned for days to make the best fort for Stiles. Stiles had taken one look and broke into loud tears. He tried to run, to break free from Scott when the boy had pulled him close. Stiles had accused Scott of making fun of him, of trying to tarnish his mother’s memory. Scott had eased Stiles inside the fort, letting him continue to cry as he pulled blankets around him and held him until they both had fallen asleep. Scott’s mother had returned from work to find the two of them, hidden beneath blankets and cushions.

“You have questions,” Stiles pointed out, sighing slightly as Scott tensed next to him.

“That obvious?” Scott asked quietly.

“I’d have questions, I do have questions,” Stiles admitted.

“We don’t pick our soulmates,” Scott pointed out.
“They’ve been mostly good,” Stiles explained. “They even – I don’t know. It just feels ridiculous. They’re older you know.”

“Alice’s soulmate was older,” Scott mentioned.

“They got along, no bad history,” Stiles pointed out.

Scott sighed. He pulled out his phone, turned the flashlight on and set it to the side.

“Tell me about them,” Scott said, knowing that as much as Stiles wanted to not talk, it would be best for him to do it.

“There isn’t much to say, they researched –”

“I know that,” Scott pointed out. “What about before then? There has to be a reason beyond he-who-must-not-be-named that it’s affecting you so much. You got really good at hiding your reactions to him.”

“Don’t freak out?” Stiles asked, letting himself lean into Scott’s side. Scott moved his arm around his friend, a frown already on his face. “We kissed,” Stiles sighed. “I – it’s stupid, I thought we were getting somewhere and then they just –” Stiles ended with a groan.

“You kissed them?” Scott asked in a strangled tone. “Willingly?” he added as an afterthought.

“Willingly,” Stiles agreed.

“Dude!” Scott whined, giving Stiles a worried look. “That’s Allison’s dad – it’s Derek’s uncle!”

“I know,” Stiles said, his mouth twitching.

“Shit,” Scott whispered. “If you get together and I stay with Allison…” Scott met Stiles’ eyes, his own wide at the thought. “If Peter – I’m screwed.”

Stiles couldn’t help the laugh, both at the thought of Allison dealing with himself and Peter as step-dads and Scott being in a relationship with Allison when Peter and Chris were looking out for her. It was comical.

Speaking of Allison, the humour disappeared fairly quickly.

“She knew,” Stiles frowned to himself. He fumbled with his own phone, opening the Facebook app and ignoring Scott’s questions as he spotted Allison online.

**Stiles: You knew?**

**Allison: Knew what?**

**Stiles: About Jay.**

**Allison: They told you I know?**

**Stiles: No, but you mentioned they were concerned**

**Allison: They were, what did they say?**

**Stiles: Not much, tell me what they found out?**
Allison: They should really tell you

Stiles: I’m not talking to them

Allison: You at home?

Stiles: Scott’s

Allison: Omw

Stiles: No, you don’t need to do that

Allison is Offline

“Allison knows?” Scott frowned, reading the messages as Stiles sent them.

“She better have an explanation,” Stiles said darkly.

“No hurting my girlfriend,” Scott said half-heartedly.

“We’ll see what she has to say first,” Stiles pointed out.

“No murder in the fort,” Scott said firmly, pulling Stiles close once again. “Do I get to know why we hate this guy?”

Those words made Stiles freeze.

“That’s a no,” Scott assumed.

“Sorry,” Stiles shrugged.

“It’s ok,” Scott said with a nudge to Stiles’ side.

“Mario?” Stiles asked.

“Staying in Fort Solitude?”

“Ideally,” Stiles admitted, a hand running over one of the cushions to his side.

“I’ll be right back then,” Scott smiled, moving to crawl out of the mass of blankets.

Once Scott was out of sight, Stiles felt himself sink into the surrounding softness. It had been years since he had allowed himself the childishness of this. Since he had let himself do something so personal, something so connected to his mother.

The first time he could remember his mother pulling him into a fort was one where they had spent the night reading together and trying to block out the sound of thunder and the flashes of lightning when his dad was at work.

The time he remembered helping construct the fort, was one where Scott had an asthma attack. It had left him breathless and shaky, and he watched as Stiles and Claudia had worked together to make the perfect den for them to stay until Scott felt strong again. It was their own resting spot.

It had happened fairly often when Stiles was young, sometimes his dad joining them all and laughing as they failed to include the television under the mass of blankets.
Once Stiles’ mother began to show signs of her illness, and Stiles uses that lightly, she was more reluctant to join him. Stiles had tried his best that first year as he slowly saw his mother lose herself, he made forts, trying to make them the best he could to coax her inside and bring back the woman he remembered.

After she was admitted to the hospital, Stiles had made one last fort. He had skipped school, faking his own illness as his dad went to work. He had pulled the blankets and pillows that they normally used, taking care to sneak his mother’s pillow from her bed as well. When it was complete, Stiles had crawled into the safety of the den. Trying to regain the feeling of it, to remember just how his mother had laughed and joked with him.

The feeling didn’t return as it used to. Stiles had felt empty, lost and alone. He knew that he was losing his mother. Without waiting to be discovered, Stiles had begun to deconstruct the fort, vowing to never build it again. He didn’t want that empty feeling, that realisation that his mother wouldn’t be just outside, ready to climb in and read with him.

Even after Scott had made that fort for the first time after the funeral, Stiles had never been one to suggest they do it. He couldn’t do that to his mother’s image. Even sitting alone in the one now was leaving a stronger ache in his chest. He wanted to leave, to breathe. To feel wanted. He wanted Chris and Peter next to him, they had betrayed him but he wanted them close enough to touch, to share the painful and light-hearted memories of these times. Even through everything, they had made him feel wanted.

Stiles fumbled for his phone again.

*I’m not sorry for being angry. I think we need to talk about it all. I don’t want to fight. But maybe in a few days. I need to know why you did it, and I don’t think I can handle that right now. I didn’t mean it when I said I didn’t want you in my life. I shouldn’t have said that. But you shouldn’t have*

Stiles frowned at himself for a second before deleting the last four words. There was no point trying to turn the blame back around. He had already indicated that they shouldn’t have done it. It should be enough. With a deep breath, Stiles hit send, sending the message to both Peter and Chris.
How Much Do They Know?

Chapter Notes

I started this three different times, lost what I was working on twice. Then, ended up writing and finishing it whilst listening to some pretty sad music. So, that is the warning for this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Allison’s here,” Scott said, breaking the silence in the fort.

Stiles glanced up from the Nintendo DS, seeing Scott’s head poking through the entrances of the fort. Not even bothering to save the game, Stiles turned it off, putting it to the side before mentally preparing himself to leave. It wasn’t that he didn’t want to leave the soft space he was in, it was more that he didn’t want to deal with the world.

“She’s waiting but I could send her up?”

“No,” Stiles protested instantly, Scott just nodded, as though he had expected that response.

“You ready to leave then?” Scott asked.

“Ready as I’ll ever be,” and that was the truth. If Stiles could, he would stay surrounded by better memories in the hopes that everything that had happened wasn’t true. That he could still be someone he liked. That the world wasn’t a continuous struggle.

“Dude,” Scott said quietly.

“Don’t worry about it,” Stiles said with a shake of his head. “I need to face reality.”

“We can put it off,” Scott offered.

“That isn’t healthy,” Stiles argued. “Holding onto the past isn’t a good thing. Staying here isn’t a good thing. The future is the way forward,” he finished with a shrug.

“When have we ever been healthy?” Scott asked with a slight smile.

“You’re miles ahead of me at the moment bro,” Stiles returned the weak smile. “Let’s go face the music and maybe I’ll get some answers.”

Scott looked at Stiles steadily before nodding. Stiles watched as Scott ducked back out of sight, the sigh leaving him before he could consciously stop it. He knew Scott heard it. He knew Scott wouldn’t say anything else about it. He would be willing to listen but he wouldn’t push.

“I can do this,” Stiles muttered to himself before crawling out after Scott. He pushed himself to his feet with a heavy breath.

“You can do this,” Scott reaffirmed, clasping a hand on Stiles’ shoulder when he finally stood.

“Totally, I’m the man,” Stiles laughed. It wasn’t full of the same amount of emotion that he would
normally push into such a phrase. From the look that Scott gave him, he noticed. “Let’s do this,” Stiles sighed, he pulled himself from Scott’s grasp and began to make his way to where Allison had been left waiting.

Allison was sat patiently on the couch, she heard the footsteps on the stairs. Standing, she turned to the two males.

“What happened?” Allison asked, stepping forward, her hands raising up but stopping before she embraced Stiles. “What did they do?”

“It’s ok,” Stiles mumbled, stepping closer and letting Allison pull him into her arms. “I agreed to talk to them, I just needed time.”

“What did they do?” Allison demanded, pulling back to stand at arm’s length away and scrutinising Stiles.

“They said they knew about him,” Stiles said.

“Why don’t we all sit down?” Scott suggested, shifting uncomfortably where he stood.

Stiles nodded, stepping out of Allison’s hold. Scott stopped Stiles with a hand to his arm.

“You want me here for this?” he asked, and it reminded Stiles of his best friend.

“Yeah,” Stiles nodded, a true smile.

“You sure?”

“Of course, dude, just – don’t question too much,” Stiles asked.

“Ok,” Scott nodded, he let Stiles move, sitting next to him as Allison took Stiles’ other side. “Say the word and I’m gone.”

“How much do they know?” Stiles asked Allison, focusing on her as she gave Scott a confused look.

“They didn’t tell you?” she asked carefully.

“Didn’t have a chance,” Stiles mumbled. “I freaked out when they said his name –”

“Nothing new,” Scott muttered. “He’s basically Stiles’ Voldemort,” he added, leaning against Stiles’ side as he spoke.

“I can understand why if what happened is the same,” Allison said sadly. “We didn’t find anything concrete but they came up with what probably happened, based on what they read online,” she explained.

“What do they think happened?” Stiles asked stiffly.

“They –” Allison paused, sending Stiles a hurt look. “Stiles, I don’t want to do this,” she admitted.

“No, I – I need to know if they were right,” Stiles said, stressing how important it was to him. He did need to know and he didn’t know if he could handle finding out from them. He wanted time to prepare. To plan. He had to know what he could say to them to make it so they didn’t worry. It was over with, it was nothing to worry about.
Allison sighed, her voice shook a little as she spoke, “They read that he had strangled someone until they passed out, then he smothered them until their soulmate marks disappeared,” the words were enough to make Stiles flinch back into Scott. There were enough to draw a quiet curse from the werewolf.

“Well,” Stiles forced with a smile. “They got it right.”

“Stiles,” Scott whimpered.

“It’s fine,” Stiles said automatically.

“It isn’t,” Allison pointed out.

“I know,” Stiles admitted.

The three fell into uneasy silence.

Allison reeling in the fact that what they had read was actually true. That Stiles had been through something has huge as that. That he was still alive. He was the person she knew, and the more she knew him, the more he seemed to have been through.

Scott fought back the urge to pull Stiles behind him. He knew that there was no threat near them, but knowing or even hearing that Stiles could have been in such a threat was devastating. Plus, it made sense that something this big had happened, and Stiles kept it a secret. He didn’t tell anyone, he didn’t tell Scott. They had shared everything. Stiles sharing when his mother had forgotten him, when she had condemned him, when his father drunk so much to manage meeting his son’s eyes. Scott had shared the time his father had gotten angry, gotten to the point where his family meant nothing. Yet, this was kept secret. This was so much more than Stiles felt able to share and he had kept it with him for years.

Stiles leant forward. His head fell into his hands. Steady breaths. He had learnt just how to keep himself calm. How to hold back on the building panic. They knew. In the past two days, people knew. His soulmates knew. His friends knew. His dad knew. It felt like everyone knew. It was overwhelming. It was difficult to breathe.

In such a short amount of time, people knew and Stiles couldn’t help but feel ashamed. It wasn’t his fault. It wasn’t him. Stiles had no part in it. Sure, he had wanted it. Even now, Stiles could recall himself asking for it, for the way to remove the marks on his body. He was young. He didn’t know better. He was young and he was hurt. He should have been helped. He should have been kept safe, but that was the issue. The person that was meant to help him was the one that had those answers. It was just easier to blame himself. It was easy to note how much he had wanted it, how he would have let it happen if it wasn’t scary. How sometimes he wished it had happened without a problem, how he could have just passed out and woken to bare skin.

“I’m sorry,” Stiles sighed, his head still in his hands. He didn’t know why he was apologising, perhaps because he still wondered how his life would have been. Perhaps because people were finding out and were horrified on his behalf. Perhaps because Stiles didn’t want them to be horrified. He wanted people to forget it, forget what they knew.

“You didn’t do it,” Allison said firmly. “And he’s dead,” she added.

“He is,” Stiles nodded. “Murdered right?”

“Yeah, someone he - their brother decided to have revenge,” Allison said carefully.
“Good,” Scott said quickly.

Maybe, just maybe, it was enough to make people forget. The man being dead meant that what happened isn’t an issue. It was something in the past, it wasn’t at all in the present. They just needed to remember that. It didn’t matter if Stiles thought about it sometimes, that is normal, it didn’t mean that other people had to worry as well.

“I’m going home,” Stiles mumbled.

“Stiles,” Scott said quietly.

“I need to figure out what to say to them –”

“They care about you,” Allison said. “They – if you tell them that you don’t want them to know it all. If you explain that, they will leave it –”

Stiles scoffed.

“- If they don’t…”

“They won’t stop until they have the full story,” Stiles pointed out. “That’s why they found out his name.”

“Then we make a deal,” Scott said. “We make it so they have no choice but to leave it.”

“You’re not even going to ask –”

“It’s your story,” Scott said firmly. “You kept it hidden for so long, there has to be a reason. I’m not – we’ve shared a lot,” Scott pointed out gently. “For you not to share this… there has to be a reason and I trust you.”

“Thanks man,” Stiles said quietly.

“We’ll figure something out,” Allison agreed. “They’re worried but they shouldn’t have broken your trust. Not with something you kept secret for so long. It wasn’t right.”

“No, it wasn’t,” Stiles admitted. “It’s what nosey bastards would do.”

“That includes you?” Scott asked, the faintest hint of humour in his voice.

“You know it,” Stiles nodded. He couldn’t return the amusement, but he knew enough about himself to know that Scott knew. It was something Stiles would do, and he had said as much to his dad. It was just a lot when it was something so personal. Something he had never wanted anyone else to know.

Chapter End Notes

I keep saying this, but I think the end is in sight. Less than ten chapters (I think). Although, I did think the end was in sight when Stiles finally spoke to Peter and Chris, and boom, we’re over 40 chapters. I know where it’s going though, and how it’ll end. It just depends on how long it drags out. Just a little more angst before things get truly better.
“You’re meeting them?” Stiles recalled his father asking as he got ready to leave the house for the first time in a week. He had Allison and Scott both coming around more often than not and it was exhausting. Even if Stiles hadn’t agreed to meet with Peter and Chris, he needed to get out of the house and away from pitying looks.

Stiles didn’t quite know how this meeting would go. Chris and Peter had both been good about keeping their distance, which Stiles was grateful for. The few brief moments of solitary were good, they helped Stiles sort his thoughts. Stiles had managed to organise his thought process beyond feeling betrayed. He knew what to say, at least that was something.

Stiles was halfway to the café when a car pulled up beside him. Thankfully, or worryingly, he had chosen to walk rather than drive. The motions of walking doing more to steady his growing anxiety than driving.

“You want to join me darling?” Peter asked once the window had lowered. He was leaning over the passenger seat to talk to Stiles.

Stiles gave Peter a smile, it wasn’t quite as convincing as he hesitated climbing into the car.

“I’m not going to say anything about it,” Peter promised.

“We do need to talk about it,” Stiles sighed, finally giving in and climbing in. A glance to the back seat found it empty. “Where’s Chris?”

“Sadly, he is ill and couldn’t make it,” Peter explained.

“Oh, well that’s ok,” Stiles said, sinking back into the seat as Peter began to drive again. “The talk can wait.”

“Stiles, we really do not need to discuss it if you do not wish to,” Peter said gently. “Neither of us will mention what we know.”

“No. You need to understand why I got upset,” Stiles said. Just thinking about explaining himself was causing his chest to tighten, he tapped his fingers against his knee. “I don’t want this to end in an argument and I don’t want – look, I kept that a secret for six years,” Stiles pointed out. “No one knew, so of course I was annoyed you looked into it. You should have asked me – I know I wouldn’t have said anything but you should have tried first.”

“Ok,” Peter agreed. He pulled over onto an empty stretch of road. It was quiet, unlikely that many cars would pass them. “If something like this happens again, we will ask first. The only reason I told Chris to research his name was because you were obviously hurt.”

“Of course I was hurt,” Stiles pointed out with a self-deprecating laugh. “But that is my problem and my choice to share it. Yes, I know how that sounds,” Stiles added as he closed his eyes to avoid Peter’s knowing glance. “Just – a lot has happened to me. I’ve been nearly hurt so many times, what happened six years ago isn’t a big deal.”

“I disagree,” Peter said firmly. He turned in his seat to face Stiles even more. “The fact that things he
said stuck with you is enough to make both of us concerned. I had no idea that it had been that intense and knowing what I know, I am aware that it wasn’t fair to put you in that position,” Peter continued.

Stiles opened his eyes slowly, meeting Peter’s gaze with a curious look.

“Chris pointed out that hiding what we knew from you would only make things worse when you found out, and you would have found out. You were always smart Stiles,” Peter said gently. The older man’s hand twitched on his leg before he smoothed his features out.

“I had this big rant planned out,” Stiles said dryly.

“By all means, go ahead,” Peter smiled.

“Ok, so don’t judge me for this,” Stiles said slowly. He waited until Peter nodded. “So, as I said, I didn’t tell anyone, and in two days I learn that three people knew and I was put into a position where I felt forced to tell my dad and Scott,” Stiles said. He had gone over this speech a few times. “I didn’t have to tell them but they would have been the first ones I told so it felt wrong not to,” Stiles took a moment to audibly swallow. “It felt like you didn’t care. You ripped that secret from me and didn’t consider that I wanted to forget it –”

Stiles stopped talking as Peter took his hand, the warmth bleeding over his fingers as he realised that they had been shaking.

“Keep going,” Peter prompted, the joking tone gone as he waited. Stiles nodded, letting himself relax slightly from Peter’s touch.

“I – thinking about him makes everything he said come back. I remember everything that happened before seeing him and why I needed help in the first place,” Stiles said, his voice softening as he continued, but he knew Peter could hear him clearly. “My mom – she thought I wanted to kill her and when she died I thought it was my fault. I know it wasn’t,” he added quickly, since most people felt the need to tell him that. “There – there was a lot wrong with my sessions with him. I know that, I don’t like remembering it. So, I pretended they didn’t happen and I pushed it to the side and refused to think about it. Then you came along and forced it back into thought,” Stiles sighed.

“It isn’t healthy to do that,” Peter pointed out gently.

“I know,” Stiles agreed. “He got inside my head, typical really. I know you don’t know anything really. You just know maybes but I need you to trust me enough to handle this. I need to trust that you won’t dig further –”

“We won’t look,” Peter said carefully. “We will be there if you need to talk to us but you do need to talk to someone about it. We – I shouldn’t have tested your trust,” he admitted.

"Just – just don't do it again,” Stiles tried to say firmly, yet the words came out pleading. “Please, because I can't handle it again. I will walk away and not look back. I know how to get rid of the marks and I will find someone –"

"Don't -" Peter started sharply.

"I'm not letting myself go crazy if you both prove me right in thinking soulmates are doomed,” Stiles said, his voice sure and steady as he met Peter’s eyes. “I refuse. So just - make sure it doesn't happen."

The loud buzzing of Stiles’ phone interrupted Peter’s response. Glancing down, Stiles pulled his
phone out and read the message.

*Sorry we can’t make it. We’ll need a raincheck little lamb.*

Stiles frowned at the message. There was so much about that message that made Stiles uneasy. The unknown number for a start. Shaking it off as a mistake, Stiles looked back to Peter only to feel his phone vibrate once more.

*Come to Allison’s, there’s a situation. UTL*

Stiles’ blood ran cold. He knows what UTL meant, it was a police abbreviation, one that Stiles had mentioned to Scott in passing a few times. It meant that they were unable to locate something, or someone. Glancing back to Peter’s message made the sinking feeling in Stiles’ stomach grow. It was just a coincidence. It had to be.

The fact they were meeting at Allison’s was worrying. He didn’t want to be there but if it was important, then he had to face it. Allison, she could be missing.

“We need to go to Allison’s,” Stiles said, she showed Peter Scott’s message.

“Christopher better not have left that bed,” Peter growled, starting the car up again.

Chapter End Notes

This feels short. But it's normal length and I don't know how to cope with that at the moment.

I hope y'all don't hate me too much for this, i have the next parts pretty much finished but there might be a slight delay as university work does need to be done and mental health is an issue (although I'm hoping a day dedicated to that will catch me up). I think that talk needed to happen and wow, things are going to start. Stiles just cannot catch a break just yet.
Missed

Peter pulled up to the Argent’s house. Stiles wasted no time in jumping out of the car and approaching the front door, it was ajar and Stiles could see the indent in the door where someone had seemed to have kicked it.

“Why are we waiting?” Derek’s annoyed tone cut through the silence on the other side of the door.

“Stiles needs to know,” Scott said back calmly.

“IT doesn’t concern him!” Derek pointed out. “He should be a kid, you shouldn’t even know.”

“Derek,” Allison, she was there too. She was safe. “Stiles has to know. We can’t leave him out of this.”

“Tell him to hurry up,” Derek snapped.

Stiles pushed the door open slowly to reveal Derek pacing. He saw the worried looks Allison and Scott gave him and it did nothing to ease the dread filling him.

“Who?” Stiles asked, because this behaviour wasn’t due to something missing, it was someone. Peter stopped appeared behind him, a hand on Stiles’ shoulder to keep him from shaking – or to stop him from shaking. Stiles felt like he was shaking. This wasn’t a false alarm. Something had happened.

“Stiles,” Allison said, her voice shaking as she came closer. “We – you need to stay calm.”

Stiles stepped back, stopping her from approaching, his back bumping into Peter’s chest as he did. There were so many possibilities in his mind as to what happened. He tried to convince himself that it couldn’t be his dad, he had seen him earlier and for a UTL to be called, there has to be evidence along with the missing person. There was no other reason for them to be as worried as they were.

“Who?” Stiles demanded, hoping his voice didn’t shake as he said it.

“Stiles,” Scott said. “Allison came home and found her house had been broken into.”

That explained the damaged door. It didn’t explain why Stiles was there though.

“I – I don’t know how they managed it because we have so many security systems in place. He would know as soon as the glass had broken but –” Allison tried to explain.

“Argent is missing,” Derek cut in.

“Arg – wait, what?” Stiles exhaled when his mind finally connected the words to what they actually meant. Chris. “What happened?” Stiles pushed his unease out of the equation as he stepped into the house, he fought back the shiver as he passed the threshold. He could do this. He had to. Stiles felt Peter’s grip on his shoulder tense.

“There is a broken window upstairs,” Allison said shakily. “No one is in the house but – it feels too planned.”

“Hunters?” Stiles asked, he could feel himself pushing the worry away, he didn’t have time to focus on that. Not now, not when something important like this was happening.

“We don’t have time for this, the house smells like hunters but it is a hunters’ house,” Derek pointed
“Stiles, Derek and I are going to search for him, for something,” Scott promised. “I need you to stay here and keep Allison safe. We don’t know if anyone will be back.”

“Go,” Stiles said, dismissing the two wolves. He turned his attention back to the door, pushing it all the way open and observing the dent as he moved away from Peter. “They kicked it in,” Stiles pointed out, talking more to Allison than the wolves who had still not moved.

“Frame is damaged as well,” Peter pointed out stiffly, he moved closer to see the damage, he pointed out the blistered wood.

“It was locked when they broke it,” Stiles agreed. “Where is the broken window?” he added, turning his attention to Allison. Stiles had half expected Peter to have left, to have run as soon as he knew that Chris was gone, but that didn’t fit Peter at all. Peter had never walked into danger unprepared, or without a plan.

“Stiles,” Scott said cautiously.

“You need to go looking for him,” Stiles snapped, the blank feeling he had erupted into a short-lived burst of anger. “We need a lead. Allison and I will find out what we can from here.”

“Ok,” Derek agreed. “Call us if anything changes.”

“If you do the same,” Stiles said firmly. Derek met the teen’s eyes and nodded stiffly. “What are you planning?” Stiles asked Peter, knowing that it would be unfair to boss him around, especially after the talk they had about letting the other make their own choices – even if that talk was largely irrelevant right now.

“Allison, which room was the window in?” Peter asked, answering Stiles’ question as he did.

Stiles nodded, accepting it. He knew that Peter was unlikely to run off without an idea of what he would be walking into. It was the smarter choice. If it were hunters, Derek and Scott were unlikely to find a real lead, not if they were good at what they did.

“Come on,” Allison said, making her way to the stairs.

Stiles followed, leaving Scott who seemed even more hesitant to leave. Stiles looked around, seeing the clear trail. Pictures were tilted, almost on the verge of falling and ornaments were smashed.

“It’s too controlled,” Peter noted.

“What do you mean?” Allison asked, glancing back with a frown.

“Look,” Stiles said. He pointed out the harder to reach areas that were showing signs of a struggle. Walking past Allison, he trailed his hand over the mess. It was a clear trail.

“It’s a path,” Allison said softly.

“They didn’t struggle here, it’s too clean,” Stiles frowned. “They did this before or after, but why?”

“Allison was right to describe it as a path,” Peter pointed out. A true struggle would have left a more expressive picture, especially one which involved Christopher Argent.

They followed the trail to a single room. Stiles didn’t realise just which room he was in until he saw Allison’s concerned look. His breath caught, he stepped back, shaking his head. He couldn’t go
“Stiles…”

“It was hunters,” Stiles said firmly. He could feel the hair on his neck stand. “They were trying to tell us something.”

“What? What were they trying to tell us?” Allison asked, her tone urgent.

“Stiles,” Peter said gently, he turned the boy’s head towards him, making him refocus away from the room. “Keep talking,” he prompted.

“If they have Chris –” and Stiles truly thought they had. This was too much effort to go through and Chris could have interrupted them easily. “If – there’s no real evidence of a struggle. There’s no visible blood, nothing beyond thought out trails. They didn’t want to hurt him,” Stiles pointed out, his mouth drying as he spoke.

“So, they wanted him as... what? As bait?” she asked.

Stiles didn’t say anything, his stomach felt like lead. He pulled out his phone, unlocking it onto the unknown message and the pieces clicked uncomfortably fast. He typed ‘Who are you?’ and debated sending it, expecting no reply. Before waiting to see if he was right, he deleted the drafted message and shut his phone down. It didn’t add up. There was something missing.

“Look in there,” Stiles said. “I’m going – I can’t go in there,” he finalised. He watched as Allison went into the room, she left the door open behind her, the window was shattered and near it amongst the glass was a brick.

“Stiles…” Peter murmured.

“I – Jesus Peter,” Stiles said quietly, letting himself be pulled into an embrace. It wasn’t just for his benefit, he realised as Peter drew a large breath against his neck. Peter needed the comfort as much as he did – it was his soulmate. Peter hadn’t actively fought the bond. Peter loved Chris, or at least felt strongly enough to spend his free time with the man.

“Can you track him?” Stiles asked softly. He wasn’t sure if he was asking about the bond being strong enough or Peter’s abilities as a wolf but Allison’s shocked gasp pulled him back to the situation at hand.

“What is it?” Stiles demanded.

“There – look,” she quickly left the room and hurried to Stiles’ side. In her hand was a torn piece of paper.

“Give me it,” his voice shook, he couldn’t move any further into the room, he just couldn’t. He needed to see what was on the paper, but he knew that it was nothing good. He took the note from her, his hands shaking as he read it.

_You kept it secret little lamb, only one monster for a mate. Let’s have another talk soon, I want to hear the real story behind my friend’s death, it might just save Argent’s life._

“What does it mean? Why are they - what did they do to you?”

Stiles shook his head.
“Tell no one about this,” Stiles exhaled. “No one.”

“Don’t do anything stupid,” Allison said firmly. “Either of you.”

“What if - what if they meant it? What if Chris -”

“Stiles,” Peter growled, gripping both of his shoulders and turning him to face him. “Christopher is going to be ok. *Nothing* will happen to him.”

“We *will* find them,” Allison promised. “We will do it together. I’m not letting you go alone.”
Stiles was thankful for Peter’s presence. It grounded him in ways that Allison couldn’t have. It eased the panic and helped Stiles focus on trying to find the answer they needed. Stiles hoped he was able to help Peter in a similar way, even though he doubted it.

He was even more thankful when Peter had led him away from that room. Peter had continued to murmur soft assurances as they made their way down to the dining table. He didn’t offer everything will be ok, but more we will make them regret this. He had promised that Chris would be perfectly fine, but it was only said to stop the building panic, as soon as Stiles was calmer, Peter spoke more realistic assurances. Ones that promised retribution, ones that promised justice for anything that might happen.

“They’re not going to find a scent,” Stiles pointed out.

“You don’t know that,” Allison protested, glancing over to the doorway as if Scott and Derek would appear and prove him wrong.

Stiles looked down, the note that Allison had found was spread out on the table. I want to hear the real story behind my friend’s death. It didn’t make sense.

“It’s been over a month,” Stiles mused out loud, his eyes still on the note. “Why would they wait so long?”

“How do you know that it’s hunters?” Allison asked. “I mean, it makes sense but you’re saying it like it’s fact.”

“That – the room they broke the window – they made a path,” Stiles said shakily. “It was that room, when they – Peter, they have to know what happened before. There is no way all of this is a coincidence.”

“But why?” Peter questioned quietly, pulling Stiles’ worried expression away from Allison. “Why go through all of this trouble for you?”

“I –” Stiles’ mouth was dry. That was what he didn’t understand. The hunters had clearly wanted Stiles, but it didn’t make sense. “They know that Gerard is dead,” Stiles pointed out. “They don’t know why – they – they guess I did it?” Stiles offered.

“Gerard died with many others,” Peter pointed out. “They would be stupid to think you did all of that alone.”

“So they think my dad had something to do with it?” Allison pointed out.

“Then why take him to get to you?” Peter asked Stiles. “Why not just take Christopher, or even take you to lure him?”

“Chris – he wouldn’t talk. He wouldn’t tell them the truth, they – they’re taught about it. They have to be,” Stiles frowned. “I – I’m just a kid,” Stiles pointed out. “If they hurt me – if they threaten me then I’ll talk,” he explained. “I don’t have any pain resistance training, they’ll be able to learn what they want to.”
“That could be why,” Peter agreed. “It doesn’t explain how they got Christopher,” he added with a sigh. He knew that there were many ways to explain that, if they had been watching, then they would have noticed the illness, especially since Chris had been rather out of it with the medication. It fit too nicely, as Stiles had suggested, it seemed too planned for it all to be a coincidence. So, how did they adapt their plans when they learnt of Chris being ill? Was the illness planned? How did they know that Chris was Stiles’ soulmate? “There is a lot that isn’t explained,” Peter sighed again.

“Why now?” Stiles asked, pointing out one of the things Peter had pointed out as unexplained. “What happened to make them do this now? They’ve had a chance to get me, I was alone most of the past week, but instead they took Chris. Why?”

“You weren’t alone,” Allison pointed out. She had stood to the side and mostly observed the conversation with a growing horror. “Scott and I were almost always with you –”

“You two aren’t exactly an issue if they wanted to take him,” Peter pointed out lightly.

“If they wanted it to be unnoticed…” Stiles trailed off. He frowned more at the piece of paper, if they wanted it unnoticed, why take Chris? “Allison, do you know what hunters are still in town?” he asked urgently.

“Um, not really. Dad normally has it all, they talk you know. Argent’s settled here so there shouldn’t be anyone else,” she explained.

“But Gerard brought a group of hunters with him,” Stiles pointed out. “Peter you said Chris was sick, what was wrong with him?” Stiles asked firmly, not giving Peter any room to avoid the question.

“He was just ill,” Peter frowned. “Nauseous, dizzy, fever… it wasn’t anything worrying. Human’s get sick all the time,” he added.

“But what if he wasn’t just ill?” Stiles asked, staring at Peter hard. “Did you notice anything different?” he asked. “Strange smells? Other people?”

“Stiles,” Peter sighed. “If I noticed something I wouldn’t have left him alone. I merely checked on him before meeting you and he seemed fine beyond the fever. He had called me to say he couldn’t make it because he was sick. I checked on him within half an hour and sent him to bed once I noticed he was dizzy and clearly not thinking clearly.”

“He was fine this morning,” Allison frowned. “No signs of any of that,” she continued.

“Ok,” Stiles nodded. None of it was adding up. Nothing made sense. If Chris was ill, he would show signs of it beforehand. If someone had tampered with it and made him ill, Peter would have noticed, he would have smelt something.

“Wait,” Allison frowned. “Can you notice things without a smell?” she asked, turning to Peter.

“What are you thinking huntress?” Peter asked curiously as he tilted his head to observe her where she stood.

“Just – what if someone slipped him something? There are supposedly drugs that are odourless, would you be able to notice that?” she stared at Peter hard. Not letting herself cower under Peter’s curious gaze.

“We can’t keep guessing,” Stiles snapped. “He might have just been sick. We need to think of how to get him back,” he stressed. “We need a plan of action. Can you track him?” Stiles turned to Peter,
meeting the wolf’s eyes with a steely look, almost daring him to disagree.

“There’s a chance,” Peter nodded. “I cannot say for sure until he reaches for us,” he explained. “There’s only so much that I can – he needs to be conscious and aware for the bond to work that much,” Peter said gently. He didn’t want to get Stiles’ hopes up, not about this.

“Then we plan,” Stiles said firmly. “We plan for the worst, that there are hundreds of hunters waiting, that Chris is – that he cannot help us when we get to him. We need to plan how to make them pay for this.” Stiles ignored Allison’s partially worried and partially concerned look that she sent his way as he continued to stare at Peter.

Peter watched Stiles curiously. The panic the boy had was subdued, leaving a simmering rage in its place. It had been a while since he had seen such an intense anger within the teen. It brought him back to the night he had followed them around the school, the calm but deadly presence. It was enchanting to see. To witness when not directed at yourself. It wouldn’t be like Gerard’s death, somehow, this would be even more personal to Stiles. It showed in his reactions to Chris being taken. Peter couldn’t wait to see what Stiles would do. What the teen would cause.

Chapter End Notes

Some Chris’ perspective next? We can find out just what is happening with him and learn why.
Chris’ conscious mind did not come back online at the rate he was used to, it seemed to crawl to the forefront of Chris’ brain before stopping to catch its breath. He knew that he wasn’t at home, he wasn’t where he should be. The alertness that meant to arrive with that realisation was nowhere in sight. Acknowledging that caused a small burst of panic, one that stopped almost as soon as he noticed it. Perhaps he was still asleep, that would explain it.

There was a noise behind him, which made Chris turn his head after a second.

“P’t’r,” he managed to get out, the word not cooperating with his mind. The word was delayed, spoken several long seconds after he thought to say it.

“Chris Argent,” a voice said behind him. “I wonder if you would recognise me,” the man mused. “It’s been a while since we have seen each other, your father was more interested in my business if I’m being honest. I had enough sense to leave town after what happened.”

Chris listened as footsteps moved behind him until the man was within viewing distance. The words that were spoken mostly went over Chris’ head, not making sense in his jumbled mind. Squinting slightly, he could make out the long brown hair, the blue top and the black trousers, but further features were just not coming to him.

“Wh’t y’u d’to me?” Chris slurred. There was something seriously wrong, he felt as though he was crumbled, as though his bones were nothing more than string that was being held up by something out of his body. Chris tried to push himself forward, he knew that he was sat on a chair, he could feel the back of it against him. Chris only grew more frustrated with his body as all he managed was to squirm in place.

“Don’t strain yourself Argent,” the man chuckled. He stepped closer, taking a seat on the chair in front of Chris. “We put another dose in you before you woke up, had to make sure you weren’t going anywhere.”

“Wh’t?” The realisation was slow but overwhelming. It made sense, sickeningly enough. Chris’ thoughts were all over the place, his body not responding to him or taking longer than normal to respond, it even took a few seconds for him to take in his surroundings. Drugs made sense.

“It’s good,” the man said, his features more visible to Chris. The striking green eyes, the smug smirk. “Hunters often forget that drugs are something so debilitating, everyone forgets. Something as simple as powder can knock an adult out, some clear liquid can be added to a drink and the next few hours are a blur,” there was another chuckle. “It’s nice to know that Gerard didn’t take your training that far, otherwise, we would have needed more than just a little bit of rope around your wrists.”

Almost as though the words had opened Chris’ senses, he noticed the tightness around his wrists. He couldn’t stop the frown as he tried to pull at the restraint, barely even managing to wriggle his arms beyond the rope.

“I would like to know what happened to Raymond, you remember him right?” the man said slowly, recapturing Chris’ attention. “He was with us when the kid was taken. Bit too eager, likes to take his time to get what he wants,” the kidnapper – is it kidnapping when it’s an adult? Chris knew there
was a better word to put to the man but it just didn’t come to him. “You see, I expected Raymond back a month ago, but I knew that our job can take longer than expected, so I waited.”

“W’rríd?” Chris rolled his eyes, growing even more annoyed at the delay it took.

“Not as worried as I am pissed,” the abductor – *that’s the word* – said calmly. “If I thought I’d get an answer from you, I’d already be hurting you. I know what happened to Gerard,” the green eyes met Chris’ blue with a hard look. “If I find out that Raymond was in that building when it burnt, I will take my time to hurt the boy and I’ll keep you drugged enough to watch it without being able to do a single thing.”

“D’n’t b’rn,” Chris mumbled. “Was found.”

“Someone’s speaking clearer. Do we need another dosage?” the green eyes came closer as the man leant forward. He gripped Chris’ chin with a firm hand, chuckling to himself when Chris feebly tried to move away. “Not just yet. Let me know when you feel strong enough to actually move. Now, where was I?”

The hand on his face left as the man stood. He moved out of sight, the sudden silence and emptiness around him making Chris’ head spin. It felt as though the room was moving around him, taunting him with how powerless he was.

Chris wasn’t sure how much time had passed when the hunter with abandonment issues came back into view with a wicked grin on his face and a hand holding something shiny by his side. Chris knew that he was at this man’s mercy, at least until he had enough of himself back to shake off the heaviness in his body.

“We don’t know that this will work,” Allison pointed out, past the point of pleading with Stiles as Derek frowned.

“We aren’t risking it,” Derek had grumbled. “You’ll get hurt.”

“That’s the thing!” Stiles snapped. “If they just wanted to hurt me, they could have just taken me when no one was around, instead they took Chris and there has to be a reason.”

“We aren’t letting you just walk into danger,” Scott growled.

“I’m the one they want! That note was left for me;” Stiles said loudly, he looked back to Peter, who was watching him with an expressionless mask.

“How are you so sure?” Derek asked.

Stiles froze for a moment, his breath speeding up before he shook himself. It was now or never.

“Chris is my soulmate, or one of them,” Stiles said calmly. “The other is a werewolf, when – when they took me last time, they made a point of how much of a monster – but it doesn’t matter,” Stiles ground out. “They have Chris and I’m not just going to sit here and let you all –”

“Stiles,” Scott said quietly, cutting Derek’s confused spluttering about Chris being Stiles’ soulmate off. “We aren’t going to let you get hurt.”

“You can’t stop me,” Stiles pointed out softly. He noticed both Allison and Peter tense beside him. “Either you are aware of what I do, or I do it without backup, but I’m not – I cannot just sit around and wait. I refuse.”
“What’s your plan?” Peter asked, speaking for the first time since Derek and Scott had come back with no leads. Stiles gave the man a thankful look, even as Scott protested.

“I think they sent me a message,” Stiles said slowly, noting how Peter tensed further. “I – I didn’t really think much of it, but it used the same name as the note. If – we can find them through that. They clearly want to be found,” he pointed out. “I could send them a message, or call them and find somewhere to meet and they’ll think I’m alone and –”

“No,” Peter said firmly. “You are not being bait, nor are you walking into a trap.”

“Peter,” Stiles hissed. “It’s the only way to get him back without waiting. What if – what if they did something?”

“Christopher would agree,” Peter said.

“Christopher could be hurt,” Stiles snapped bitterly. “I’m not going to sit around and wait to find his body.”

“Stiles,” Allison said gently, a hand on his arm. “We’ll figure out something, something that won’t put you in danger but keeps him safe and gets him back as soon as we can. Just let us try,” she begged.

Chapter End Notes

*offers blankets and pillows to those that might want them* I think the next part will be the rescue. On the plus side, Stiles has really accepted them now!
Siles tried to calm his shaking hands, he held his phone tight. He could feel Peter watching him. Stiles knew that everyone else was stood around out of view, ready to spring into action if they were needed, even though Stiles had made them all promise to stay away. They hadn’t, and Stiles couldn’t blame them.

Glancing down, Stiles saw his phone still turned on and unlocked, the screen glowing brightly even with the dim sunlight all around. The messages were visible to anyone close enough on the empty street. It had taken a while, but Stiles had managed to convince Peter to let him do this. To put himself in this situation, to contact them.

**Tell me where, just don’t hurt him.**

**Be alone little lamb**

The response that was given to Stiles, was followed with the street Stiles waited on. The one that was undoubtedly watched. It would be foolish to believe at least a pair of the eyes on him didn’t belong to someone that had taken Chris. It wouldn’t surprise him if they had followed him since he left his house.

The discussion at Chris’ had lasted late into the night, planning and theorising on just what they could do. It was failed attempts to get Stiles safe that finally made Peter listen. He didn’t like it, the man had protested a lot, but they knew it was best. Everyone present knew. Stiles saw it in the grim determination, in the visible concern, the fear.

It would be a lie for Stiles to try and say he wasn’t scared.

Taking a deep breath, the teenager shoved his hands into the pockets of his jacket, hiding the trembling fingers and the phone from any onlookers. His feeling of dread grew when a car approached him slowly, the windows tinted. He swallowed around the dry lump in his throat, knowing that this was it. The window lowered slowly.

“You look lost lamb, want a ride somewhere safe?” the man in the driver’s seat asked. The brown eyes shining in amusement and his voice cocky. Stiles didn’t recognise him, it wasn’t any of the hunters he had seen before. “Just climb in the back kid,” the man said when Stiles didn’t respond, his voice losing the lightness.

Stiles took a second, aware that his fear was only growing. He gritted his teeth, giving the driver a stiff nod before moving to the door. A deep breath. He could do this. He needed to do this. There was another person in the car, sat in the back, waiting for Stiles to join him. Watching as the door opened.

Stiles would be lying if he said he wasn’t disgusted. He didn’t want to be in such a small space with any of them, he didn’t even want to look at any of them. It was to find Chris, he had to remind himself.

Climbing into the car took more control than Stiles would care to admit. The urge to run the opposite direction was too strong for him to just slide in, not when there were obvious predators about.
Without a doubt, these men were predators.

“Phone,” the man in the back with Stiles demanded once the door was closed.

Knowing that it would be useless to argue, or even pretend, Stiles handed the phone over slowly. He had expected as much. It would be stupid of them to let him keep it on him. He watched as the man took it, taking his time to power down the phone, sending Stiles a grin.

“Wouldn’t want anyone tracking it now would we?” he pointed out.

“Not completely stupid then,” Stiles couldn’t help but quip.

“Barnes is going to love you,” the driver chuckled. “Hands Len,” he added with a glance back.

“Hands kid,” Len said, pulling a set of zip ties from the pocket in the back of the seat in front of him.

“Downgraded from actual cuffs?” Stiles asked, aiming to make his tone biting, to show that he wasn’t scared. He guessed it didn’t work as Len grabbed the hand closer to him and wrapped one of the plastic ties around it, he laid another against his wrist before pulling the first tight.

“Other hand kid,” Len smirked.

“Tell me his name first,” Stiles demanded, nodding to the driver.

“You’re in no position to make demands lamb,” the driver chuckled.

“Barnes didn’t expect you to contact us so soon,” Len continued, reaching for Stiles’ hand as if he hadn’t heard the request. “You haven’t exactly been on good terms with Argent since you made out in the street.”

Stiles froze, staring at the hunter next to him in shock. Len took this as an opportunity to grasp Stiles’ free hand tightly, pulling it over and locking it in the open zip tie. He pulled the bound hands closer to him as he grabbed another zip tie, a longer one than the two around his wrists. Len wrapped it around both of Stiles’ wrists, over the already locked ties before pulling that one tight and letting Stiles pull his hands back.

“Just so you don’t get out too easily,” he winked.

“You’ve been watching me,” Stiles said quietly, watching Len warily.

“Of course, we have,” the driver laughed. “Ever since Barnes realised Raymond was missing and we heard about Gerard being murdered. Got to hand it to you kid, it was a nice murder.”

Stiles tried to block the words out. He needed to feel calm. He had to stay calm. He couldn’t let himself get overwhelmed, not here, not now. They had been watching him. They saw him kiss Chris – they had to know that he had been socialising with Chris and Peter.

“How long have you -?” he started to ask.

“Long enough kid,” Len smirked. “We went after the mate that was easier after all,” he pointed out.

“You – you think Argent is my soulmate?” Stiles asked shakily, hoping that it would work again. He hoped they were as arrogant as Gerard, that they would hear what they wanted to.

“We know he is,” Len said with a shake of his head.
“Maybe I just have a thing for older guys?” Stiles suggested, knowing that his voice was betraying how uncalm he actually was.

“You said it yourself kid,” the driver pointed out, and Stiles could hear the amusement in his voice. “Soulmates,” he shook his head. “Silly of you to say it out in the open, but what else can we expect from a kid?”

Stiles swallowed thickly. He had only said it out loud once, unless they had bugged his house. They had been following him – they knew. They had heard it from him and had seen him interact with both men. Stiles could feel the panic building. He hadn’t anticipated this. Not to this extent, he thought they were running on suspicions alone, not actual knowledge.

“Think he’s finally realised just what’s happening,” Len chuckled. “Might even pass out.”

“I’m not carrying him in –”

“I secured him!” Len hissed.

Stiles tried to ignore the bickering between the two men. The plan had to change. He only hoped that Peter wouldn’t kill him for it, and that Chris was ok.

Chapter End Notes

So Stiles gets to see Chris next, and he is asked a few small questions.
Hold On To Hope

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Stiles made a noise of protest when he was pushed forward. It took a great deal of strength for Stiles to keep his mouth shut. He wanted to snap, say something about how it wasn’t very nice to treat guests in such a manner, but he knew that would only make things worse. Stiles was just waiting for his moment. For the chance to be alone and to see if the trick to breaking the zip ties worked. He hadn’t had the chance to test it yet, which was unfortunate, something that would have to be rectified.

A hand on his shoulder stopped Stiles from continuing forward. The fingers dug into his skin despite the clothing. It made the boy hiss, the noise being pushed beyond the filter Stiles had set up to keep himself as safe as possible.

“Did you search him?” a new voice joined the group. It was pure willpower that stopped Stiles turning. This man must have been Barnes, unless there was another. The voice unfamiliar, but threatening. It was overwhelming, stifling.

“Wasn’t aware you wanted us to,” Stiles heard Len faintly behind him.

Unable to stop himself, he turned in time to see the other man – Barnes shoot the man at his shoulder an annoyed look. It had been months, but his face was one that Stiles couldn’t forget. The expression was different, but the intensity in the murky green eyes was the same. He barely looked different, yet at the same time, everything about him was different. Last time, it was Gerard that commanded the room, the one in charge. This man – he had stood to the side, watching the ongoings with little interest, merely observing as the others took part. Yet now, he was the one in charge, the one demanding attention by his presence alone.

“He knew he was meeting us, do you really think he doesn’t have something planned?” Barnes hissed, he didn’t want for a response before he was bounding past the driver in long strides. “I’m surrounded by idiots,” Barnes sneered as he turned Stiles to face him fully. “If you don’t tell us where every single weapon is, we’ll make sure Argent pays. It’s your choice, tell us and he stays relatively unhurt, hell, we’ll even let you see him,” he offered. The tone of his words were all wrong, they were harsh and mocking. “Agree?”

“I don’t ha –” Stiles was cut off as he was backhanded, the words turning into a gasp. Len’s grasp on him was the only reason he hadn’t moved with the hit.

“Try again before I count that as one lie,” Barnes threatened.

“I’m not stupid,” Stiles bit out. There wasn’t much time for the words to sink in before Barnes had ripped him from Len’s grasp and pushed him face-first against the wall.

“I’m inclined to believe that,” Barnes admitted. “Search him,” he ordered, stepping back. Stiles didn’t have time to move before another set of hands pushed him forward again.

“Don’t move kid,” the driver suggested, his voice close to Stiles’ ear as a hand pressed his shoulder forward against the wall.

“You’re disgusting,” Stiles hissed, he could feel the man’s hands moving slowly from his shoulders down his back before he reached forward and ran his hands upwards.
“Tops clear,” the driver said. He ignored Stiles squeak of protest as the hands moved downwards once again, reaching into the pocket of his jeans before doing the same for the back pockets.

“Get off me!” Stiles snapped, trying to move away as hands touched his thigh.

“Now kid, I have a job to do. Just think of it as a nice friendly pat-down,” the man chuckled.

“Molestation part of the job?” Stiles asked bitterly, trying to ignore the hands on him and how invasive it felt. He had hoped they would have been as arrogant as Gerard had, that they wouldn’t think to actually check him.

“Perks of it,” an amused voice broke into Stiles’ thoughts. There was a second before a victorious ‘aha’ came from the man.

“It isn’t a weapon,” Stiles said automatically. He wasn’t lying when he said that he wasn’t stupid. As much as he hoped that they would be dumb, he couldn’t have risked Chris like that. Stiles had left the morning with nothing on him except his phone and Scott’s old inhaler.

“You don’t need this,” Barnes said, taking the small object from the still unnamed man. “Who’s is it?”

“It’s mine,” Stiles tried. “I – I didn’t know how Chris was so I wanted to be prepared.”


“Take it and make sure it’s destroyed,” Barnes said. “Steve, you know what to do.”

Stiles closed his eyes, knowing that they couldn’t see his face at the moment. He felt Steve move away from him. He had hoped that they would let him keep the inhaler, it had been part of Peter agreeing to let Stiles take such a huge risk, after all, they had managed to put a small tracking device on it thanks to Scott visiting Danny.

“Ready to see sleeping beauty?” Len asked as another pair of hands gripped Stiles’ shoulders and pulled him back away from the wall. “He wasn’t all that aware when we last saw him.”

“What did you do?” Stiles asked, looking over his shoulder to see what was around him. Len was the closest, a hand on Stiles as he pushed him forward and guided the way whilst Barnes trailed lazily. Steve was nowhere in sight.

“He’s just letting the drink we made work,” Len said with a wide grin. “All Barnes idea of course. Kids don’t even question why drinks appear unopened in the house.”

“What?” Stiles gasped, coming to a stop. He turned to stare at the two men. “What – ”

“Drugs,” Barnes supplied. “Simple date-rape stuff, I’m surprised at how well they worked.”

“But that –”

“Keep walking kid,” Len said, nudging Stiles forward again.

“ – That doesn’t – how did you even –”

“As I said,” Len said, his voice harder. “Kids don’t question it. It was just a waiting game after the drinks were put into Argent’s care.”

Stiles shook his head, “the wolves –”
“Mix it with something fruity, you can’t taste or smell it,” Barnes said, moving past them as he pushed a door open. “Now shut up before we gag you.”

Stiles’ eyes widened as the room ahead of them was revealed. He could see Chris from where he was. The man was obviously tied to the chair, ropes around his ankles visible despite the fact he was seemingly unconscious. Stiles swallowed thickly, Chris’ head was bent forward, adding to the image of him being unconscious.

“We don’t have all day,” Len said. “In fact, you have a few minutes before we pull you away from him again.”

Stiles looked over to the man in shock, taking a second to digest the words before he scrambled forward. He needed to make sure Chris was ok, it was important. He hadn’t expected Chris to be drugged, or unconscious. It made the plan slightly riskier. There was no way that Chris would be able to help them, not like this.

“Chris?” Stiles said quietly, hoping that the two men wouldn’t hear him. He reached forward with his bound hands, lifting Chris’ head gently. Leaning closer, Stiles pressed his forehead to Chris’, hoping it was enough. He desperately wanted to hear Chris’ voice, or even see his eyes, but the touch would have to do.

“No!” Stiles protested loudly as he was pulled backwards. “Please! No –”

“Times up kid,” Len said, the amusement vacant from his voice.

“Please,” Stiles begged, his voice catching slightly. “I need to know he’s ok.” He didn’t voice the other thoughts that continued, *I need to know that this isn’t for nothing. Peter needs to be able to find us. I need to know that he’s ok so I can get through this.*

“If you answer our questions, he will be.”

Chapter End Notes

I hurt myself when writing this, especially that last part. Poor Stiles. Next part will be the questions, and then I believe we will also get the start of Peter arriving, because I can't keep this going. I just want them happy. I did plan on Stiles seeing Chris for a little longer, but the hunters probably thought it would be better to keep Stiles concerned.
Remember

Chapter Notes

So University is over, I'm just waiting on exam results before I start panicking about what to do next. So I thought I'd write again, well, I took a week or so to relax and breathe after the chaos of the past few months. BUT I am back darlings! This is a smallish update that I'm not 100% happy with but the next part involves more Stiles being sneaky and then Peter maybe appearing. Oh! And I'm planning to update Safe Space in the next few days, if all goes well, I am at home so more nsfw stuff is harder to write with children (and parents) around. I'm also committing to working on another when I get this one a bit more done, because we're coming to the end I think, then it's more a fluffy story in the works along with the slightly porny one.

Now, just for a reminder, Stiles has joined Chris' abductors, his wrists were bound with the threat of answering questions to ensure Chris' safety.

“Do you remember me?” Barnes asked, his tone light as he watched Stiles struggle against Len’s hold on his shoulder. Stiles had struggled since he was pulled from Chris, trying to get back. Even in his frenzied mind, Stiles had done his best to keep Barnes in his peripheral vision as least, he didn’t want to lose sight of the man. He couldn’t risk anything happening.

“Not an easy memory to forget,” Stiles grumbled, wincing as fingers dug into his shoulder. A silent warning from Len to dial back on his attitude.

“So, you remember me, that’s always a good start,” Barnes said casually, he sat across from Stiles, leaving Len the only one still stood in the room. “What about everybody else? If they were in a crowd of people, would you still remember them?”

“If you really lured me out here to ask if you made a lasting impre –” Stiles cut himself off with a groaned curse as Len's grip tightened even more.

“Watch it,” he had hissed.

"We have been rather hospitable Stiles," Barnes said, an air of disappointment in his tone as he waited for Stiles to meet his eyes once again. "We could bring Argent in and see just how much you want to test our patience."

Stiles set his jaw, he heard the threat. He knew that they wouldn't hesitate to hurt Chris - he needed to keep himself set on his task. He needed to be sensible about this, at least until Peter arrived.

"Why do you need me to know the others?" Stiles asked stiffly, trying to keep his tone clear of any accusations or snark. He watched as Barnes looked over Stiles' shoulder and inclined his head.

A hand appeared in front of Stiles' eyes, a fading picture gasped. The picture held Barnes, he looked younger - carefree, looking at the young man in the picture, it was strange to think of what he turned into. Part of Stiles wondered just what had happened, what tragic hunter background happened to change the man in front of him into this hardened. Next to the younger green-eyed abductor, was another man - another one that Stiles recognised all too quickly. It wasn't the actual features on him
that drew Stiles in, rather, the distinct star that was carved into the man's cheek, the same one that he had seen before him too often.

"When did you last see him?" Barnes asked, voice soft as he watched Stiles carefully for any indication of Raymond being hurt.

Stiles wet his lips, his eyes moving quickly from the picture, up to Barnes before settling back on the picture again. He couldn't - it wouldn't be a good idea to admit just when he had last seen the man in the picture. Not yet. Not before Stiles had a guarantee that Chris was safe.

"I suggest you talk kid," Len said quietly, removing the picture from view.

"I don't -"

"Don't you dare lie," Barnes hissed.

"Ok!" Stiles said, trying to keep Barnes somewhat calm. He lifted his hands slightly as he spoke, aiming for a hand-up 'I'm not a threat', it didn't quite work with his hands still bound in front of him. "I - I have seen him. He was part of -"

"Since then?" Barnes asked, leaning forward. "I know you saw him that first time."

"I -" Stiles glanced around the room, partially hoping to see Peter lurking, he'd willingly take any of the wolves hidden in the shadows, just someone to prove that he wasn't in danger.

Barnes sighed. It was loud and drawn out. He stood back up, his back to Stiles as he stepped away. Stiles could feel the heaviness in his stomach, unsure of just what was going to happen.

"You should know, when Argent woke up, he asked for the wolf. Didn't even consider asking about you." The words Barnes said made Stiles breath catch slightly. It was illogical to be upset, not when - it was normal for Chris to ask for Peter.

"He's known Peter longer," Stiles pointed out stiffly, trying to push away the hurt. They had been together, they cared about each other. Stiles had been pushing both of them away, it was understandable that Chris was asking for Peter -

"New bonds are always stronger," Barnes pointed out, interrupting Stiles' thought process. "But then, you've all spent time apart a lot lately, makes you think about how important your bond is to them."

"I know what you're doing.," Stiles forced out, he could feel the heaviness in his stomach growing. He was just trying to make Stiles feel insecure. Trying to make Stiles want to keep himself safe and no one else.

"We haven't done anything to dampen your bond, why hasn't the wolf already found you?" Barnes asked. "He knows how to use bonds, we've seen enough evidence of that, so why doesn't he care about you? Just what does he prefer about Argent?"

"It's none of your business," Stiles ground out. "Who was the other guy? Your bond?" Stiles groaned as Len dug his fingers into Stiles' shoulder once again.

"He wasn't," Barnes said. "Otherwise I would have already killed Argent."

"You don't even know that -"
"He's dead?" Barnes finished. "I'm fairly sure. This isn't like him."

"What will you do if he is?" Stiles couldn't help but asking.

Barnes turned back to Stiles slowly, regarding him. Stiles knew that he offered no real threat. He was sat, held in place by Len's hand on his shoulder. Add in the bound wrists and the age, Stiles had nothing visible against Barnes. A trained hunter against an untrained teenager who runs with werewolves.

"If he is dead, I'll make sure whoever did it suffers," Barnes promised before leaving the room.

Against his better judgement, as soon as Barnes left, Stiles partly relaxed. Even knowing that Len was still behind him, he felt safer without the other man around.

"You might want to stop," Len warned quietly. "He's on a crusade."

"Says the lackey that helps lure underage kids," Stiles hissed as he tried to move out of Len's grasp.

"He knows about Gerard," Len continued, refusing to release his grip on Stiles. "There was a fire, if he finds out that Raymond was in -"

"I don't know what happened to him," Stiles interrupted. It wasn't a lie, the man had been out of Stiles' sight when he had died, and he trusted Peter enough to believe him and the group were dead. Raymond - the man in the picture, was one of the group that had followed him that night, the night that Chris, Peter and himself had truly spoken. It was the man that had pressed him against the wall,

"Just tell him what he wants to know," Len advised. "Otherwise he'll do his best to make you talk."

"I don't know for sure what happened," Stiles tried to explain. "I just saw him ok? I didn't even talk -"

"Just tell him what he wants to know when he gets back and you'll be able to go home," Len said calmly, squeezing Stiles' shoulder gentler than he had done previously. He finally lifted his hand from Stiles, and made his own way to follow Barnes with a warning to Stiles to stay where he was.

"No I won't," Stiles muttered, continuing mentally about how he wasn't dumb enough to believe that after all of this, he would just be let go. On the plus side, he had been left alone, he could try his best to break out of the zip ties and find a way out before they came back - the only possible issue was what they would do to Chris if he managed to escape.
Stiles glanced around the room once again, making sure that the two men had left and that he was alone. He didn’t believe for a second that he’d be able to go home if he told them everything — anything. There was no way that Barnes would be happy with any answer, especially not that Raymond was more than likely dead at Peter’s hands because of what he had done and said.

The room was empty. That worked in his favour. Stiles stood up, feeling slightly off-balance as he did so. He wouldn’t normally use his arms to steady himself but he really felt the loss of his arms, perhaps it was just the whole situation.

“Ok Stiles,” Stiles said quietly, the words barely audible to his own ears. “It looked simple. You can do this, just up and down. It might hurt,” he tried to prepare himself. “Staying here might hurt worse though. You can do this, Stilinski men are made of iron, I can channel Tony if I want t-” he continued to ramble as he stood comfortably. He kept his feet about shoulder width apart, trying to keep himself steady. Raising his bound arms, he slowly brought them back down towards his waist, wincing as the ties dug into his wrists.

He hadn’t tried this before, but he had seen it work.

“Ok Stiles,” he whispered. “Just a little quicker, no stopping. I can do this. I’m the goddamn man,” he finished as he raised his arms once again. He paused for a second, trying to remind himself of just how important this was, how he refused to be a victim again.

Stiles closed his eyes tightly before he pulled his arms back down at a much faster rate.

“Fuck – shit – ow – I am so not the man,” Stiles groaned, his eyes wide open once more as he looked down at his still bound hands. “That looks so much easier than it is. Peter, if you are in hearing distance, get your ass here right now,” he hissed, shaking his arms, trying to ease the pain in his wrists where the ties had dug into his skin.

Stiles began to think once more. There was no use running. They would probably catch him before he managed to leave. They could even be between the exit and Stiles.

No matter. Stiles couldn’t wait, he couldn’t just… he was torn between leaving, Peter had taken longer than he had promised, but Stiles also wanted — no needed to make sure Chris was ok. The very brief moment Stiles had to see Chris was not enough. Granted, Stiles knew Chris was reasonably ok, he didn’t quite know how he knew, but something in him told him that Chris was mostly ok.

“Peter,” Stiles said softly, making his way to the only door, the same one that Len and Barnes had left through. “Hurry the fuck up man.”

Stiles didn’t feel confident walking down the corridor, it was dimly lit, several doors branching off and no guarantee where the other occupants of this run-down building were.

“Time to channel my brave side,” Stiles whispered. “I am a badass.”

Stiles swallowed thickly, trying his best to stay calm as he stepped into the hallway. It was dim enough that Stiles had to squint in order to view his surroundings. It was filthy, something Stiles had
not focused on when he was forced down the hall to begin with.

Stiles took another breath, he had to be brave. He stepped forward once more, half expecting either man to rush towards him with threats already spilling from their lips. Yet, nothing came. It was silent, unnervingly so. The reality of the situation had once again begun to sink in, if Peter didn’t arrive, then there was no saying what might happen.

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

Peter came to a stop, his attention solely focused on the four heartbeats that he could hear clearly. Two were calm, beating at a typical rate, one was slower than the average human and the other was fast. Unless Chris was elsewhere, there was still one person unaccounted for in the building. Granted, there was the possibility that the extra person was the one taking the trackers on Stiles elsewhere. This was the first stop that had happened after Stiles had climbed into the car, ignoring his own anxiety on the poorly thought out plan.

It had been Stiles’ own insistence to act so quickly. Something Peter both admired and feared. There was never anything good to come from people holding someone’s soulmate, and both of Peter’s were now in the hands of madmen. Ones that still hadn’t made their true demands known – or not that Peter was aware of.

The fast heart rate sped up some more, causing Peter to focus what he could on that one individual. They were moving slowly, not much but there was movement. If Peter were to guess, this person was either one of the men who was now only beginning to doubt their actions, or Stiles. Stiles would be the better choice between the two, even though him being alone did now seem right.

The other three heartbeats were together, the two calm ones barely differing. It was disconcerting how slow the last heart was compared to the others. Whomever this person was, they were not fully capable of anything right now.

As much as Peter would prefer to observe the ongoings, he could not afford to. Not now, not with Chris and Stiles both in danger – even if the danger did not seem immediate, that all could change in a fraction of a second.

Taking a bet on Stiles being the more anxious of the bunch, Peter set out to catch the one alone. If it weren’t Stiles, then Peter could easily reduce the number of enemies at hand by dealing with the one alone.

Peter almost scoffed at how unprepared the building was, there was no mountain ash, no wards – nothing to stop him just waltzing in. So, that is just what Peter planned to do. He took care to focus on his surroundings as he worked his way around the back of the building, working in the shadows just in case there was anyone watching.

The door to the building was open.

So, this was more than a trap for Stiles. They had expected someone to look for him, to be able to follow the trail right to where they are.

Silently, Peter crept in, glancing around the narrow hallway he had found himself in. There was one other entrance, also left open. The air brushing through the damp concrete explained that much. It did leave Peter with a bit of hope as to how this would work.

The racing heart grew closer as Peter made his own way towards the sound. It seemed as though he would be greeted mid-destination. Preparing himself, Peter braced for the shout. The alert.
Something to indicate that he should not be present and that he should take down whoever was before him in an instant.

Yet -

“Stop being such a goddamn baby.”

That was undoubtedly Stiles’ voice. It was soft, but there was no mistaking it.

“You can do this, you are the one that insisted, so stop being a baby –”

Spurred on, Peter moved quicker, still taking care to be mindful of the other three people. It didn’t take long for Peter to catch up to the teen, stepping into a hallway behind him.

“Do you always monologue?”

Stiles spun round, his bound wrists raising as his heart raced as he met Peter’s glowing blue eyes.

“What the hell!” Stiles hissed, “how did you even – what took so damn long?” he finished, glaring at Peter.

“I’ll explain later darling, let’s go get Christopher first, I do assume he is also here,” Peter said gently, reaching forward and cutting the zip ties around Stiles’ wrists with an easy motion.

Once his hands were free, Stiles leapt forward, his arms wrapping around Peter’s neck.

“Thank fuck you are here,” the teen said quietly. “Chris is somewhere, I don’t know where the hunters are.”

“You’ve done amazing so far,” Peter said, letting Stiles take whatever comfort he could, and moving his own hand onto the teen’s neck and holding him close. The fear was not as strong, but still present. As much as Peter wanted to take Stiles to safety, they couldn’t risk what might happen to Chris, but working together might give them the upper hand for just a moment.

Peter gently pushed Stiles back, “here is the plan,” he said gently, meeting Stiles’ eyes. “There are three people, three heartbeats left. One has to be Chris so the other two are the hunters –”

“Chris is drugged,” Stiles said quickly. “I don’t know exactly what but he was out cold.”

“We focus on the hunters then,” Peter stated. “The others are following the tracker, so it’s just us. Is there anything that might help? Anything they said to you?”

Stiles looked away from Peter’s eyes, licking his lips hesitantly.

“They want revenge, I mean, they haven’t said it but that’s what – the main guy, a friend of his was part of the people killed. They know it’s about me, so they want to know what I know. I haven’t said anything,” Stiles stressed, meeting Peter’s eyes again and trying his best to convey that fact.

“I know darling,” Peter said, his voice soft as he brushed a thumb over Stiles’ cheek. “I need you to be a brave for a little longer, we can get Christopher out and it will be easier with you helping. Do you think you can do that? It’s truly ok if you cannot.” Peter didn’t get to continue his reassurance as Stiles changed his stance. No longer was he seeking comfort, he was straight-faced and battle ready, and it made Peter want to cherish him all the more – but first, they needed Chris to be safe.
So this took longer than expected, but it was a real pain to write. I'm still not 100% happy, but honestly, I want this chapter out of the way.
I can really see Stiles monologuing in order to keep himself as calm as possible, even if it's whisper talking.
The real rescue next, and then we get back onto fluff and more fluff.
“Barnes,” Stiles said loudly, his voice echoing around the hall. His voice had shaken as he spoke, even with the reassurance that Peter was nearby. Stiles was safe, or as safe as he could be with Peter, he wouldn’t get too hurt with Peter around. “I’m ready to talk, just – please,” Stiles closed his eyes as his voice broke on the last word, so much for seeming strong.

“What are you doing up?” Len questioned when he turned into the hall. “And you got out of them,” he added, glancing down to Stiles’ hands. “This way if you’re being serious – he’s really not in the mood for any games.”

“No – no games,” Stiles tried to convey honestly. “I – I don’t want Chris to be hurt so I’ll talk.”

“Good choice kid,” Len said with a grim smile. “Come along.”

Len lead the way, taking Stiles down a few different long halls that were each as filthy and dark as the other. The longer they walked, the more determined and settled Stiles grew, much to his own surprise. He assumed it was Peter’s presence, it certainly wasn’t Len’s.

Stiles’ eerily calm did not last long. As soon as Stiles had been taken into the room where Barnes was, the calm was overtaken with that all familiar panic. It was the room that Chris had been in – that he was still in. It wasn’t Chris’ unconscious form that made Stiles stop, no, it was Barnes and the moveable table by him. The table held a selection of implements that glistened in the dim light.

“W – what you doing?” Stiles asked shakily, eyeing the table.

“Oh these?” Barnes asked, placing a hand on the table, his fingers near the handle of a small knife. “These are just an… insurance you can say,” he grinned. “You keep your end of the deal and talk, these don’t have to be used. If you play any games, I will take each of these and use them on Argent until you decide to talk. Understood?”

Stiles licked his lips, his eyes focusing on Chris’ limp body. He nodded.

“That man – the one in the picture,” he said. “I – he was with a group of people last time I saw him. They – ”

“I don’t have all day,” Barnes said idly.

“Sorry,” Stiles mumbled. “They cornered me. I don’t – ok, well I do know what happened but not for sure. They were interrupted and I was taken away from them and –” Stiles paused, not quite wanting to give Peter up. “Chris got me away from them, I don’t know what happened after that.”

“You have an idea,” Barnes pointed out quietly. His tone void of emotion as he gave Stiles his full attention. “Did Argent go after them?”

“No,” Stiles said firmly. “He stayed with me. Chris didn’t do anything.”

“He really didn’t,” Peter said, stepping into the doorway. “I’m not sure who you want to avenge,” he continued, “but if they were a part of that vile group, then he’s dead.”
Stiles saw the following events in slow motion. He saw Len pull a gun from his waist and focus it on him. He saw Barnes’ hand grasp the handle of the knife before he stepped completely behind Chris. Barnes grasped Chris’ hair with one hand as the other steadied the knife against the man’s throat. Even without Peter making a move, the whole room froze.

“That isn’t very nice,” Peter drawled. “Christopher is defenceless after all.”

“He’s –”

“Insurance,” Peter sneered, “you did say.”

“Which would you prefer? The boy or the hunter?” Len asked. Even knowing that Peter wouldn’t answer, Stiles felt his heart skip. “Come here kid,” he added.

Stiles considered ignoring him, he almost did. It was only another look at Chris that made him follow the order. There had been a moment, a small moment that Stiles imagined Len doing the right thing, that he wouldn’t keep the gun on Stiles. Alas, that was not true. Stiles eyed the gun, not happy with how close he was to it.

"Now, that really isn't fair," Peter said, his voice not holding the drawl that he had used before. He kept his eyes on Stiles, Chris could handle a bit of second-hand revenge, but Stiles shouldn't be in this position. Not now, not ever. He was just a child - albeit a teenager who had gone through a lot already. "Let us just... leave these two alone. Two against one is real good odds for you."

"Peter," Stiles whispered as he stepped closer to Len, letting the gun brush against his side. Stiles closed his eyes for a second. He could do this, it was just like he had practiced. He knew how to take a gun away from a person, his dad was paranoid enough to teach him. He just needed to breathe and stop panicking. "Calm down," Stiles hissed to Len, raising his hands slightly. "I'm not the threat here."

"Stiles," Peter said calmly, noting the rise in fear.

Stiles met Peter's eyes, he lifted his head slightly. He waited for Peter to take a step forward. Once he had moved, Stiles moved as well. He stepped to the side, one hand moving to Len’s wrist to hold it tight and steady the gun where it was despite him sidestepping out of the path. Stiles spun, holding onto Len's wrist as he punched him square in the face. It didn't quite have the impact that Stiles had hoped, but it did make Len stumble back to a degree. Stiles used the man's movement to use his free hand and grasp the gun, twisting it as Stiles continued to move. Len fought back, trying to keep control of the gun as Stiles forced it downwards and finally from the man.

"Impressive trick," Barnes noted as Stiles stepped back with the gun in his hands. It wasn't steady as he held it towards Barnes, trusting Peter to keep an eye on Len. "You don't really think that's the only one around?"

"No," Stiles answered honestly, "but that doesn't matter," he continued.

Peter watched as the bullet flew from the gun, without watching where it landed Peter also made his move. He pulled Stiles out of the way, moving himself between Len and the boy.

Even with the jarring movement, Stiles continued to watch Barnes. The man hadn't even blinked as the bullet slammed into his forehead, nor as he fell back. Stiles saw the red well on Chris' throat.

"Shit," he hissed as he moved forward. "Chris, now would be a great time to wake up!"

"Stiles," Peter said, his voice a calming notion in the chaos that was Stiles' mind.
"Peter he's -" the words died on Stiles' tongue as he looked back. Peter had traces of blood on his shirt and his hand was covered in it. Len laid on the floor, crumpled by the wall with a gash across his throat and a hole in his chest. "Jesus," he breathed.

"Let's go," Peter said, wiping his hand on his shirt as he moved closer to untie Chris. "We need to get out of here just in case someone comes along."

"Ok - yeah," Stiles said, still somewhat breathily as he watched Chris slump forward without anything holding him in place. "We - we don't have a car."

"I have my phone," Peter explained. "Call your dad, he can collect us and we can make sure Chris is - that he's ok." He held Chris up slightly, stopping the man falling from the chair as he pulled a phone from his pocket and held it out.

"Peter," Stiles mumbled, taking the phone slowly.

"Let us get away from here," Peter repeated, meeting Stiles' eyes and holding his gaze. "Once we are safe -"

"Yeah," Stiles said, shaking his head. Stiles wondered just how long he had before he really crashed, he knew it would happen. He just had to wait a little longer.

Chapter End Notes

Some much-needed comfort is on the way next. Maybe with a protective Sheriff hovering just a little. There shouldn't be much angst left though. We are on the happy path.
Stiles waited, continuing to shift from foot to foot. He saw the Sheriff car pull put into the dirt path.

"Stiles," Peter said, placing a hand on the boy's back to stop him falling backwards. "Just a little longer."

"Get Chris," Stiles mumbled, taking a stumbling step forward. His dad was here and they were leaving. Stiles made his way closer to his dad's car.

"Stiles!" he heard his dad shout as he climbed from the cruiser.

"I'm here," Stiles said, his voice still mumbled as his dad ran over.

"Jesus Stiles," John muttered. "What the hell happened?" He pulled Stiles towards him, trying not to panic as Stiles almost fell into the embrace he gave. “What happened?” he repeated, seeing Peter move closer with a body slung over his shoulder.

"There are two bodies inside," Peter said. "One death by an animal attack, the other by a bullet. I would hazard a guess that one tried to shoot the beast and accidentally hit his friend before he was attacked," Peter explained.

"What?" was John's sharp response, he looked over Stiles' head to send a searching look to Peter who had opened the backseat of the cruiser to lay Chris down.

"They took Christopher, and they hurt Stiles," Peter said curtly, meeting John's eyes. "I took care of the problem."

Stiles snorted at the statement Peter said. _He sorted the problem. Peter._

"Stiles did well," Peter continued, holding John's gaze. "He took the gun from one of them."

"And shot the other," Stiles added.

"You - what?" John frowned, looking down at his son as he pulled him to arm's length. "You shot someone?" he repeated.

"He was a vile person if that helps," Peter offered.

"I'll - I'll explain everything," Stiles said, he met his father's eyes. "Everything, but we need to get Chris safe first," he pleaded. "Leave them to rot for a while and I'll get someone to call in a gunshot."

"You'll - you know what. I don't want to know why you have people accessible to call in gunshots," John said, shaking his head.

"Stiles, you should get in the back as well," Peter said, moving closer to the Stilinski duo. "You're going to crash and being near Chris will help."

Stiles nodded. He wanted to firmly confirm that Chris was ok, especially after everything and the fact the man was _still_ unconscious. He stumbled his way from his father to where Peter was stood resting against the car door.

"Thank you," Stiles said to Peter, offering another grim smile to the man.
"No need to thank me," Peter murmured, a hand on Stiles' cheek. "You did most of the work. Just relax now," he added with a small caress, knowing that John was watching closely.

"Peter, up front," John said, giving the older man a stern look. "And I want this," he said, waving to the building, "explaining soon."

Stiles climbed into the backseat, half tempted to lay over Chris. The realisation that his father would be joining the car soon, he decided not to. Instead, Stiles sat, the majority of his side pressed against where Chris had been propped up. The movement caused Chris to slump against him, the steady rise and fall of his breath did wonders to soothe the remains of his anxiety.

"So explain shooting someone," John demanded as he started the car, looking into the rear-view mirror to see Stiles who had looked up in shock, not realising that both Peter and his dad had climbed into the car themselves.

"He pulled a gun on me and it was only a step into position to disarm him," Stiles shrugged, slumping more into the seat. "Thought I might as well try it."

"You taught him how to disarm a gun-wielding man?" Peter asked, somewhat impressed and somewhat amused.

"Being the Sheriff isn't a family friendly job," John grumbled.

"I'm not upset," Peter added, a grin forming. "It made the plan easier."

"There was a plan?" John asked tiredly.

"Christopher was taken and Stiles had a plan to collect him safely - which I did argue against, just for the record," Peter explained.

"It was my fault they took him," Stiles frowned, leaning against Chris.

"Not at all, it's your fault we have him back," Peter said, glancing back at the two of them. "You'd be proud of how he acted," he added for John's benefit.

"I'd be proud of him killing?" John asked sceptically.

"I think he means of how long I stayed lucid without panicking," Stiles quipped. "Which is a downright lie, because I was panicking the whole time. I'm just glad they're all gone."

"Why was Chris taken?"

"It's a... long story," Peter said.

"You know the last time I went missing?" Stiles asked. "It was them, and a few of them found me again a while ago which lead to soulmates coming to the rescue. They took Chris now because they wanted to know what happened to one of the men back then," Stiles shrugged.

"Do I want to know the full story?" John asked as he made a turn, well aware that Stiles was still leaving something out.

"There's no point," Stiles sighed, at Peter's low growl he then added, "I'm fairly sure everyone involved is dead. It'd only make you want to kill them yourself."

John didn't respond, his mind already going down a dark path in the what-ifs. The rest of the journey was almost silent, the Sheriff didn't bother asking Peter where he wanted to be dropped off, nor
where Chris should be left. He just drove home, separating the group now would probably do more harm than good.

As they rode in silence, Peter texted Allison to let her know her father was safe, and was going to be with both himself and Stiles at least for the night. Whilst he had his phone, he also sent a message to Derek, telling him to handle the last of the group, making it explicitly clear that the man they were following was still a threat and shouldn't be underestimated. He couldn't outright tell Derek to murder a man, but it was pretty well hinted.

It was as John pulled into his driveway that Chris groaned, his head rolling to the side slightly.

Hearing the noise, Peter unclipped his seatbelt and turned to see the two seated together. Stiles' eyes mostly closed as he rested against Chris, as Chris blinked groggily, turning his head slowly from side to side.

"Christopher, I swear if you are going to pass out again without confirming you're ok, I will hurt you myself," Peter threatened softly. Chris turned his attention to Peter, his mouth twitching as he did so. "That isn't being helpful." Peter huffed, more relieved now that Chris had his eyes open.

"Wh'r 'm I?" Chris slurred, causing John to glance back with a frown.

"He was drugged, with what I don't know," Peter explained to the Sheriff. "No hospital," he added quickly. "Not yet."

"P't'r."

"We're going somewhere safe," Peter said gently. "Stiles is next to you, and we're just going to wait until whatever they gave you is all gone. Then - then we will have a talk about drugs," he added the last sentence more to himself than to Chris.

"We should get them both inside. I can call Melissa to check him?" John said, phrasing it more as a question.

"It's late," Peter argued.

"She'll be waiting for Scott I assume," John counteracted. "Just - get them both inside before Stiles refuses to move." John unbuckled his seatbelt and climbed out of the car, already dialling Melissa's number.

Moving the two had been fairly eventless, Stiles had been picked up and deposited on the couch without the boy fully waking. Chris had been helped up and walked into the Sheriff's house before being sat next to Stiles. Still not fully aware, Peter urged Chris to just relax and wait for the drug to pass through his system, offering Stiles as a possible cuddle buddy if the other man wanted one.

Peter left the two for a moment, collecting water and John before returning. He had also taken the phone from a rather irate Sheriff to inform Melissa that Chris seemed stable and if that were to change he would let her know as soon as it happened, but otherwise, she should rest for the night. John, of course, refused to listen to the same advice, demanding he stay in the same room to keep an eye on his son.

So, for the night, the two men sat in relative silence as Stiles and Chris slept.
Stiles was the first to wake up, his eyes opening slowly as he looked around. Peter and his father were both sat in opposite chairs asleep. Something not all that unusual for the Sheriff, but seemingly out of place for Peter. Stiles shifted, feeling another weight on him. Chris laid, partially sprawled over Stiles, an arm holding him close.

Stiles moved again, considering slipping from Chris' grasp. As he moved, Chris pulled him closer. Stiles drummed his fingers on Chris' arm, considering his next move when he felt a small jolt of amusement. He huffed at the feeling, refusing to acknowledge it in this situation, not after everything that had happened.

"You awake kiddo?" Stiles heard his father's raspy tone. Stiles glanced over to see his dad watching him.

"I'm being squashed," Stiles grumbled, frowning for extra effect as he felt the bubble of amusement again. Beneath the amusement was still the baseline emotion of feeling content, the actual annoyance and frustration that Stiles felt barely a whisper.

"Just push him away," Peter's amused voice said. Glancing over, Stiles found him still sat with his eyes closed and his posture relaxed. "I'm fairly sure he's not completely asleep anyhow."

"Like you," Stiles mumbled, but he did as Peter suggested. He lifted Chris' arm and pushed the man away, scowling when he saw the smile and the ease of the movement. "You are all horrible," he added. "I hate every single one of you."

"That's a lie and we all know it," Peter drawled, finally opening his eyes. "How are you doing Christopher?"

"I feel like shit," Chris grinned, his own eyes opening to look at Peter.

"You were drugged," Stiles huffed. "Just what did they give you anyway? Wait," Stiles paused, remembering what they had said. "Date-rape -"

"You got roofied," Peter pointed out, unamused as he interrupted Stiles. "At least you've been asleep for a while, it means that most of it will be out of your system. How did you not realise?"

"They mixed it with something flavoured," Stiles muttered. "He said fruity, that way you wouldn't taste or smell it."

Peter gave Stiles a curious look. He tilted his head slightly before turning to Chris. He glanced over to Stiles, before meeting Chris' eyes again.

"Right, since everything seems fine, I'm going to get ready to leave," John announced,

"Work?" Stiles asked.

"Yeah."

"Go kick the deputies," Stiles grumbled as he pushed himself up. "The amount of things that happen without you all knowing is crazy. Oh!" he paused. "I didn't make the call."

"Calm," John sighed, he stood up with a stretch, groaning as his back cracked. "I called a new
deputy to check it out when you all were out of it," he ran a hand over his face. "I'll need to explain how I knew about it but that's not an issue. Just - don't do - don't kill anyone else before I get this sorted."

Stiles stared after his father in a small amount of shock as he moved. Once his father was out of sight, Stiles looked between Peter, Chris and the empty doorway.

"Did he - did he just tell me not to kill anyone?" Stiles asked in a somewhat horrified whisper. "Until this one is sorted?" he added.

"It seems like it," Peter grinned. He tilted his head once again before nodding towards the door. "Your father wants to talk to you."

Peter grinned as Stiles stumbled out of the room, following his father.

"Don't eavesdrop," Chris muttered, his eyes closing again as he kicked out towards Peter with one leg.

"As if I would ever," Peter huffed.

Chris didn't see it, but Peter had moved without a sound. He slunk forward, following Chris' advice to not make an effort to listen into the two Stilinski's conversing. Instead, Peter climbed onto the couch next to Chris, noticing how Chris had relaxed as Peter moved closer.

"You sure you're ok?" Peter asked softly, a hand on Chris' cheek.

"You worry too much," Chris teased, an easy smile on his face as he turned to Peter. "I feel good, content even."

"It's a nice feeling is it not?" Peter chuckled. He leant forward to press a chaste kiss to Chris' lips. "I still want you to get checked, either the brat's mother or another person."

Chris rolled his eyes, accepting that Peter would force him into meeting someone if he refused. He didn't quite agree with Peter calling Scott a brat, even if he wasn't Chris' favourite person. He had to appreciate what Scott did for both Stiles and Allison.

"They're talking about us," Peter whispered.

"I told you to leave it," Chris chuckled. Chris wrapped a hand in Peter's hair and pulled him closer for another kiss, less brief than the one Peter had offered.

"If you send them away because you're scared, I will handcuff you all together," John said, eyeing Stiles harshly.

"Dad," Stiles whined. "I can't really - you cannot say that! Peter can hear you!"

"Then let him be reminded that I won't settle for either of them hurting you again," John threatened.

"Get ready for work," Stiles groaned. "Just leave and stop all of this."

The Sheriff looked at his son, considering his next words carefully before he spoke.

"Just, remember how strong you are," John settled on. "You've done so much and even last night - it'll hurt but you did it to save yourself and them."

"Dad," Stiles said, interrupting his father. "I've already told Peter that if anything like before happens
again, I will -" Stiles paused for a second, not sure how to phrase just what he said he would do. "We'll talk later, I promise," he settled on.

"Don't keep anything in," John asked, not wanting to watch Stiles bottle up any more of the negative emotions he might experience.

Stiles opened his mouth to reply, to assure his father that he wouldn't fall back into old habits, even though it was more than likely to happen. The words didn't come, instead, Stiles got the intense feeling of warmth, of happiness and a small amount of arousal. The strange cocktail of emotions really did not fit the current situation, not when he was stood in front of his dad. The strangest aspect of these emotions was the way Stiles felt something move near his heart. There was no way Stiles felt he could describe it, not even to himself. There was a heaviness in his chest, one that normally indicated his anxiety becoming overwhelming, yet there was nothing else beyond the positive emotions. No fluttering in his stomach, no racing thoughts of what might be happening or what might happen. It was a good feeling, strange but good.

"You ok kiddo?" John asked, shaking Stiles' shoulder.

"Y - yeah," Stiles mumbled, swallowing. "I'm ok." Stiles saw the concerned and calculating look that his dad gave him, but it didn't register beyond an observation. Stiles was more focused on the bizarre feeling he had.

"Go make the two of them move, see what they want to do for breakfast and make sure Chris get's checked, if the drugs are still in his system, we should know," John pointed out.

"Rightio," Stiles nodded, having half listened to what his dad had said.

"Go," John sighed, giving his son a push.

"Alright, alright," Stiles huffed, flailing a hand back. "I'm going."
Sum It Up

Stiles rolled his eyes when he came back to the two men pulling away from each other, even as a small part of him dismayed at missing the possible show. Stiles stood himself mentally, not entirely sure just where that thought had come from. A small part of Stiles tried to remind him of why he hadn’t wanted to get in the middle of this.

"You alright?" Chris asked, interrupting the thoughts Stiles could have easily gotten lost in.

"Yeah, we should probably go see Melissa before she goes to work," Stiles said, refusing to look at either man.

"You missed his speech," Peter drawled, rolling back to his own side of the couch. "He had planned it all so well and you had to get roofied before he could tell you."

"You said it was your idea," Stiles pointed out, his annoyance shining through his tone as he levelled his stare at Peter. "Chris was happy to leave me alone to be angry -"

"To sulk you mean," Peter interjected as Chris noticed his own annoyance directed towards the werewolf.

"Shut it," Chris said softly, directing it to Peter before he focused on Stiles. "You want to give me the summary of the speech?" he asked the younger male.

"It was just –" Stiles took a deep breath. “It was - that you needed to understand that I was angry and that you shouldn’t have looked into my past without at least asking me first. There was obviously a reason I kept it quiet and no one else knew, so why the fuck were you two allowed to dig it up?” Stiles paused to take a breath. “It was my secret to tell, and yes I know how stupid that sounds but I should have been the one to tell it to anyone I chose. It happened years ago and I don’t – I know why it’s a big deal but I moved on. Yes,” he added as a snap when Peter opened his mouth. “I don’t seem to have right now because it was brought back up when I wasn’t prepared.”

Chris and Peter both sat in silence, letting Stiles speak. There was real emotion in the words, so strong that both men could feel it. There was the barely lingering anger, the frustration, the fear. None of those feelings were overwhelming within Stiles, just hints that he used to tell his side once again.

“You made me feel like shit,” Stiles said softer. “I re – I refuse to let you make me feel like that again,” he added, pushing more strength into the words. “I will leave if it happens again. If – if this is going to work then you need to respect my choices, even if it involves hiding something about my past.”

“Feel better now?” Peter asked.

“A little,” Stiles nodded.

“You have a point,” Chris sighed. “We overstepped.”

“Exactly,” Stiles grinned. “I saved your ass and now you are going to be reasonable.”

“I still think,” Chris continued, noting how Stiles’ happiness dipped at the words. “You should talk to someone about what happened, even if it isn’t us. We won’t look into anything more but you shouldn’t keep it to yourself.”
“I don’t need to talk to anyone,” Stiles protested, the annoyance flaring back up. “Last time I talked to someone all of this happened,” he regretted saying it as soon as he started, the feeling bubbling stronger than usual. Stiles knew it was a bit of an overreaction, just because that one person had turned out to be such a strange and unhelpful therapist, it didn’t mean that all of them were like that – even if Stiles had a deep distrust of Ms. Morrell, the school guidance counsellor.

Strangely enough, Stiles felt a sense of pride in what he had said, in how he had said it. It didn’t quite make sense. He focused on the two men before him. Chris; who was watching with a frown as Stiles frowned. Peter; who was smirking.

“You should talk to someone,” Chris repeated.

“Don’t push Christopher,” Peter said, keeping his tone even as he grinned at Stiles. “If he wants to talk to someone he will. If he doesn’t, then that is his choice. We will stand by and if he wants to talk about what he kept hidden for years,” he stressed. “Then we will let him.”

Stiles felt a stab of annoyance, unsure as to why it happened as Chris turned to Peter.

“I’m not going to encourage him to hold his pain back,” Chris huffed.

“Like you are a shining explain of talking,” Peter shot back, his voice dripping with innocence.

“Enough,” Stiles said firmly, glaring at both men as his annoyance grew. “If – and that is a big if,” he added. Stiles licked his lips, he tapped the outside of his thigh, hoping that they would listen. “If I talk to someone, it won’t be a professional. I can’t.”

Chris stared at Stiles, seeing how much he had been struggling and how he had forced himself to do already. Everything that Stiles had said was outside of his comfort zone. They had forced the past onto Stiles, and it hadn’t helped the boy at all. It hadn’t offered him closure, nor a safe space to talk. Instead, it seemed to open a wound he had not kept clean, one that threatened to become infected and isolate him from everyone around him.

“Ok,” Chris sighed. He couldn’t willingly force Stiles’ wound open more, not at the risk of such damage to the boy. It was Stiles’ choice to keep it safe, to stop it worsening, or to stitch it up. He had managed before, and now, now at least someone knows. He can turn to someone without keeping it to himself, so if he needed it, he could get help.

The single word from Chris had an enormous change to Stiles, his shoulders slumped, his hands relaxed and the firm look softened.

“Now that all of this is done, shall we get Christopher checked by Scotty’s mother?” Peter asked lightly.

“Don’t call him that,” Stiles protested half-heartedly. The amusement present even as he tried to deny it. He heard the thudding of his father stepping down the stairs. The steady footfall along with the quiet squeak of the odd step.

“Everything ok in here?” John asked, poking his head into the room.

Stiles looked over, smiling as he saw his dad all dressed in his uniform. It always sparked a hint of pride and happiness, he knew how much his dad enjoyed his job. How much he loved to help people.

“Everything is perfect,” Stiles said, his grin growing. “Go kick the bad guys' ass!”
“Make sure he’s checked out,” John said as he flicked his eyes over to Chris. “And don’t disappear again.”

“Can’t promise anything,” Stiles quipped, “but I’ll try,” he added, fixing the firm line his dad’s mouth had become.

“You do that,” John nodded.
What Happened?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Chris hadn't been happy to be pulled from the car and into the McCall's house. Nor that Scott had been the one to open the door with his own worried expression as Allison hovered in the background, waiting for confirmation that her father was ok before she began her own interrogation about what happened.

"I am a grown man," he huffed as Peter steered him towards the dining table. "I do not need to be coddled."

"You were drugged," Peter reminded him patiently, having done so the whole ride. Even having to go as far as climbing into the back with the other man to ensure he didn't attempt to dive from the moving vehicle. "I will tie you to the chair," Peter threatened idly.

He would do it, having done something similar in the past when Chris had come to him injured and refused to get any aid from anyone. Peter had waited for him to fall asleep, it hadn't taken long with how hurt he had been. Chris had been injured for a while before he had found Peter, pale and shaking from the exertion. It had been a particularly rough training session, or so Chris had said, Peter had his doubts about what he said happened. Once Chris had fallen asleep, Peter had done his best to tend to Chris' injuries without waking him, with very little success. He settled for sitting Chris up, tying his arms behind him and his legs to the chair legs. It then only took waking Chris with quiet, reassuring words. Sure, Chris had struggled, arguing and yelling at Peter for what he did, but Peter had managed to make sure he was ok, even managing to stitch one particularly nasty cut that Chris refused to acknowledge, even as Peter sat next to him and closed it.

"Melissa, be a dear and check him before I do tie him down," Peter said, a grin on his face. "He should have flushed the drugs out, his heart is steady and he doesn't seem to have any side effects but I would like a second opinion."

Stiles shook his head, feeling annoyed at how Peter had dismissed Chris completely, yet feeling slightly amused at the whole situation. They were two very conflicting emotions that left him a little shell-shocked.

"You ok dude?"

Stiles turned to Scott, frown still visible. Both Scott and Allison were looking at him with worry. Allison did look between Stiles and her father, calming slightly as she heard Peter's thoughts about him being somewhat ok.

"Should we wait elsewhere?" Scott asked, knowing how hesitant Stiles could be with medical equipment. That wasn't the only reason, Scott was levelling Stiles with that one look that said there was more to what he was saying, and Stiles couldn't figure it out.

"Sure, you coming Allison?" Stiles asked, sending the girl a confused look, even as she nodded. Her nod was done with a straightening of her spine, standing taller and fiercer than normal. "Ok," Stiles said, with a nod of his own, truly curious to see what the two wanted.

Surprisingly enough, it wasn't Scott that led the way. Allison took one last look at her father before making her way towards Scott's room. Stiles followed, sending his own glance back to the three
adults, Melissa now sat next to Chris, with Scott trailing behind.

"What happened?" Allison asked once they were out of Melissa and Chris' hearing range. "Scott said Derek got a text saying that Peter had found you both and you were safe."

"Things went bad," Stiles admitted. "It was stupid of me to walk into that without a real plan -"

"You had -"

"My plan sucked," Stiles pointed out, cutting Scott off. "They had been watching us," he continued, not quite ready to admit that it was him that was being watched so closely since the thought still sent a chill down his spine. "They knew that Peter and Chris were my soulmates and they wanted to know about this guy - someone who was dead."

"Someone Peter killed," Scott frowned.

"Yes," Stiles snapped, his annoyance strong as Scott's morals got too strong once again. Even though Stiles knew that Scott didn't know the whole story and that if he did, his thoughts would be different. "The person they were asking about was someone Peter killed, and I'm glad," he said firmly. Turning to Allison, he continued, "Chris was drugged, I'm not sure what it was but they said it was some type of date rape that they put in juice or something in your house, so get rid of anything else like that," he suggested, thankful when Allison nodded and didn't interrupt. "Nothing - nothing really happened. Peter arrived before they did anything, but they threatened to hurt Chris if I didn't talk. When Peter showed up, one pulled a gun on me and had a knife to Chris."

"That explains why he smells like blood," Scott noted.

"He was cut," Stiles pointed out overcome with a relieved feeling that made him sit on Scott's bed. "I took the gun and -" Stiles paused, unsure of whether he should tell them. He didn't doubt that Allison would take it ok, she would be glad Chris was safe, she would know or at least understand that Stiles didn't have the choice. Scott - he didn't know about Scott, sure he father had accepted it, but Scott had always been a beacon for goodness. Focusing on Allison, Stiles just said it, "I shot one of them while Peter got the other one."

There was silence, one that ate at Stiles' insides, making him want to stand and pace. He wanted to justify himself, his actions, explain why he did it and what he had been thinking.

"Did you get hurt?" Scott asked quietly. He was watching Stiles closely, not showing any outward emotions.

"No," Stiles answered honestly. "The furthest they got was patting me down and holding a gun on me," Stiles left out how uncomfortable he had felt, how it had brought back bad thoughts that he had hoped he had left in the past, he didn't need to say that, no one needed to know.

"Was Peter hurt?" Allison asked. Stiles just shook his head, Peter hadn't been hurt, not at all as far as Stiles knew. "Do you regret it?" she asked, and Stiles knew, he knew that she only asked because of how much she had regretted her actions when she had sided with Gerard.

"No," that was the honest answer. "It would have ended a lot worse if he lived, he wouldn't have left quietly," he explained, knowing that Scott was listening closely.

"Have you told your dad?" Scott asked, he sat next to Stiles, letting his arm brush against his. Stiles almost melted at the soft touch, it spoke volumes, saying things that Scott hadn't said to reassure Stiles. Scott didn't hate him, he didn't blame him or think him evil for taking a life, even with the recent development in his morals - which had happened rapidly after he had conveniently forgotten
them when plotting Peter's murder.

"I explained it, or I'm going to explain it all," Stiles sighed. "I need to," he added, more for his own benefit.

"Ok," Scott said. There was no judgement, no hate. A weight was lifted from Stiles' shoulders.

Chapter End Notes

I think this is the last part that'll be a recap-y bit, but it helps Stiles manage some of what happened. Which is good, and he is being accepted, which is doubly good.
Christopher Argent was not a man that asked for help often. He preferred to handle his problems himself, to deal with his own issues, much like one Peter Hale. It always annoyed him that Peter would push for outside help when it came to Chris' issues, but when they were Peter's, the man would be quiet. It was hypocritical. Almost everything about Peter was hypocritical.

"Stop sulking, it does not suit you," Peter smirked, he caught Chris' eye as the other man glared at him. It wasn't anything new, Chris had a habit of sulking when he didn't get his way.

"You aren't helping keep him calm," Melissa said pointedly. She had noted the thin cut under Chris' neck, but she didn't want to scare him away from anything else just yet, so she left it alone. She hoped that Peter wouldn't just stand in the corner and watch with that patronising smirk that he had, it unnerved her.

Stiles, in Scott's room, was now lent completely against Scott's side. He hadn't paid attention to what the two had been talking about, instead, he just basked in the feeling of being a part of something good and something normal. It was a nice feeling, he felt settled. It was like he was young again. No real worries, no true fear in the way of living his life. It had been a while since Stiles had been able to truly sit back without any intense anxiety.

"Stiles, are you listening?" Allison asked, pulling Stiles back to the present moment.

"Of course," he lied. "You two are adorable and precious."

"Stiles, Scott asked if you were going to run again," Allison repeated with a smile.

Stiles made a 'psshh' noise as he pushed himself up from Scott's side. He repeated it again, giving Scott an annoyed look.

"Dude, you nemo'ed last time," Scott pointed out.

"Sure I did," Stiles shrugged. "Last time was different, or I hope it was. Don't worry, I'm tempted to really try this time," he added quieter, knowing that Peter could probably be listening. "I still don't really expect it'll go anywhere, but I'm willing to give it a try if they behave," Stiles had been smiling as he spoke, the anxiety surrounding Peter and Chris being at an all time low since the moment he had heard them speak. He wasn't scared of what could happen, not right now.

"You ok?" Scott asked, noting the sudden souring of Stiles' scent. "You -" he stopped himself suddenly, noticing how Stiles' was now frowning at the wall. "What?"

Stiles huffed, not entirely sure as to what caused the mood change. He had been fine, and then he was just frustrated. It had happened so suddenly and without warning that it had even taken him by surprise. He had been calm.

"You have a serious frown," Scott pointed out.

"What's wrong?" Allison added, shifting from her seat so she was in a better viewpoint.

"I don't know," Stiles admitted. "I just - I keep having weird moods. Like earlier -" Stiles stopped himself. He didn't want to tell either of them or have Peter hear, how he had been aroused around his father without any warning, how he had kept having small bursts of annoyance or even amusement, all without any cause. There was no reason for it.
"You keep having strange moods? What do you mean?" Allison asked, reaching forward to place her hand on Stiles' knee.

"Just - it's just feelings that don't make sense in the situation. Like now, I was calm, then boom, I'm all annoyed, for no reason," Stiles huffed. "It's been happening all day."

"Just today?" Scott asked. "Not before?"

"No, since I woke up," Stiles frowned.

"What happened after you woke up?" Scott asked, knowing that Stiles liked to talk through his own discoveries most of the time. More often than not, he would be explaining something when he reached his epiphany.

"You don't want to hear it," Stiles told Scott seriously, aware of how he had reacted to the news of the last Stiles sandwich that had happened. Stiles ignored Scott's gasped protests. Scott didn't need to know what he had woken to Chris being half laid on him, nor how peaceful Peter had looked. Or how Stiles had been amused at how Chris wouldn't move even though he needed him to. How Stiles had realised that Peter was awake after the amusement had happened. Then there had been the talk with his dad, how arousal had just shown up out of nowhere and then he had walked in on Peter and Chris kissing.

"You've figured something out," Scott pointed out, watching Stiles as his face slackened and his expression changed.

"I - I think I have," Stiles mumbled. "We should - we should go back down," he decided, wanting to test his own theory. "Check to see if your mom is done," he added, "and that Chris is ok."

"I want to know what you found out," Scott frowned.

Narrowing his eyes, Stiles met Scott's gaze and sent a look towards the door slowly. Stiles waited for Scott to follow his gaze, to understand that he didn't want to talk with so many ears around. Annoyingly enough, it was Allison that seemed to understand first.

"Let's go downstairs," Allison said, a little louder than necessary as she hit Scott on the arm. "We can finish our talk later."

"Exactly," Stiles grinned. "Let's check on the old people," he added, hoping to feel something - _anything_ just in case he was right. He waited, hoping that something would happen, that Peter would overhear and have a stab of annoyance, or even amusement, but nothing came. With an internal sigh, Stiles decided he would have to try something a little different when he was closer and could either both men.

"You're frowning again," Allison pointed out.

Of course, he was, his thoughts weren't proven right, and Stiles was always a little impatient and unwilling to truly test his own hypotheses. Stiles knew that he was probably trying too much, focusing too much to notice anything but he couldn't help the disappointment.

"Right, I'm done," Melissa sighed, she took a step back from Chris, keeping her back to Peter as she did. She could still feel Peter's eyes on her, how he watched every moment she made. She had been around so many people like him, but it still unnerved her, the way that they would hover and critically watch all movement, just to make sure nothing unneeded happened. Melissa knew that Peter could tell how much she was on edge, how her heart beat faster, how her hand almost shook before she steadied herself to do her job. It was different, trying to get into the mindset to handle the
over protective family members or partners in her own home.

"You did a good job," Peter spoke softly, making Melissa pause.

"I'm going to get ready for work," she said back, not acknowledging Peter's words, not even attempting to consider that they were said to help her relax.
"Dad, are you ok?" Allison asked, rushing forward, past Stiles and Scott, and even past Peter as she only had eyes for her father.

"I'm ok," Chris sighed. "You are all overreacting."

With narrowed eyes, Allison took hold of Chris' cheeks and tilted his head up. She eyed the scabbed over cut on his neck.

"You got hurt," she accused.

"It's nothing," Chris sighed.

"It could have been worse," Peter noted from the wall. "He was scratched, nothing more."

Stiles could feel the relief at that single statement. How Peter had agreed that it was nothing to worry about, nothing too bad. Even if that had caused a spark of anxiety about Chris having faced more serious situations - which obviously he had. A small part of Stiles noted that the relief he felt was beyond what he should feel, especially since it didn't impact him, other than knowing Chris was actually ok.

Scott nudged Stiles, drawing him out of his silent contemplation. With a few blinks and a glance to each person in the room, Stiles found the attention on him. It was slightly unnerving, especially since Stiles had not realised how the whole situation had turned on him.

"You ok there Stiles?" Chris asked, a thread of worry in his tone that made Stiles' heart skip. Stiles could feel the worry seep into his chest, curling around his heart before it receded.

"I'm ok," Stiles shrugged, "just hungry," he added, hoping that it was truthful enough that Peter and Scott wouldn't pick up on the uncertain lie beneath it. He was hungry, that was no lie. Stiles did duck his head at Chris' somewhat suspicious look.

"I could eat," Allison shrugged. "Melissa made pancakes before you came."

"I have work," Scott explained, more to Stiles than to the two adults. "Also," he added, dropping his voice as he leant towards Stiles. "Mom wants to talk to you at some point, I – er – I kind of told her about all this and she just wants to hear stuff from you."

"You what?" Stiles asked, a lot louder than Scott had been, much to the amusement bubbling around his heart. Stiles gripped Scott’s sleeve and pulled the arm towards with. "How could you do that?" he hissed, aware of everyone watching. "She’s going to grill me and I’ll be dead – dead Scott," he emphasised.

"She isn’t going to kill you," Scott said, shaking his head. "Not if – have you done anything stupid?" he asked cautiously.

Stiles made another ‘psshh’ noise before he shrugged, saying; "You know how I am."

"We can take you all out for something to eat?" Peter offered, interrupting the spat between the two
friends.

"Should he be moving?" Allison asked, turning her attention to Peter, much to Chris' annoyance. Allison ignored her father's noise of complaint, she was still reeling from the fact that he had gotten himself kidnapped from their own house, that he had been hurt.

"Ally -" Scott started to say, cutting himself off when Chris' glare focused on him. Lifting his hands, Scott took a step back, further behind Stiles, who was struggling to keep his amusement internal. Stiles knew how intimidating Chris could be, he had been pressed against the wall by the super calm hunter to be told a bedtime story after all.

"Christopher will be perfectly fine," Peter smirked, his smugness radiating all the room. Stiles couldn't stop his own smile, as Peter continued. "If it would make you feel better, I can carry him to the car."

"Like a damsel," Stiles added, catching the stab of frustration. Unable to help himself, Stiles sniggered. It wasn't until Peter's amused gaze turned to him that Stiles felt his insides freeze. If what he thought was true - if what he was feeling was Chris and Peter, then what was there to say that they weren't feeling what he felt?

"Scott!" Melissa's voice called from her room, conveniently cutting off Stiles' growing panic. "Stiles," she added. "I'm leaving soon, remember to lock up - yes, it happened once but once is enough," she interrupted herself before Scott even had the chance to puff out his chest to begin his protest. "Stiles, leave the key - yes, I know you have it," she said, once again interrupting herself. "I'll be home for dinner, I expect you to be as well, if you're staying late at work tell me before I finish cooking."

"Yes mom," Scott replied dutifully.

"You're working today?" Stiles asked, turning to his friend, ignoring the other three humans in the room. "You lock up, we'll pretend that nothing happened."

"She keeps threatening to change the lock," Scott reminded him.

"She won't."

"She should," Scott shook his head.

"You know what happened last time," Stiles reminded him, earning a sigh. "I'll do it again."

"I can't get bit again," Scott pointed out.

"You could – say, what happens if a wolf is bitten by another were-thing? Do they become a hybrid? Because that would be cool and we need to make that happen," he asked, first turning to Peter and Chris before returning his attention to Scott with a considering look. "Wolf-kanima, that could be cool. All the wolfiness and the venom."

"Stiles," Scott sighed. "I don't want to be part lizard."

"But dude, think of the possibilities –"

"It isn’t possible," Chris pointed out, interjecting into the conversation before Stiles could get truly carried away with the possible supernatural mixtures.

"We haven't heard anything like that," Peter corrected, knowing better than to say it was impossible.
“Shame,” Stiles sighed. “Are you working?” Stiles asked again, forgetting if Scott had answered him.

“I am, heading out in an hour or so.”

“Are we done?” Allison asked, sensing a dip in the conversation. “Scott, are you coming for something -”

"I think I'll pass," Scott said slowly, shooting looks to Peter and Chris. It wasn't that he was afraid of them, he would just rather stay away from them and not be invited to an awkward meal. Past experiences with Chris hadn't passed in his favour, and Scott had no doubt that Peter would relish in making the whole experience one he wouldn't want to repeat.

“Great, not that that is sorted,” Peter said in a cheery voice, “Scott, thank you so much –“

“Peter,” Chris warned.

“I was being nice,” Peter protested, his smile still in place. “Scott, we’re thankful you let Allison stay, and that you were so hospital as to share your –”

“Peter,” Stiles interrupted, sensing just where this ‘thanks’ was going, by Chris’ eyes narrowing, so did the other man. “Enough, Chris needs to get into the car remember. Damsel and all of that, so shoo and keep your mouth shut.”

“Of course,” Peter said innocently. He raised an eyebrow at Chris until the other stood up. “After all, you made it sound so much worse than I did.”

“I am human,” Stiles reminded him. “No super senses, I just don’t want to embarrass my friends in front of their parents.” Sure enough, both Allison and Scott were bright red and determined to look at either the floor or the ceiling as if that held all the answers to them.

“Got it, we’ll wait until they’re gone before telling Christopher just what happ –“

“Go,” Chris sighed, pushing Peter’s shoulder. “We aren’t doing this. I’m going to get into that car and act like nothing has happened.”

“Good plan,” Stiles piped up.

Chapter End Notes

So, I've just realised I updated this one instead of Safe Space, which I was planning to. This is what happens when you try and stay on top of things people! I knew I had this chapter to finish and I assumed it was the next to be posted. You get this one a little early though, so that's a good thing.
Stiles shifted in his seat. He had a sandwich in front of him, one with bacon, sausages and egg inside as the other had various different options in front of themselves. It was slightly uncomfortable, being sat across from Allison with Peter and Chris on either side. It was quiet, each person taking time to eat rather than to talk. Yet, even during the silence, Stiles felt as though there was so many different things being said. Peter was torn between keep his eyes on Chris or on Stiles, unable to manage both comfortably from how he was positioned. It did amuse Stiles someone that Peter had taken the seat facing the exit, something Stiles would have normally commandeered without realising. Chris was sluggishly looking around the cafe, it was one that he hadn't been in before, so the entrances and exits were all new to him, he was more than likely identifying potential hazards of just eating in such an establishment. Allison was the only one at the table that didn't seem visibly one edge, she dug into her sandwich with vigour, not sparing any noticeable effort in seeing what was around her. Stiles just couldn't settle his own nerves, not with Chris' eyes darting around the open space, nor with Peter's glances over his own body. As easy as it should be to focus on Allison, it was a failing effort.

Allison looked up, her eyes zoning in on Stiles automatically as she placed the half of her sandwich back on the plate in front of her. She wiped her hands with a napkin as she frowned. Even with all the mood swings she had seen Stiles go through, this was unlike him. Allison pulled her phone from her jacket pocket and typed out a simple message, remembering Stiles' hesitance to talk when Peter might overhear.

In the silence, Stiles heard his phone buzz rather than felt it in his pocket. With a frown he pulled it out, seeing a message from Allison. He shot her a confused look from across the table, noting how she almost refused to meet his gaze.

From Allison; R u ok?

Stiles paused before he replied, unsure of just how to respond. He took a second to truly check himself, it was something he hadn't done for a long time, the whole body check to see how he really felt. It was a common therapy skill that is given out, focusing on parts of your body and observing how it is. Even without the focus, Stiles could tell that his hands were shaking slightly, one holding the phone whilst one stayed under the table. He had a headache, a slow-building one if history had taught him anything. His heart was fast, which wasn't unusual, but the amount he could feel was a little overwhelming to focus on. It was with that observation that Stiles realised that his body was betraying the level of calm he was trying to exude. In a short moment of honesty, Stiles typed out what he had been concerned about since he had talked to Allison and Scott earlier. At least through a message, Peter wouldn't be able to hear and neither of them would realise just what had happened.

From Stiles; I think I bonded? I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO

From Allison; Breathe. Bonding is good, u know this

Stiles looked up to Allison, her response having come through almost instantly and there was no hint of surprise on her face. If Stiles didn't know any better, he would have assumed she had just sent a message about the weather outside.

From Stiles; ALLISON NOT HELPING I AM BONDED TO TWO OLD MEN THAT ARE SUPER DANGEROUS AND I KILLED SOMEONE AND SO HAVE THEY AND I JUST CANNOT RIGHT NOW AND I'M PANICKING AND I'M SAYING AND A LOT HELP ME
It was easier to send the message than Stiles would have liked. He knew that if he had tried to speak those words, they would have gotten caught in his throat and he wouldn't have been able to push them out. Continuing with that line of thinking, Stiles stopped thinking, he just let Allison's messages come through and he responded without worrying about how to say what he wanted to say.

From Allison; Stiles.

From Stiles; Do they know? Holy shit, what if they know?

From Allison; They probably haven't realised, you didn't

From Stiles; They are already bonded though, how could they not notice me being added to that?!

From Allison; Just get through breakfast

From Stiles; I can't, I'm going to be sick

Stiles did feel nauseous, still having not even touched his sandwich. He probably shouldn't have ordered something to eat, but no doubt one of them would have given him a concerned look and the whole thing would be over before Stiles figured out just what he wanted - or what he really felt. How could he figure out what he felt when his emotions were being influenced? Was there a guideline for that? How was he meant to focus on himself and know what was him and what wasn't - his phone vibrating pulling him out of his thoughts.

From Allison; U r n't, just focus on something else

From Stiles; There is a strange feeling in my chest and I feel nauseous, how can I do that?

From Allison; Breathe, focus on ur breathing. In and out

From Stiles; You are not best friend worthy

From Allison; Stiles, breathe. I've seen u handle anxiety before, u know not to let it consume u

From Stiles; I can't and if I could format messages that would be italicised and bolded AND underlined!

From Allison; How did u handle the kidnapping or the whole being a hostage? U CAN DO THIS

Shaking his head, Stiles turned his phone screen-down on the table. He met Allison's eyes, ignoring Peter and Chris, who were both watching him with curiosity and worry. He saw Allison's caring eyes, the way her lips were twisted into a frown. When she was positive Stiles was watching her, she took a deep breath, holding it for a second before blowing it out slowly before repeating the pattern. Stiles knew what she was doing, the way her whole body seemed to move with the exaggerated breaths and the way she pleaded him with her eyes to join. Unsure of just what else to do, least he actually be sick in front of everybody, Stiles did his best to match her breathing. After a few repetitive patterns, Stiles did feel slightly calmer, less likely to be sick but there was still the underlying panic that had settled in his brain. He still felt nauseous, he doubted that would leave anytime soon, but he felt steadier - calmer.

"You ok?" Chris asked, his own frown something to challenge his daughters.
“Yeah,” Stiles nodded, knowing that it was a lie even as he said it. It was second habit to lie when that question was asked. "Just feeling a little sick," he added on, that was the truth and Peter couldn't claim otherwise.

"Are you going to eat?" Allison cut in, interrupting her dad before he could say anything else.

"You still hungry?" Stiles asked, his eyebrows raising.

"I could eat," Allison shrugged, a smile on her face.

Peter met Chris' eyes, glancing to Stiles before returning back to Chris. Peter got a nod in return, they would talk about it later, when Allison wasn't there, perhaps Stiles would be more willing to open up and discuss what was wrong, because there was clearly something more than feeling ill, especially since he was fine earlier before he had talked with Allison and Scott. Then again, Peter did want to let Chris in on what he had heard, mainly that Stiles wanted to make something of their bond, which was something Chris had been worrying about, even if he hadn't verbalised that worry. Peter did want to get down to what was causing Stiles such intense anxiety though, he could almost taste it around the teen, it was that strong. Chris had noticed as well, and his senses were duller, which did make Peter worry a little more. Once Allison was out of range, they would discuss what was wrong, and help Stiles deal with whatever it was.
"Calm down," Chris sighed, running a hand over his face. "If you want we can go over to Peter's or even your house so we aren't here," as much as Chris didn't feel completely himself, he didn't want to put any more stress onto Stiles, and he knew that being inside of his home would be doing that.

"It's ok," Stiles said, shaking his head as he glanced around the Argent living room. He could do this, he had done this, the only difference was that now Chris was safe and ok, and Stiles didn't have the need to find him to focus on rather than the crawling in his skin.

"He's right, we can leave," Peter said, touching Stiles' shoulder. It would never get old how Stiles partially relaxed at the touch, his shoulders dropped and his body stilled for the briefest of seconds.

"No, it's ok, really," Stiles said. He wouldn't be silly enough to send Chris out of his own house, not when he was still so out of it. Sure, the man had claimed he felt fine but there was a tiredness to his stance that wasn't normally so visible. "Look, I should - shit, I should probably tell you something." As soon as he said it, he wanted to hit himself. He hadn't had time to gather more data, he could sound ridiculous and they could laugh at him or say he's stupid or even -

"You can tell us anything," Chris said carefully, aware of the frantic look that had crossed Stiles' face.

"I - I feel bad about shooting that guy," Stiles settled on, annoyed at himself for chickening out. He shouldn't not say it just because of how they might react. What if he was on the right track? What if they had noticed something as well? Sure, that was a terrifying thought but it would mean that Stiles isn't going crazy again. Part of him wanted Peter to say something, to point out the lie and demand to know the truth, but that didn't happen.

"It isn't an easy thing to do," Peter said calmly, squeezing Stiles' shoulder. "I won't say it gets easier and I do hope you don't have to do that again, but take comfort in the fact it was self-defence."

"But it wasn't," Stiles protested, focusing solely on the discussion, he had to protest Peter's statement. It wasn't true, not at all. "As soon as I took the gun away from Len, I was safe. We don't even know if he was going to hurt you," Stiles added, turning to Chris. "I did it because -" Stiles couldn't bring himself to continue, not as his body chilled at the realisation on why he had shot Barnes so steadily in the head. He wouldn't be able to hurt anyone else, he was the last person that was still alive after what had happened, and sure, he hadn't actually done anything, but he stood by and let it happen. Stiles shot him out of revenge, he killed someone because they had a small part in hurting him.

"Whatever you are thinking, stop," Peter said firmly. "You shot him because he had a knife to Christopher's neck. You saw a risk and you removed it. In that single moment, that was all you were thinking."

"You don't know that," Stiles said thickly. He had been horrified as Barnes fell backwards, but there was a small part of him that revelled in the fact the man was dead. That was not normal, normal people shouldn't react like that when they kill someone. They shouldn't feel good about it, not even for the smallest of seconds.

"Stiles," Chris said. "It isn't easy, no matter what it was. Nothing will make it feel right. Taking a life isn't something you feel ok with, the fact you're so conflicted proves that you're human - that you're humane," he corrected as Peter rolled his eyes. "Even when it's between you and them, it's not something that sits right with you. Having that reason makes it easier to justify it, but it doesn't
"You're really making me feel better," Stiles snapped. He didn't know how to explain just what it was, that it wasn't so much Barnes was dead, or that Stiles had killed him. It was that he felt good about it, even when he knew he shouldn't - everything Chris had said proved that he should feel bad about it. There shouldn't have been that spark of pride or gladness, he should have thought before he pulled the trigger.

"Talk us through what you're thinking," Chris suggested. "It might be easier that way."

"No," Stiles said much too quickly. "I'm being silly, just survivors guilt I guess," he added with a nervous laugh.

"Stiles -"

"Christopher," Peter interrupted before Chris could say anything more. "We agreed not to push, if he wants to talk to us, he will. If not, then we can hope you confide in someone before it overwhelms you," he added the last sentence to Stiles.

"Yes, totally," Stiles nodded. "I'll talk to someone." Stiles winced as Peter frowned, catching onto the fact Stiles had no plans to talk to anyone else about it. "I'm going to get a drink, I need water. Just sit and I'll be right back."

Without waiting for a response, Stiles bolted from the room, aware of Scott's voice in his mind pointing out his 'Nemo-tendencies', but that wasn't the issue. The issue was that Stiles clearly had something wrong with him and he had only just realised how bad that whole thing was. At least Peter and Chris weren't going to push it, even though they wanted to.

"I swear, if he's hiding -"

"Christopher, it has been a long time since you've been this pushy, please do not make a habit of it, it's another one of your unattractive traits," Peter snapped. "You're normally the level headed one of us."

"I'm not unattractive," Chris scoffed.

"I should have tied you up and left you at McCall's," Peter sighed.

"He's not going to talk to anyone about it."

"We've done enough damage already and I am really not enjoying being the sane one of us. I prefer to drag your protesting ass into trouble," Peter huffed, sitting down next to Chris. It was rare that Chris was like this, the last time that he recalled this mood when they were alone was when he had figured out how bad his mother's illness was. It was before the fire, not too long beforehand. Chris had gone straight to Peter, wanting space from his father to process the information. It had been a long night. One where Peter had almost left Chris to calm himself down before he did something irrational, especially since Chris had been the one emotionally hurting. "What has brought this on? It's can't all be because of -" he didn't need to specifically state what happened with the kidnapping.

"I'm just tired," Chris said quickly.

"No you aren't," Peter sighed.

"So you'll push me but let him get away with it," Chris huffed.
"This is really not a good look on you," Peter said, an eyebrow raised as he looked over Chris. "Before all of this you were all for letting him move at his own pace. Normally you'd be all for taking a step back after what just happened."

"He killed someone," Chris said quietly, leaning against the couch. "Because of me. I can't justify that and I shouldn't even try to. He is just a kid."

"He is a kid, a smart kid who would probably surprise you with what he can handle. We might have caused this particular situation but he would be in others just because of Scott - really, it's all my fault," Peter explained. He couldn't deny that if he hadn't have bitten Scott, then Stiles would have been safe, he would have lived a blissfully normal life - to a degree of course. Perhaps Stiles had always been destined to run into some trouble, his therapist, the supernatural, even himself sometimes. It was possible that Chris and Peter had cursed him by being his soulmates, it wasn't an easy thought to think, but plausible.

"You two are seriously depressing right now," Stiles said loudly, his voice echoing around the house slightly, followed by a softer curse.
The Bond

Chapter Notes

I'm not dead, I hate being away for so long. I really need to get back into the swing of writing, and I started rewatching Teen Wolf so I was a little inspired again. I honestly don't know if it'll stay that often because life is horrible but I need something nice in my life.

Anyhow, here is talking - actual talking. Plus a bit of planning to help keep things manageable for them. Also a few idea for myself on where this might go, which is good. I might actually manage to bust out a good few chapters for this before I get pulled back into life again.

“So,” Stiles started nervously, fidgeting with the water bottle he had pulled from the fridge before joining Peter and Chris. He couldn't put it off any longer, not when he felt the realisation, he didn't know who it hit but it was certainly one of them. The abrupt feeling that made him stop short whilst he had been leaning against the kitchen counter, it washed away the headache, stopping his own fear about what he was becoming - or what he had already been.

Peter was still sat next to Chris, having not moved after Stiles' announcement. There was no way of getting around why he said that, he couldn't say that he knew, that would raise questions on how. Stiles hadn't even been in the room when they both were contemplating the wrongness of the whole situation, so there was really no way of Stiles explaining it away but with the truth, and that really wasn't going to be easy.

“I've noticed that – I think – shit -”

“Take a breath,” Peter suggested, “you’re all over the place.”

“I think I’m” Stiles started much too quickly. Realising his mistake, he did take a breath, he could feel his heart in his chest as it tried to escape. “I think I’m feeling what you feel,” he said slowly, taking care to articulate each word.

“How long did it take for you to notice?” Peter asked, one side of his mouth lifting.

“I’m been collecting evidence,” Stiles snapped, annoyed that his big reveal was ruined. “When did you notice?” he added with a huff.

“When we were rescuing Christopher,” Peter stated lightly. “You were projecting a little too much to attribute it to senses.”

“In all fairness,” Chris interrupted. “I hadn’t noticed that much, but it does make sense.”

“Oh my god,” Stiles groaned. “You both knew?”

“Just that we were getting better with the bond,” Chris shrugged. “It’s a good thing Stiles.”

“Not when you are feeling my feelings,” Stiles frowned. "I guess that's how it works, I feel you and you feel me?"
“Just strong ones unless you project, you’ll get used to it,” Peter soothed.

“Wait –” Stiles said, his frown deepening. “Have you – did you two – could you –”

“We have had this between us since the bond completed,” Chris nodded, seeming to have understood just what Stiles was asking. The heat that had been behind his words earlier having disappeared in view of Stiles’ own need. “We didn’t know if it would extend to you.”

“Shit man,” Stiles whispered, realising that every single time Peter had been hurt, Chris had felt that beyond the pain of the bond being hurt. He had actually felt what Peter had felt, and something that strong must have been projected. Once again, Stiles was stuck wondering how Chris had survived all of that, even if the first time he was comforted by the fact Peter was in a coma, it still must have been so devastating.

"We can work on you blocking your emotions from us, if that will make you feel better," Peter offered. "It was something we both tried to figure out when we first noticed it."

"What was that like?" Stiles asked before he could help himself. "When you noticed."

"It wasn't fun," Chris admitted, remembering the continuous anxiety that Peter was nearby or prepared to jump out and 'save' him from something causing the bad emotions. "We didn't really know what was going on, and it wasn't like we could talk to our families, not without revealing who we were bonded to."

"It might be something to do with being a werewolf," Stiles pointed out, a glance towards Peter, who was listening with carefully masked curiosity.

"There is a possibility," Peter agreed, tilting his head. "Talia and Michael were close and able to read each other with ease. It was just accepted and nobody questioned it." Talia had bonded quickly with Michael when they were children, something that Peter had been envious of long before he had met Chris, Talia had been groomed for the role of Alpha, it was her right. With that right, everything else seemed to work seamlessly, she rarely struggled with herself, the perfect example of a werewolf, one to look up to and follow.

"Wolf bonds are different," Chris said slowly, shooting a small look over to Peter. "It affects them more intensely than us," he added, meeting Stiles' gaze with a nod to Peter. "He rarely let me out of his sight, arguing when I had to leave. It's part of what made our relationship more of a love-hate one -"

"Why -" Stiles stopped himself continuing, there was no need to dive into what was. Not yet, not when there were other important things to address first. Stiles still didn’t quite know if he wanted to be a part of whatever this was. He was too young for them and they had been together a lot longer, even without counting the time they had been apart from each other. "How do we block each other?"

"Practice," Chris said simply. "A mixture of meditation and a strong mind, you need a barrier between yourself and the bond -""

"Like Occlumency in Harry Potter?" Stiles asked.

"Pretty much," Chris chuckled. “You have a strong will –”

“Ignore him, it isn’t about will,” Peter huffed. “You have to mean –”

“You’re saying the exact same thing as –”
“Really Christopher, we are not going –”

“You just want to be the big-”

“You are children,” Stiles groaned. He was stuck, not for the first time, questioning why he was set to be bound to the two of them. They didn’t have that much in common, sure they all seemed stubborn but that was about it. They didn’t share interests or anything, all that seemed to be there was a magnet for trouble, which seemed to focus on all of them at some point or another. Which didn’t quite bode well for the future.

“We can talk you through some of the things we tried, it might not work but –”

“It’s worth a go,” Stiles agreed, cutting off Peter. It wasn’t the first time he had been told to meditate, it had been recommended to him when his anxiety had gotten really bad. Just focusing on ‘the now’ was meant to help, it didn’t in Stiles’ situation, it only offered him a way to focus more so on his thoughts for a period of time. The guided meditation just felt awkward to him as well, so he didn’t have high hopes for whatever they might try to throw at him.

“One of the things I tried was emitting calmness,” Chris said simply. “It was a gamble to keep Peter away.”

“So, if I can radiate calmness, then that stops you feeling me?” Stiles asked, his brows furrowed since he could remember feeling content and calm before.

“Not quite,” Peter sighed. It was a gamble, it didn’t work. “I feel that the best bet is to be able to work through your emotions quickly enough that they don’t get out of hand. A new bond is more eager to share everything before it settles, once it’s settled, then long-lasting or intense emotions pass.”

“I don’t really want you feeling every single emotion until this stupid thing –”

“That probably isn’t going to help,” Peter noted.

“- decides that we’re close enough. I don’t really want to feel all of your emotions either,” Stiles finished.

“Blocking the income isn’t easy,” Chris said slowly, “it is doable, but it’s exhausting.” He had managed it when Peter was in the coma, after the fire, Chris had to figure something out, especially when the pain didn’t stop. He could feel so much that it wore him down, seeing Peter had made it easier but he couldn’t stay. It was mainly trial and error, Victoria had been his rock in those early months away from Beacon Hills. She had seen him through the worse of it and helped him find different theories on how to ignore a bond, the majority being more painful in the long term. Chris couldn’t give those to Stiles, no matter how uncomfortable this period might be for him.

“I don’t want to block it completely,” Stiles frowned, shocked at his own honesty. “If things go wrong I want to know and I want you to be able to know if something happens to me,” as soon as he said it, it was too late to retract. “I just don’t want every single insignificant thing shared. I don’t need –” to be aroused around my dad, he wanted to say. He didn’t really want to share that much just yet though.

“We can work on it, meditation might help, even if it’s just to single your own emotions out from ours,” Peter suggested. “It can help centre you.” Peter wouldn’t admit it, but meditation was important to a pack, to a single werewolf. It helped them learn and stay in control, and Peter could see how it might help Stiles, especially with how conflicted he was currently.
“Ok,” Stiles sighed, aware that he had to try it again, and not quite looking forward to being alone with his own thoughts like he had previously. “Tell me theories and basics and let’s get this thing going.”
“So that’s everything?” John asked, he sighed, shaking his head in disbelief. “Everything?” he repeated.

“I think so,” Stiles shrugged. “It all started with Peter, like I said. He didn’t – something wasn’t right, he lost everything so we can’t blame him.”

“Why is he back to normal?” John asked, realising that Stiles had skipped over the how and why of Peter being sane.

“He –” Stiles took a second, unsure of how to phrase what he wanted to say. He didn’t want to lie, he had lied more than enough already. This was his moment to be truly honest with his father. “He had a moment of – Scott, Derek and I made a plan,” he said slowly. “He was going to hurt more people and Scott wanted to be human again so we listened to Derek. Peter died,” Stiles said, trying not to hear his father’s sharp intake. “We killed him the night he killed Kate.”

“He died,” John repeated. “You knew?”

Stiles didn’t respond verbally, he nodded a single time, biting his tongue. There was a lot that he could say, things that he knew would cut into his dad’s feelings. He held them back, refusing to do that, to be that person, even if it would give him a brief moment of satisfaction. Wasn’t that disgusting? The fact that Stiles would feel happy hurting his dad like that, even for a moment.

“Why didn’t you say something?” John asked, fighting his urge to pull Stiles close in an attempt to keep him safe from the past pain. “Did –”

Stiles knew exactly what his dad was trying to ask. Did he feel the pain? The absence of part of himself? The emptiness?

“He’s back,” was Stiles’ own response. He couldn’t do it, even with that small voice in the back of his head urging him on.

John knew the answer hidden behind that careful response. It was all too clear. Suddenly, John remembered Stiles’ behaviour, the sudden decrease in arguments and sarcasm, the influx of him actually sleeping. It was then, and John didn’t question it, not verbally. He hadn’t reached out for his son, which had clearly been hurting. Instead of saying any of this, or apologising, John took Stiles’ hint and ignored the topic.

“And Chris –”

“Yes,” Stiles nodded. “His dad – he wasn’t a good person.”

“And he was one of the men –”
“Not in that building you picked us up from, a different one,” Stiles admitted. “Peter said that he would be found, more of an unfortunate accident though. Tore apart I think,” Stiles added.

“And he hurt you?” John asked for clarification. He didn’t want to get too worked up over his son’s soul mate being a murderer, even if he probably should worry about it. Then again, with Chris being a hunter, they both were murderers in the technical sense. Part of John did worry for his son, being around two dangerous men. Stiles, he had proved time and time again that he could handle things he really shouldn’t be able to. He had helped his friends and survived.

“Not tech – kind of,” Stiles amended. “He beat me up, and arranged other people to be around as well – he was the mastermind behind it all.”

“Then –” John paused, it was easy to feel a little vindictive, especially about someone that hurt his son. It was just conflicting to have that happen when he was meant to hold the law close to his heart. “I am glad you’re safe,” John settled on. He wanted to go on a spiel of how much he wanted to have been the one to hurt the man, to make sure that he was dead.

“So am I,” Stiles admitted. In all of his tales, Stiles still hadn’t told his dad what truly happened, he couldn’t bring himself to say it, not out loud and not to his dad. It was embarrassing. “There’s something else I wanted to ask, actually,” Stiles said slowly. He was unsure about mentioning it, knowing that soulmates were a sensitive topic and not easy for his dad to discuss. “I just – I was wondering about how things were, between you and mom,” Stiles' voice trailed off, he saw the flash of pain across his dad’s face.

“Son,” John shook his head.

“I know,” Stiles sighed. “I know it hurts but – please.”

John paused. Stiles rarely used that word. It was even rarer to see him look so earnest in learning something.

“What do you want to know?” John sighed. He owed his son this much after being such a failure of a father. He could cause himself a little bit of pain if it helped his son at least a little.

“Did you have one of the links?” Stiles asked, more focused on his hands than on John.

“Not really,” John admitted, there was a wistfulness to his voice that made Stiles’ heart hurt just hearing it. “We were ordinary,” and John said it so wistfully, so honest and full of emotion that it made Stiles blink back tears that were threatening to show. Now was not the time, especially not in front of his dad.

Stiles swallowed around the lump in his throat, aware that he should press for more but not quite being brave enough to really ask for anything else. There was little he could hear about them that would help, even if he did crave all the information he could get. It had been so long since they had talked about her, truly talked, without the influence of alcohol or feverish illnesses.

“Thanks pop,” Stiles managed to force out, the cheerful tone in place and the easy grin across his face. It was easy to make an excuse to leave, almost too easy, but Stiles knew not to take it harshly. His mom was a sensitive topic for both of them.

Stiles laid back on his bed, staring up at the ceiling. The room had long since darkened around him, but the thought of moving was just too daunting. He felt a little too raw, there was so much going on inside of him, guilt at forcing his dad’s hand into talking. Self-hate because he still hadn’t really been honest about everything. It didn’t quite help with, what Stiles assumed was feedback from either
Peter or Chris, or maybe both of them. There was bitterness, and Stiles was annoyed at just how much bitterness he felt.

Ordinary. That word. Is it bad that Stiles longed for it? That he wanted that? The simplicity of no supernatural, no grown adult soul mates, no nothing. Although, the thought of such a boring life wasn’t appealing beyond the ‘not close to death’ moment. Stiles had caught himself wondering ‘Why me?’ at one point, and then reminded himself how restless he got when nothing was happening. This was the boy who had eagerly looked for half a body in the woods, he was never destined for ordinary, it wasn’t him. Yet he wanted it so badly.

Stiles could remember, clear as day, just how happy his mom was. She would smile, and laugh, more than Stiles remembered himself doing since her death. She was happy, and Stiles wasn’t. He wasn’t sure when he had last been happy. He missed her, maybe not as much as his dad did, but there was a hole where she had been. It was normal, he had been told, losing a parent always took something from you, but it didn’t make it any less real.

With an annoyed huff, Stiles wiped at his eyes. No tears had fallen; it was a pre-emptive measure. Just as he went to lay his arm by down, his phone buzzed from next to him. Without a second thought, Stiles sat up, phone in hand and already prepared to grab a jacket, his shoes and his keys.

You seem upset

Stiles glared at his phone, reading the message again. Of course.

Stay out of my emotions. Stiles typed angrily, more annoyed at himself for letting them get so loud. There was no way that Peter would have questioned it unless – although, yes, Peter would definitely question it just to get a rise out of Stiles.

Stop me? The reply came back, and Stiles could practically see Peter’s smirk, hear the teasing tone.

Rolling his eyes, Stiles left the message. He turned his phone face down on the bed, laying back with another huff. It was easier said than done. That was the annoying part. The only way to really block them, that they knew of, was to meditate and all of that mumbo jumbo. Mediation was never something that Stiles excelled at, he had tried in the past. There was just the fact that it left him alone with his thoughts, the ones he struggled to shut off, even with medication to calm him down a little. No, every time Stiles tried to mediate, he got lost in a spiral of thoughts, ones he always felt worse off with. It was too easy to reflect. To ruminate on everything in his life. On every single mistake. “Am I a bad person?” Stiles mumbled into the emptiness. He didn’t quite know what he was expecting, maybe a voice to speak from the nothingness and tell him what he wanted to know. “I’m a horrible person,” he said, the words falling a little too easily for him to doubt them. “I’ve – I helped kill my soul mate, why did I do that? I knew – and – and I didn’t hesitate. I didn’t even hesitate with Barnes and I’m glad he’s dead. If I could go back and change it, I wouldn’t. I want him to be dead. I’m glad.” Stiles knew that it wasn’t the complete truth. He had regretted hurting Peter; he wasn’t proud of his actions there. The same went for how things went with Barnes, Stiles wasn’t proud. He was just glad. Thinking back realistically, there was no survivor’s guilt, no ‘me or him’ scenario, Stiles didn’t even know for sure that he wouldn’t have done something differently. He just knew that he had wanted him dead and that is how it ended.

Still staring up at his ceiling, Stiles contemplated if it was truly worth talking to someone about. The amount of people he could talk to was fairly limited and a good amount of them made Stiles feel even guiltier for feeling the way he did. He didn’t feel comfortable telling them how satisfied he was. Sure, he felt sick, thinking of how Barnes’ body had hit the floor, how the blood had smeared all over Peter and everything else, but Stiles did not regret the death that happened. Peter, Chris, his dad
and Scott all seemed to think Stiles was traumatised by the act, but Stiles was truly more concerned about how *not* traumatised he was about that death.
“Did he answer you?”

Peter looked up from his phone, watching as Chris turned his back to him, the wooden spoon dipping into the pan. There was no need to pretend otherwise, Chris had felt the depression. It had been building all afternoon, but it was the final push that made Peter give in and reach out. Of course, he didn’t expect Stiles’ to magically open up.

“Of course he didn’t,” Peter responded as if it was obvious. It was, and Chris knew it if the annoyance was telling enough. “You aren’t blocking as much,” the wolf added.

“I’m focusing on not overwhelming him,” Chris sighed. “He really deserves better than this.” Chris stirred the sauce that was in the pan. He hadn’t voiced it before, even though it had been in the back of his mind since he learnt of Stiles, even before he was their soulmate. Perhaps it had been that which drew Chris’ attention to him. He had noticed how Stiles would put himself in harm’s way to protect his friends, even though it was unnecessary

“I’m not disagreeing,” Peter said after a moment when it was clear Chris wouldn’t continue his train of thought. “I just don’t think he is capable of an easier path.”

“Or is that because of us?” Chris added, his voice a little thin.

Peter tilted his head, this was unlike Christopher. On the rare occasion the man would be honest about his emotions, he did so in a way where he was almost distant from them. Sure, there was the influence – oh, that explained it. Peter stood up, taking his time as he walked around the kitchen island. When he was close enough, Peter pulled the wooden spoon from Chris’ hand, moving the pan away from the heat.

“You’re a perfectly good soulmate, Christopher, sure we have our bumps and we’ve tried to kill each other, but who hasn’t?”

“I did have a part in killing you,” Chris pointed out, standing stiff in Peter’s arms.

“Am I dead?” Peter asked. “You know, if you wanted me dead, I would still be dead. Don’t think I haven’t thought of tearing your throat out, it’s always been a fantasy of mine darling.”

“Don’t darling me,” Chris replied automatically, just as Peter knew he would. There was slightly less tension in his body, he didn’t relax fully, but he wasn’t actively fighting the comfort Peter was offering. It had been a running gag between them, or rather a source of amusement for Peter, who delighted in the knowledge of Chris’ hatred for anything cute. No pet names, no date nights, and to begin with, no cuddling. Of course, that last one didn’t stick, Peter had been determined to make a cuddler out of Christopher Argent.

It worked, to an extent.

“I need to finish cooking,” Chris sighed.

“You don’t need to,” Peter counted, keeping his arms firm around Chris. “Spaghetti isn’t that difficult to perfect.”

“That isn’t the point,” Chris said, finally making an effort to move away from Peter. He didn’t move fast, only enough to let Peter know he was serious. The man had always been open about giving him

A Moment Of Calm
space when he needed, but Peter always seemed to know when Chris needed that slight push.

“What is the point then?” Peter asked, watching as Chris stepped away, putting the pan back on the heat and grabbing the spoon again.

“Felt like cooking it,” Chris shrugged. He didn’t feel comfortable explaining the full reason, he had never been overly open about his feelings. As simple a dish it may be, it held a lot of meaning. It was the first food that he and Peter had eaten together, first real meal. They had had snacks, brief things between rounds of sex or just being together. Chris was never one for sentiment, he would never voice it, but he wanted to remember that time, that moment where they had both agreed to have a real date night and Peter had cooked for him. It was spaghetti, nothing special but it was the first time that Chris really thought that maybe, just maybe, they could work out and manage to stay together despite anything.

Peter moved closer behind Chris as he cooked, resting his head on the man’s shoulder, watching as Chris stirred. It was blissfully domestic.

“You need to start the sauce,” Peter said softly, not wanting to shatter the illusion they were under. It was never easy to forget who they were, never easy to forget the hunter and the werewolf. Two opposing forces that shouldn’t work, that probably wouldn’t ever work together.

“I don’t,” Chris smiled. “It’s –”

“In a jar,” Peter sneered as if that fact was a criminal act. “You still don’t know how to cook?” he asked.

“I know enough,” Chris said defensively.

“You cannot cook a tomato based sauce? It isn’t exactly difficult darling.”

“Don’t condescend me like that,” Chris huffed, he nudged back against Peter, the smile still on his face. Peter had always been a condescending person, one that enjoyed pointing out a person’s faults and issues. He did restrain himself somewhat, but it wasn’t quite in his nature to be too kind.

“Learn to cook,” Peter responded, not missing a single beat.

“Why cook when I have you?” Chris asked, aware that he was being cheesy, but he really didn’t mind too much when he got to feel Peter’s head turn into his neck and a kiss press against his skin. Statements like that had always been the closest he would get to say those three words, words he had never even said to Victoria. He couldn’t, he showed it through other ways. Chris knew that Peter understood, even Peter never said those words. It wasn’t something either of them had said, they cared about each other but those words were a huge commitment, even for someone that found their soulmate.

Stiles was still laid on his bed. His hands had found a way to his hair. Unlike previously, Stiles’ eyes were closed and he was feeling calm. His mind had quietened. Stiles didn’t quite know what he was trying to achieve, if he was searching for something or if he was meant to be building a wall around his mind. It was frustrating.

Stiles’ dad had gone to bed about half an hour ago. Leaving the house silent as Stiles just existed. He could feel every single breath, and it was calming. Just to be there, no distractions and certainly no real worries. He felt floaty, like he wasn’t really in his body, like he wasn’t grounded against his bed.

It took hours to get there. Sometimes Stiles doubted he’d do again. He just needed that moment. If he
could maintain that calmness, it would be great. It was just frustrating, Stiles had a handle of his emotions. He always hid them, it was rare that someone noticed anything, especially not when he didn’t want them to. So why now? Was it just the link that was making him this weak? Or was it just himself? He knew he had better control than this. He would overcome this. He was determined to overcome it.

Stiles didn’t quite know how, but he would get there. Somehow.
Scott had come round, a bag full of questionably healthy foods. Scott had dumped the bag, pulling out a box of chicken nuggets, passing them over to Stiles, before diving back into the bag for his own box.

“I feel special,” Stiles joked. “You planning on seducing me Scotty?”

“Shut up,” Scott said, shaking his head. He leant over the table and grabbed the bottle of sauce, pouring an ungodly amount of ketchup on the inside of the lid of the box, making Stiles gag a little.

“You are disgusting,” the teen said. “Like seriously.”

“You’re just jealous,” Scott grinned, he made his way back over to Stiles, settling down next to him.

Stiles waited, he still expected Scott to ask questions or something. Stiles hadn’t asked for the company, he had just shown up, food in hand and a smile in place. “Thought you deserve a treat,” he had said. It was nice, and Stiles did appreciate the gesture. Clearly though, Scott was concerned. That much was clear as time passed on. Stiles had stayed almost silent, even as Scott unloaded the range of foods, letting Stiles pick what he wanted.

“You’re quiet and it’s scary,” Scott finally voiced, watching as Stiles cleared up after the two of them. He had insisted, pointing out how Scott had bought the food and acted as a delivery service.

“I just have things going on,” Stiles shrugged. “I’m just trying to sort out things. It’s all crazy.”

“Allison mentioned your bond,” Scott tried to mention casually. He knew he failed as soon as Stiles’ body stiffened. “We don’t have to talk about it,” Scott added.

“It’s fine,” Stiles sighed. He picked up the kitchen towel, wiping his hands before he turned around. Stiles didn’t bother to say anything else, he didn’t want to talk about this in the kitchen. He wanted to at least have somewhere comfortable to sit. So, he made his way over to the living room, knowing Scott would follow. Which he did.

Stiles sat on the couch, turned so he could see Scott when he sat down. Both were sat facing each other, a leg bent with the other on the floor. Neither spoke for a few moments, but unsure of just how to start. Scott waited, not wanting to push, but knowing Stiles well enough to know he wanted to talk. It was just a case of waiting for him to figure out what to say.

“I told them,” Stiles admitted. He met Scott’s open eyes, and the words just fell from his mouth. He told Scott about how he had been sure that his emotions hadn’t just been his own. How each time a new piece of evidence hit it, it had made him fear that he was true, but also how nothing seemed too real. How he hadn’t been sure. Stiles told Scott how he had tried to tell them, only to chicken out, managing to bring up other insecurities in the process, only not saying what. Stiles was still a little too concerned about the rejection around that can of worms. Then, he came to the full reveal, how he had told the two, how they had taken it and how there was no sure answer to stop it. Stiles didn’t even realise how honest he was being when he admitted how scared and uncomfortable he was, especially knowing that they knew what he felt. He mentioned Peter messaging him the previous night, checking in when Stiles had gotten upset. He admitted that he didn’t think it would stop, only growing worse with stress until he had a breakdown. Another breakdown.

It was freeing, to admit it all without Scott interrupting.
Even when Stiles looked back to his friend, he didn’t see judgement. Scott’s eyes were furrowed, his mouth set into a grim but determined line. It wasn’t comforting, but Stiles said his piece, thankful for the opportunity.

“Stiles… I hate to say it,” Scott said, worrying his hands around the pillow he held. Stiles didn’t like how Scott sounded, not at all. It lacked the cheerfulness that his friend normally carried, leaving concern. Stiles had had enough of concern. It hurt that it was Scott looking at him like this, the boy who had tried his best to be a beacon of joy in some of the darkest moments of Stiles’ life. “Maybe you should talk to someone, like a professional.”

“No,” Stiles spat instantly. His heart raced and his mouth dried, horrified at just the thought of it. “I am not –”

“Stiles,” Scott said, his voice overly calm. The forced calm he tried to use every time he thought he knew best and was trying to make Stiles see reason. “I’m not saying that you’ll be alone. If you want I would force my way into it with you –”

“Scott, stop,” Stiles said weakly. He didn’t want to think about it. To consider it. He blinked, trying to focus on that calm feeling he had felt the previous night, knowing that Chris and Peter were both getting feedback and were probably concerned and on their way by now.

“Look, you aren’t a kid,” Scott continued on, watching Stiles closely. He did know his friend enough to know when to stop, and Stiles could handle more. “You aren’t going to let yourself be manipulated –”

“I wasn’t,” Stiles protested.

“You were manipulated,” Scott interrupted firmly.

“Scott –” Stiles didn’t know exactly what he wanted to say or even how to say it. He didn’t know how to make Scott understand. Sure, Stiles knew he was manipulated to a point but - “I wanted it.”

“You didn’t know what you wanted,” and Scott said it so surely that Stiles couldn’t help but feel sorry for him.

“I asked him - no listen to me,” Stiles pleaded when Scott went to interrupt again. “He didn’t do much to manipulate me. I wanted it and I’m scared I still do.” Stiles hadn’t voiced that worry out loud before and the honesty of it made his voice disappear. He met Scott’s own fearful eyes, worried about how this would affect their already somewhat strained relationship. Scott had mostly begun treating him the same, resisting the urge to walk on eggshells, and letting himself be normal, but it was a battle some days.

“I thought you were trying…?” Scott’s voice was hesitant, unsure of everything. He was worried about his friend, but aware of what a difficult job it was to show that concern sometimes.

“I am trying,” Stiles sighed. “I just – especially lately,” he amended, shrugging his shoulders. “There’s a lot, you know. I don’t know how I’m ever going to handle it because I just feel like I’m trying to hold steam. It hurts and it’s not working. How am I meant to magically hold onto something like that?”

“If anyone can, it would be you,” Scott said softly, aware that Stiles was listening to him. “You helped me when everyone else would have run away,” he continued, “you managed to make a plan and save the day so many times. You always seem to manage the impossible. You just have to believe it, that’s the only difference here, you don’t believe.”

“Well suck it up because you are a damn genius and you always manage it anyway. Just pretend that I’m in danger,” Scott smiled. It was a cheeky smile that Stiles hadn’t seen in a while, one that normally ended with them doing something incredibly stupid – like searching for a body in the middle of the night, in a forest, on a full moon stupid.

“I love you bro,” Stiles said, his voice barely a whisper, but Scott heard it loud and clear. His mouth fell open, his heart pumping a mile a minute as he just stared at his best friend. Part of Scott wanted to ask what was wrong with Stiles, who had taken over his body, and what the message Scott should know from that, because this wasn’t normal. Stiles didn’t say that. He avoided those words in every manner other than a complete joke. Even then it was rare.

Scott swallowed. He didn’t know what to do.

“I love you too,” he settled on. Scott had thought it would have been weird, to say those words to someone of the same gender. Perhaps it was because his dad wasn’t there, that Scott had that feeling. Or maybe it was the fact he only had a handful of people he had said those words to before. It didn’t matter, he did love Stiles, they were family, even if they weren’t related. Scott knew Stiles would do anything for him, and Scott hoped that he would do the exact same for Stiles if he was in that situation. Stiles had done so much for Scott.

The words had just taken him off guard. Scott couldn’t remember a single time Stiles had said that since – Stiles had been very careful about saying those words. Scott knew why. It was difficult to see someone you love turn against you, to claim you were the very thing making them worse. Stiles hadn’t talked about it much, only the odd time.

Scott could still remember the last time that Stiles had used the word ‘love’ seriously. It had been late, a night that Stiles stayed over, his dad too drunk and not stopping, so Melissa had stepped in. It wasn’t the first time and it hadn’t been the last. Scott remembered how quiet Stiles was, how even his favourite food hadn’t perked him up. How he didn’t even try to sleep, staring up into the darkness. Scott hadn’t slept, too worried about his friend. It had only been a month since his mother had died. In the dead of night, when Scott’s mom was sleeping, Stiles had spoken.

“I loved her,” he had said, his voice soft and shaken. “I told her and she didn’t say it back.”

Scott hadn’t known what to say, so he had just stayed silent. They were both in the same bed, as they always had been when they stayed at each other’s house. Scott laid still, scared about hurting his friend and scared about what else Stiles might say.

“She told that I needed to leave because all I was doing was making things worse for her,” Stiles’ voice had been robotic, the emotions vacant. “She said it before she went into the hospital... why did... did she always...” Stiles had trailed off. Whatever else he was planning on saying lost to the night.

Scott didn’t have an answer, he didn't quite understand the gravity of what Stiles was telling him at the time. Instead, he had just moved closer to his friend, wrapping his arms around him and holding him close. It wasn’t anything like his mother had done in the past, but Scott had hoped that it would be enough to keep Stiles together for just a little longer. It seemed to have worked. Neither of them slept much that night, both too caught up in just being near each other. It was comforting. Scott felt like he was helping, and Stiles felt a little safer and less raw.
Stiles didn’t know why he was anxious, there was no real need for it, he tried to remind himself as he wiped his hands on his trousers. Chris had contacted him with an offer to pick him up, so Stiles was waiting. The message was simple, just a polite request for Stiles’ presence for a meal. It wasn’t anything that they hadn’t done before, so Stiles didn’t know why he felt nervous. He just felt like there was a lot more behind the idea of them having a meal than there used to be.

“Are you sure?” John asked, poking his head back into the room. Stiles had mentioned Chris’ request, he was still trying to be open and honest about what was happening. Even if he did still omit some details.

“Dad,” Stiles said, offering a smile. He knew that his dad was nervous as well, which didn’t quite help his own anxiety. Stiles could imagine how it would feel for your own child to go off on a date with someone that should be the love of their life, just the thought made Stiles worry for his pretend child’s fate. So as much as it didn’t help, Stiles accepted it and was glad his dad cared so much. “It’s just date night, nothing crazy. Chris said Peter will be cooking.”

“And you’re ok with this?”

“Yes?”

“That doesn’t sound convincing,” John sighed. He stepped fully into the room. “Codes in place? I can call you and make sure everything’s alright. I can even pick you up if you want.”

“Dad,” Stiles said again, his voice softer as he smiled at his dad. They had set up code words if they needed the other one to make an excuse to leave wherever they were. Stiles would call his dad ‘pops’, and John would sigh and call Stiles ‘kiddo’ with some type of question about what he had done now. It was the easiest escape, ‘Oh no, my kid’s got into trouble, you know what he’s like’, it worked well. Everyone and their mother knew about the Sheriff’s son. Although John had never had to use his own code, it was mainly developed under Stiles’ insistence. He was a strange child.

“I’m being serious, I can be your date bail,” John assured him.

“I don’t need you to be my – what the hell is a date bail?” Stiles laughed. “We’ll stick to the ‘get-me-out-of-here’ words,” Stiles pointed out. “I’ll even text you if I need you to get me. You don’t even need to call –”

“I’m going to call,” John interrupted firmly. He left no room for Stiles to disagree, the last time he hadn’t checked in, he ended up getting a call to collect his son from a murder scene – that he had been involved in. So, John was not going to take that risk again.

Just that short chat had helped Stiles more than he ever thought possible, he felt a lot better. Yes, he was anxious. There was a lot surrounding Chris and Peter, especially after his talk with Scott. Speaking of, Stiles hadn’t been able to get Scott’s suggestion out of his mind. Amongst that one suggestion, which Stiles refused to repeat, Scott had also mentioned spending more time with both of the men, which Stiles could handle more than trying to trust another professional person again.

“It’s going to be fine,” Stiles said, partly to himself but mostly to his dad. “Chris shouldn’t be too far away.”

“Be safe,” John said, and before Stiles could sincerely respond, his dad had continued; “Ideally no sleeping over, keep me in the loop, you’re underage, and just make sure you don’t do anything
stupid. You can’t get pregnant but there’s still –”

“Dad!” Stiles shouted when he finally managed to close his mouth. His eyes were wide and he had turned a bright red. “No!” Overly delayed, Stiles slapped his hands to the side of his head, covering each ear as his dad laughed.

Chris’ arrival wasn’t too much later, Stiles’ cheeks still somewhat pink as he climbed into the car.

“Evening,” Chris said, pausing slightly. “What’s wrong?”

“Nothing, just go,” Stiles grumbled, pressing his cold hand against his cheek. He didn’t want to get into the fact his dad had insinuated they might have sex. “So, the plan for tonight?”

“No plan,” Chris said, starting the drive. It wouldn’t take too long, but it was nice to have a bit of quiet time with Chris. “Peter’s cooking something, he wouldn’t tell me what, so it’ll be a surprise. He is a good cook though.”

“He’s cooked for you before?” Stiles asked. Being this close did manage to ease some more of Stiles’ unease. It was fine, there was nothing strange going on. Stiles had been around both men more than enough to know they didn’t want to hurt him. He didn’t even know why he was so anxious about this, it wasn’t like either man had done anything. Stiles wanted to lay the blame completely on Scott and his stupid suggestion, but if he was being honest, it could be because Stiles knew they could feel his own feelings. That was a lot to handle, even the thought of it.

“A few times,” Chris said, giving Stiles a quick smile before refocusing on the road. “He took over the job after I managed to burn some hotdogs –”

“How?” Stiles laughed, the chuckle continuing as Stiles imagined the whole scene.

“I was young,” Chris shrugged. He reached over and tapped Stiles’ leg. “We got… distracted,” Chris admitted. “He decided I couldn’t be trusted.”

“You – ah, right,” Stiles said, his chuckles turning nervous. It was a little strange to think of them two, back when Stiles was just a child, even more so with the fact Stiles was a child. It just reminded Stiles of how much younger he was compared to them.

“I said something,” Chris noted, he had pointed out, finally voicing his observation after several minutes of silence after Stiles’ nervous laugh. Unable to stop himself commenting on it, he spared Stiles another glance, concerned and wary of just where this might lead.

“It’s nothing,” Stiles said automatically, aware that it was his go-to response. He should probably work on that. “Just – you two are older and it just reminded me,” he shrugged. “It’s silly.”

“It isn’t silly,” Chris protested. “I’d be worried if you didn’t think about it. I know there is an age gap, and it isn’t ideal –”

“Really, it doesn’t matter,” Stiles said, shaking his head. He wanted this conversation over, ideally dead and buried.

“You shouldn’t ever feel pressured to do something you aren’t comfortable with, and I know Peter would want you to know the same. No matter what –”

“I know,” Stiles said, cutting Chris off again. “Look,” he took a breath. “I don’t know why the three of us were put together, Allison thinks we’re all alike and Scott says you’ll probably keep me out of trouble but I don’t see it. The two of you? Sure, I can see it. It’s a little weird but you are different
enough and capable enough that it would work. I just don’t know why you’d be stuck with me tacked on the end.”

Chris pulled into a parking spot. He didn’t reply to Stiles’ statement, focusing on the car. There was a lot of honesty in Stiles’ thoughts. Probably more than he had intended on revealing, and Chris didn’t quite know what to say in response to it. Once he had turned the car off, he undid his seatbelt, turning more towards Stiles.

“Do you know something, you remind me a lot of myself,” Chris said, choosing his words carefully. “And of Peter,” he added. “I saw Peter in you before I really got to know you. When you managed to pick up Jackson, it was almost like a vision of the past. I don’t remember exactly what you said, but you called him pretty and told him to climb into the car, and it was such a Peter thing.” Chris’ smile made Stiles smile.

“I also turn to murder and torture as a go-to response,” Stiles added.

“True,” Chris laughed. “Right now,” he continued, “I can see the scared teen who wants things to just go back to normal, to be able to forget everything and not worry about the supernatural. But, I know that you would hate it, just like I would.”

“You don’t know that,” Stiles said with a slight shrug. He had come to that conclusion, in amongst blaming both of his soulmates for his whole life. Stiles didn’t know how he would ever handle normal, this was the person who wanted to search out a dead body, knowing that the murderer had not been apprehended. “I might be fine with a normal life.”

“You’re welcome to try if you want,” Chris pointed out. “We can figure –”

“I want to try this,” Stiles said honestly, “for real… if you are ok with that?”

“I would be honoured,” Chris smiled. “Let’s go find that wolf before he sends out a search party.”

“A search party of one isn’t a search party,” Stiles pointed out.

Chris just watched as Stiles climbed out of the car, shutting the door behind him. That went better than he had expected, even if it wasn’t as good as he had secretly hoped. He would take what he could though. Chris took his time getting out of the car.

Stiles looked around, the parking lot wasn’t empty, but it wasn’t filled. If he had to make an escape, his dad would have plenty of room to collect him. He hoped it didn’t come to that. He had over an hour to make a choice though. He could do this. It wasn’t a problem. He trusted Peter and Chris.

“I thought you might have gotten into a crash, you took that long,” Peter called from the doorway.
Stiles didn’t quite know what to do with himself. He tried not to look over to Peter and Chris, again, that was all he had done since he had sat down. Peter had wasted no time in telling them that they were late and the food was already ready. It was lasagne. As much as Stiles hated to admit it, he just didn’t know what he was expected to do. He felt like there had to be some type of catch in place, even if Chris had claimed there wasn’t one.

“How have you been Stiles?”

Taking a moment to blink at Peter, Stiles processed the question. It wasn’t like they hadn’t been in touch, or hadn’t seen each other. Plus, they knew exactly how he had been. Pleasantries, Stiles never took Peter as one to care for them. How human of him.

“I’m alright,” Stiles shrugged, “not much has happened. I think I hit my craziness quota already. How have you been?” the question was more of a double question. It was socially acceptable to ask whoever asked you back, plus, Stiles didn’t know just what he was meant to do.

“I’ve been a little bored if I’m honest with you,” Peter grinned. It was almost like he knew how uncomfortable – well, he probably did know. “I think we are all set for a quiet night at home.”

“What’s the plan then?” Stiles asked, shifting in his seat. He finally took his knife and fork and cut a bit off his meal to eat. Unfortunately, it was rather good. Was there anything Peter couldn’t do? Stiles had the image of Peter mastering everything just to spite everyone around him and it didn’t seem at all false. It seemed exactly like Peter.

“Plan?” Peter asked, his face full of an innocence that did not suit him.

“He asked me the same thing earlier,” Chris interjected.

“I like plans,” Stiles shrugged, feeling a little unnecessarily judged by the two of them.

“Of course,” Peter grinned.

“Nothing wrong with a plan,” Chris said at the same time.

Stiles doubted it would ever feel less surreal. The two of them. Or three, if he was to really think about it. It was nice, nicer than Stiles could have ever imagined before. It just left him calm.

“I can hear the judgement,” Stiles huffed. It was forced rather than real. “I don’t like surprises.”

“That goes against everything about you,” Peter hummed.

“I wouldn’t say so,” Chris said, turning his attention to Peter as Stiles continued to eat. He took his time with every bite, chewing thoroughly before swallowing. “He’s adaptable, but that doesn’t mean spontaneous. He thinks things through.”

“He also puts himself in a lot more danger than is necessary.”

“He is also here,” Stiles sighed, having swallowed his food. “I like an idea of what happens, I don’t cope too well with rigidity but having nothing to do drives me crazy too. So I always have an idea of what is going to happen, even if it’s just playing a game,” Stiles explained. He bit off another forkful, aware of the eyes on him as he chewed.
“In that case,” Peter said slowly. “I did think we could watch something, a film we all agree on if that is possible. Perhaps we could even get to know each other a little more.”

“Nothing too big,” Chris said. “Vetoing is an option.”

“You baby him,” Peter frowned, turning to the other man.

“You are too reckless,” Chris shot back.

“You both are unbelievable,” Stiles sighed. “I am not three. If I don’t want to do something I will tell you. Now can we please finish eating?”

It was strange to Stiles, who had only really told his own father off, how these two grown men seemed to shrink under his stare. He wondered, briefly if this is what having kids would be like, having to talk in a voice he didn’t normally use. That touch of sternness that Stiles still didn’t know if he had mastered just yet.

The meal finished fairly quickly after they had all quietened down. It was nice, and Stiles couldn’t help but fixate on that feeling. He longed for it, and it hurt all the more when he thought about what was more than likely going to happen.

“Christopher, clear up while I show Stiles the collection,” Peter grinned.

“Guests shouldn’t help clean,” Chris said, rolling his eyes even as he stood up and began to collect the dishes.

“You aren’t a guest dear,” Peter said, not missing a beat. “Now Stiles,” he smiled, “Stiles is our guest.”

“It’s like no time has passed,” Chris sighed with a shake of his head. Stiles could feel the fond, bittersweet pain. It made him want to hold his chest, where the ache was centred, but just to make sure that he wasn’t actually missing a piece of him. In next to no time, the feeling had passed, and Stiles was left feeling bare. A cold achiness that somewhat seemed to hurt even more.

“He makes it sound like I’m a hassle,” Peter huffed. In the time that Stiles had been distracted, the man had stood and offered his hand to him.

It was a little overwhelming. Stiles wanted to believe that no matter who it was, this whole situation would be overwhelming. He barely felt like he was breathing, in a brief thought, Stiles compared this to holding Derek up in the swimming pool. The only difference was the lack of an end goal, he didn’t know where this would end, what he wanted this to end as. That was a lie. Stiles knew a realistic end, and an impossibly hopeful end, and both would ultimately end in more pain. Especially with them both acting like this. It had to, Stiles reasoned as he took Peter’s hand and let the man lead him through the apartment. The impossibly hopeful end was nothing more than a childish wish.

It wasn’t until he had been pushed back into the middle of the couch, that Stiles remembered his own promise to be more positive. He said he would try, and he would keep his word. Shaking his head a little, Stiles tried to push back his thoughts to that deep corner of his mind, as he had done so many times in the past. He could come back to them whenever he needed to, but he didn’t want to ruin this by worrying.

“Any particular genre requests?” Peter asked, he had sat on Stiles’ left, remote in hand. There was a moment where Stiles’ mind short-circuited with how close Peter was, his side pressed against him with hardly any wiggle room.
“I don’t mind,” Stiles said, his head shaking side-to-side in wonder. He didn’t quite know what he was meant to say.

“I’ll pick then,” Peter grinned, he gave Stiles a wink before calling Chris’ name.

“I’m here,” Chris said, making his way over to the two of them. “The dishes are in the sink and rinsed, that’s all I could do,” he said. Surprisingly, although, maybe not that surprising, Chris said on Stiles’ other side. There was no other space available that faced the screen, but Stiles still didn’t expect it.

Still in somewhat of a daze, Stiles didn’t register what started when Peter hit play. The film had already been loaded and prepared to go, he noticed, and when the writing began to scroll across the screen, Stiles quickly gave Peter a surprised look.

“We didn’t get through them,” the man said, having been waiting for Stiles’ reaction. It wasn’t a hassle to watch more of Star Wars, especially not if Stiles was as enthusiastic as he had been before. It was nice to see the kid laugh, frown and lean into every twist and turn of the films. It was even nice to hear the words quoted under his breath, and Peter had robbed Chris of that experience the first time.

It truly was an experience for Chris. He hadn’t ever been around someone who was so invested in a film they had seen before, and it was clear Stiles had seen Star Wars before. Between the grin and Peter’s own interest in the young man, it felt as close to home as he would ever consider internally.

Much to his amusement, when his phone chimed from his pocket, both Stiles and Peter, who seemed to have changed his focus from Stiles to the film, had shushed him. Trying not to disrupt the two, Chris pulled his phone from his pocket and chuckled at the text from Allison.

From Allison: Do not pressure him. Do not hurt him. I love you but you will pay if he gets hurt again.
A Dull Moment

Stiles opened his eyes slowly, blinking back at the harsh lighting around him. It was too bright to be his room, he also felt a weight pressed against his left side, something pressed across this front. Glancing over, Stiles noticed Peter. His head was on Stiles’ shoulder, probably at an uncomfortable angle. Following Peter’s arm, Stiles saw how he had hold of Chris’ top. Unlikely before, Chris wasn’t the one cuddled up to him, he was mostly asleep where he sat, his head dangling back against the back of the couch. The only thing that caught Stiles’ attention about Chris was how one of his hands laid close to Peter’s, almost as if they had been touching at one point before moving away in their sleep.

The thought made Stiles’ chest ache. Sure, he had Peter plastered against his side, which was nice, but there wasn’t that same need for the contact that there seemed to be with Chris.

“You’re thinking a lot,” Chris grumbled, not moving his head.

“We’re not having another midnight chat,” Peter added, his voice rough and tired.

Looking between the two, Stiles noted how neither man had their eyes open. He couldn’t help but wonder when they had woken, if they had even been asleep. Stiles did expect Peter to move away, but it didn’t change how much it hurt when the man did move.

“Bed,” Peter huffed, finally opening his eyes an inch.

“You go,” Stiles said, shifting a little as he stretched. His back cracked, and he let out a groan as it stretched more than comfortable after his slight couch crash.


“I’m not tired,” Stiles protested, aware that Chris was amused, even without watching the scene in front of him. Chris missed Peter and Stiles glaring at each other, neither refusing to back down, although he could almost see it behind his eyelids. It wasn’t the first time he had seen Peter like this, and he half hoped the man reacted in a similar way to how he used to. It would be nice to not be on the receiving end, for once.

“Put me down!”

Bingo. Chris finally opened his eyes, not wanting to miss it. Sure enough, Peter had Stiles in a fireman hold, even as the kid struggled and kicked, all the while demanding to be released.

“Bed,” he repeated again, staring Chris down. Taking a second to debate how likely Peter was to manhandle him into bed along with Stiles. It wasn’t worth the risk, Chris still had his dignity. Not that Peter cared.

“I’m going,” Chris grinned. Peter must have noticed and accepted how truthful Chris was being, because he nodded and turned, still ignoring Stiles’ protests.

“Chris! Help me!” he demanded, finally catching sight of the hunter. He had pushed himself up using Peter’s back but was still unable to get out of the hold. He was frantically hoping Chris would help.

“Just go with it,” the hunter offered, much to Stiles’ dismay.
“I hate you,” Stiles lied. “Both of you.” Even as he spoke, Chris could feel the teens amusement. There wasn’t even an attempt to hide it, and Peter’s laugh only helped the lightness in Chris’ own chest. Perhaps they could work this out without too much trouble.

Stiles bounced on the bed, trying his hardest to maintain his glare on Peter’s moving body. It was difficult, especially with how much amusement Stiles could feel, but he was determined not to slip out of his annoyed act.

“Stay,” Peter said, giving Stiles a hard look once he had stopped bouncing.

“Aye aye captain,” Stiles mocked, even going as far as to salute Peter. He laid back on the bed, trying to focus on something else other than Peter and Chris, who had sunk into the room behind them. Deciding there was no time like the present, Stiles closed his eyes, he could feel Peter and Chris watching him but instead, he focused on himself. After the stunt Peter pulled, it was only fair to ignore him. Chris was no help, so he was in the same boat as Peter.

Stiles hadn’t tried to block either of them that day, typically it was something that he would try before bed since that was when he could feel the most relaxed. He was curious about trying Scott’s idea out. It wasn’t too easy to visualise his friend in danger though. Frowning to himself, Stiles risked looking crazy.

“Scott is in danger,” he mumbled.

“What?” Peter asked, confused. He exchanged a look with Chris, who seemed as equally puzzled but Stiles still didn’t respond. “What happened –”

“Not really.” Stiles huffed, glaring at the wolf for a second. He closed his eyes again, aware that he was feeling a little annoyed, as well as a little amused, from what he assumed was one of the two men in the room. “Scott is in danger,” he repeated to himself. He could remember each time he had felt that fear, running through the school as Peter chased them. Fearing that Scott was going to hurt someone after he had been bitten. *Every single time* Scott had been out of Stiles’ sight after he had been bitten. Stiles had constantly been worried, especially after the *werewolf hunters* were in town.

“The only way to save him is to do this,” Stiles continued, he could feel his chest tightening. Just remembering those moments had been enough to spike his anxiety, which he knew would happen. Now he just needed to *block* it. He needed to push it back, put it in a box to deal with later. He had done that before, it was something he did excel at when he had to. Then, once he was out of the woods, when he felt ready, he could deal with it properly. When he knew that Scott was safe.

Stiles’ jaw tensed. It was easier said than done, to forcefully *push* such intense feelings away, but Stiles had this. He had done it before. He could do it. It was just the feedback from Chris and Peter that was making it more difficult. As soon as that feedback was muted, Stiles would be able to do this. So one thing at a time.

Stiles didn’t know who was more amused, but there was a clearer feeling, one that wound around his chest, leaning more to his left side than his right. It was a somewhat strong feeling, but not overwhelming. Stiles tried to imagine it, to give it a form that he could manipulate.

Watching from the outside, Peter noticed how Stiles’ left hand twitched, his fingers flexing for a brief moment before Chris’ sharp intake. Chris was staring at the boy with wide eyes, he met Peter’s eyes for a moment before moving them back to Stiles. Peter didn’t have long to wait before he felt the anxiety dull in himself. There was still the barest thread of it, just enough that Peter could pull if he wished to, but Stiles had managed it. *How*, Peter had no idea. He was struck, once again, by just how unique and special Stiles was.
The reprise lasted for only a moment before the feelings were back full force. The dull had been there, and Peter knew that he hadn’t imagined it. By Chris’ grin, he knew as well. There was a hint of triumph and defeat in Stiles, the two emotions strong and conflicting.


As much as Peter wanted to question who and why Stiles needed to kiss someone, it was a little distracting to see Stiles wriggle happily on the bed, a wide grin on his face as he laughed. His giddiness infectious.
“You are a goddamn genius,” Stiles gushed, not even hesitating to throw himself at Scott when the teen opened the door. “A literal genius.”

Scott preened where he stood, a hint of confusion on his face, but ready to accept the praise from Stiles. He had caught Stiles without a moment’s thought, almost too used to Stiles to even be shocked for a second that he was leaping through the air towards him.

“You should listen to me more,” Scott stated.

“God no,” Stiles laughed. “But this one time you were amazing and if you weren’t against it, I’d fucking ruin you until you were happy goo.”

“Please don’t start that again,” Scott sighed, it was fond but still tired. “It’s bad enough mom heard you last time, it led to awkward talks Stiles!”

“Just admit you love me,” Stiles said, faking a pout, puckering his lips.

“You’re definitely feeling better,” Scott said, shaking his head. “What went well?”

“I managed to block them, only for a moment but it’s a start,” Stiles said, he pulled himself from Scott’s arms and darted past the werewolf. “It was weird but I know what I’m looking for now and I’m hoping it’ll get easier and I don’t have to induce an anxiety attack to do it.”

“You induced – Stiles,” Scott said, exasperatedly. He shut the door and followed Stiles. “You shouldn’t do that, what if –”

“No what if’s,” Stiles said firmly. “I did it and we are staying on happy facts.”

Scott shook his head. He didn’t want to ruin Stiles’ happy mood, even if he was worried about his friend. He would let it go for now. Although, he couldn’t help himself asking, “Did you think about the other thing?” Scott asked, cautiously broaching the topic he wanted to. “Not that I’m forcing you to –”

“Don’t,” Stiles said firmly. He didn’t want to think about it. Not even in passing, and certainly not in any form of acceptance. “We aren’t talking about that.”

Scott was silent before nodding once, seeming to accept Stiles’ words. He wouldn’t push. Now wasn’t the time for it.

“How are we celebrating?” Scott asked, letting himself grin again. It was easy to be pulled into Stiles’ happiness, the teen radiated it with no shame.

“Happy goo Scott,” Stiles said, as though the answer was simple.

“You are not sexing me, we are ignoring the happy goo ending,” Scott laughed.

“I would be so good and gentle,” Stiles teased, “I’d treat you right.”

Scott just shook his head. Stiles had always been outspoken, stating how much he would kiss Scott
over a good idea or a good prank well played. The bisexualness hadn’t been a surprise, even before Scott knew what it was. Stiles had always been open to showing his affection to whomever he could. The younger version of him had even threatened to kiss Jackson one surprising day, which had been a funny memory to recall. Stiles had always been over the top and affectionate, even if he hides a lot of that affection. Scott had noticed that everything Stiles would suggest were things that he knew would be denied.

“How was the date?” Scott asked, trying not to bring his own mood down. He didn’t need to remember why Stiles was so uncomfortable showing his true affection in ways that weren’t comedic.

“It was nice,” Stiles said, his grin shrinking to an honest, yet embarrassed smile. “They were really nice,” he added.

“That’s good,” Scott noted. “Do you have another date planned?”

“Dude, it was yesterday,” Stiles pointed out, he shook his head. “Of course there isn’t another one planned.”

“Well arrange one. You can do something stupid and they’d like it,” Scott urged him. “Cook, go see a movie, go karts, whatever!”

“Look,” Stiles sighed. His good mood had faded quickly. Every single one of his doubts had resurfaced, and Stiles couldn’t help it, or even attempt to stop it. He knew what would come from this, from another date. He even knew what saying the words he was thinking would do, but he needed someone else to understand, and Scott was the best chance at that. Scott had always heard him out and helped him rationalise his thoughts. It was worth a try. “They are good together, I can’t compete with that, I don’t want to compete with that.”

“You aren’t competing,” Scott protested quickly. Even though he knew Stiles did want to compete, pointing that out wouldn’t have been a way forward. “They want to try this, so do you.”

“Scott, listen to me,” Stiles said. Stiles did want to try it, a side of him screamed that he should hold onto the chance with both hands, screw the outcome. However, the more rational part of him, the louder side, refused. Stiles was quiet, unsure of his own words as he continued on, hoping that he could make sense of the chaos in his mind, “I like them, I want it to go somewhere but it isn’t going to happen. There is just too much between us. So much bad history. I helped kill Peter. They work well together. They’re good as they are, they don’t need a kid.”

“You aren’t a kid, and if they’ve said that –”

“It’s common sense,” Stiles snapped. He needed to get the words out before Scott swept in and made him forget his point. “They have history.”

“Not a good one from the sounds of it,” Scott interrupted. “You’re just scared. I know people have left you and have hurt you but that doesn’t mean they will.”

“Of course they will,” Stiles said, there was the bitterness lining his words so clearly. “You said it yourself, other people have. I’m not likeable –”

“Bullshit,” Scott scoffed. “You’re just being a coward.” It was a tactic Scott wasn’t even sure would work, but he was growing annoyed on Stiles’ behalf because he needed someone who was in his corner, even if he wasn’t in it himself. “You want to run and hide and hope nothing happens because that’s easier than the possibility of your happily ever after not working out. You – I actually thought you would have been the one to try, no matter what. You followed Lydia for years, knowing she
wouldn’t give you the time of day and here, knowing they would, you don’t even want to try.”

“There’s nothing to try,” Stiles said simply. “We were doomed from the start.” Lydia and him was never an option, not even a chance for success. It was completely different to what was going on with Chris and Peter. The two things were not comparable in the slightest.

“I can’t believe you,” Scott whispered the words. “If it was me, you’d tell me to grow up and at least try. There is nothing to lose,” he said, the words slightly mocking as Stiles had said them to Scott in the past. He wasn’t sure how they had gotten to this, or even if it was helpful for Stiles to hear but he couldn’t stop himself. He wanted the best for his friend, Stiles deserved happiness. Stiles normally tried to get happiness.

“Sorry,” Stiles shrugged, he was sorry. He had hoped Scott would understand it, but clearly that wasn’t the case. Instead, Stiles didn’t know what to think. Normally explaining himself worked, it helped him understand what he was thinking and it normally convinced Scott. How did Scott not understand? You’re being a coward, Scott’s voice seemed to only repeat those words inside of Stiles’ brain, so much that even within a few seconds they were engraved into his memory. “I – I’ll see you tomorrow, remember we had that thing to hand in.”

Scott watched as Stiles left, barely taking a second to pause before he was turning on his heel and fleeing. Tomorrow, he would apologise. Scott just hoped that Stiles would realise that he should try, that he was worth trying. Stiles deserved to have something good in his life, and Chris and Peter might just be that.

Chapter End Notes

Part one of Stiles realising that he's being stupid about everything; complete. Part two on its way very soon with a few new guests.
Stiles sat in his car, trying to calm his shaking hands. He wanted to scream. He wanted to make Scott understand. He wanted to do exactly what Scott said. He wanted to run. He wanted to get away and not look back. Unlike before, he didn’t keep driving even though he wanted to. Stiles had moved away from Scott’s house, pulling up near the forest, and held tight to the steering wheel.

He was conflicted. As much as Stiles wanted to label the world against him, he knew he was being unreasonable. It hurt, to have his own words thrown at him, to have his friend not understand. Stiles didn’t want to admit he could be seeing a cloudy version of the truth, one skewed by fear. He brought his head to the steering wheel, resting his forehead on the cool material.

He was scared. He knew that. He wasn’t trying to deny that. From the very start, Stiles had known his actions were made out of fear. Did that mean he wasn’t seeing things clearly? Was Stiles so far in denial that he was only seeing what he thought was true? What he wanted to see? Stiles wanted to believe that he wasn’t that mean to himself. That he wouldn’t jeopardise himself that much.

Once again, Stiles found himself thinking back to Scott’s suggestion. A therapist. That was a thought even more terrifying than the three of them living happily together. Stiles wasn’t an idiot though, contrary to the evidence that pointed to that conclusion. He wondered if the others had thought about it, whether they had decided that might be the better option for him. Was Scott just the one brave enough to voice it? Was Stiles brave enough to even face another one? Was he strong enough to survive it?

He didn’t know.

Could he try? He wanted to. Stiles wanted to be happy, to live a good life. It felt impossible.

Taking a steadying breath, Stiles sat upright again. He had faced many crazy people, even crazy supernatural beings. There was no reason that a normal human would be so scary to him.

Stiles had every intention of returning home. He had begun to drive in that direction, only to continue past his house. He wasn’t running, he just had a different destination in mind. He did have other people that he could talk to, ones that whilst he knew, he didn’t know well. He would be alright being honest to them, and they could offer him a viewpoint from the outside, whereas Scott, his dad, even Allison were all onlookers. These people didn’t know Chris or Peter, or even Stiles that well.

Stiles climbed out of the jeep, he was early, a lot earlier than people normally arrived at The Jungle, but he did see a group of people gathered around all smoking and talking. Almost all of the faces blurred, none stuck out in the sea. Every face turned to Stiles as he stood by his car.

“Darling!” a voice called over the parking lot, stopping Stiles from climbing back into his car and fleeing once again. “I’ve missed you!”

Stiles found the person calling out to him. He grinned as the man made his way over, arms open as he continued to talk.

“Where have you been? I thought you promised to come back. The ladies have missed you,” Tyler gathered Stiles up in his arms, holding him close for a second before stepping back and scrutinising Stiles. “You look dreadful, come, tell me all about it.”
“Do you have a habit of stealing away underage boys?” Stiles asked as Tyler’s arm wrapped around his shoulders. The two walked past the bouncers and other employees that were gathered. A few catcalling, whilst most just smiled or laughed.

“Just the adorable ones,” Tyler said, not breaking stride. “So what is the problem?”

“No problem,” Stiles protested. He had only met Tyler in passing. The man was a helper of sorts to the drag queens. He topped up their make-up and hair if they needed it. Stiles had nothing against the man, he seemed like a nice guy but he didn’t know him well enough to consider telling all of his dirty secrets to.

“No one shows up here before opening – even at opening,” he added, “without something troubling them.”

“I just wanted a distraction,” Stiles admitted.

“You came to the right place,” Tyler laughed. Clearly, he knew Stiles had more going on underneath his protests but he didn’t question it further. He just led Stiles through the dimly lit club. There was a lack of fog, which had been present the last time Stiles had been there, but then, he hadn’t been to the club before it was busy, so he didn’t have the best knowledge on the out-of-hours procedure.

“Don mentioned he saw you,” Tyler said, “he isn’t here tonight but I’ll let him know you came by.”

“Thanks,” Stiles smiled. It was nice, almost as soon as he had walked through the doors, he felt calmer. There was no stress linked to The Jungle, not since Jackson had tried to use it as an arena to slaughter his master’s enemies. “Who’s here?” he asked, just wanting that bit of knowledge before he was thrown to the wolves – kind of.

“Miricle, Glitter, Cream, Hazel, Shimmer, and Peach Dixx,” Tyler listed.

“I only know two of them,” Stiles admitted. It was true, he had only met Miricle and Shimmer, who had introduced herself as Shim before asking to dust Stiles’ cheeks with silver glitter. He hadn’t known how to respond at that moment, staying mostly silent as he was made to shimmer, courtesy of Shimmer. That night, in particular, was the closest Stiles had come to a make-over by them. Bits of makeup added to his face in passing as they touched themselves up. Stiles had ended up with glittery silver blush, blue lips and red hands. Although the hands hadn’t been courtesy of the drag queens, it was mainly from the body paint that had been laying around that he had caught himself leaning into at one point. It had been a crazy night, one that Stiles remembered he had laughed so much during. One he would like to keep in his memory, there were no half lizards that could paralyse, no werewolves that were watching with their almost glowing eyes. It was just Stiles, being the human, surrounded by just humans.

“They all have heard about you,” Tyler chuckled, there was a slight emphasis on ‘you’ as he squeezed Stiles’ shoulders before opening the door in front of them. “The boy who needs to let us make him prettier, not that he isn’t plenty pretty on his own that is.”

“You talking about my child over there Ty?” Another voice called from inside of the room. That voice Stiles knew.

“Shim,” he called with a grin. Stiles slipped away from Tyler’s arm and ducked into the room. “I missed you.”

“Shim,” he called with a grin. Stiles slipped away from Tyler’s arm and ducked into the room. “I missed you.”

“Boy, you know better than that,” a throaty chuckle broke out in Shim’s throat. “Get here.”

Stiles almost jumped into Shim’s arms, letting the last bit of tension seep from his body. Maybe he
should have been uneasy at how ok he was to be manhandled and held by someone so much bigger
than him, but he didn’t mind at all. It was calming. Safe.

Chapter End Notes

Word of warning, I think I'll be focusing more in this story over the next week or two, I
have a handful of chapters already prepared and I think I'm close to finishing it. At the
moment, I think there are another seven chapters, but that might vary a little bit. We're
on the path to goodness though.
A Talk With Some Queen's

Stiles didn’t recall just how he had gone from catching up with his friends to being face-to-face with Miricle as she gently brushed makeup onto his face. It didn’t make sense, but Stiles wasn’t protesting. He thinks it had been a throwaway comment, they normally made them when Stiles was around. He had laughed and before he could process what was happening, there were sponges being pressed against his face. Thankfully, Miricle was being gentle.

Just over Miricle’s shoulder, Shim hovered watching with rapt attention as Stiles went through a transformation. He assumed he was being transformed at least. Maybe he could hide in The Jungle forever, he’d be close enough to Peter and Chris.


Stiles frowned, a little confused just how Shim had jumped to that conclusion – but then, Tyler had said the same thing. More or less. Maybe he was just that obvious. Or they were mind readers. Miricle clicked her tongue, reminding Stiles to stay still.

“No one hurt me,” Stiles said, stressing the word.

“Mhmm,” Shim hummed, the doubt clear.

“Honey, no one shows up here at 4 pm without a reason,” Miricle added. There was a smile on her lips but Stiles could see the seriousness in her eyes. It was a little strange that these people cared so much about him. Especially since they had only really been around each other a handful of times. Perhaps it was Stiles’ age, they knew he was young, maybe it was just protectiveness. Stiles could understand that; he had his own people that he had adopted under his wing before they managed to turn into their own butterflies and manage on their own.

“You’re here,” Stiles pointed out. He raised an eyebrow, trying to channel Peter as much as he could. He thought he fell rather flat since the two drag queens did not back away from their questioning stares.

“How long do you think it takes us to get ready?” Shim chuckled.

That earned another frown from Stiles. Sure, he had noticed that a few of the other people in the room were half prepared for the night but both Shim and Miricle looked perfectly fine. Their make-up was a little less intense than he normally saw them in but that was all, it could be a tamer night.

“You look great,” Stiles said, voicing his thoughts. Maybe they needed a touch-up and a wardrobe change, considering Shim was still in a dressing gown, but it still worked.

“How do you think it takes us to get ready?” Shim chuckled.

That earned another frown from Stiles. Sure, he had noticed that a few of the other people in the room were half prepared for the night but both Shim and Miricle looked perfectly fine. Their make-up was a little less intense than he normally saw them in but that was all, it could be a tamer night.

“You look great,” Stiles said, voicing his thoughts. Maybe they needed a touch-up and a wardrobe change, considering Shim was still in a dressing gown, but it still worked.

“How long do you think it takes us to get ready?” Shim chuckled.

“You look great,” Stiles said, voicing his thoughts. Maybe they needed a touch-up and a wardrobe change, considering Shim was still in a dressing gown, but it still worked.

“Cute!” a deep voice laughed from just beyond Stiles’ sight. “Can we keep him?”

“If they had it their way, yes,” Tyler added in. Stiles could just see the smile on the man’s face. It felt cheerful, just being in the room, Stiles found himself smiling along with the others.

“So spill it,” Miricle said, having put the sponge down now and traded it for a brush.

“It’s nothing major,” Stiles grumbled. “I met my soulmates, things are just a little complicated.” He half expected the congratulations as soon as he paused. Thankfully, they didn’t come. They just waited for Stiles to continue. “They’re older and they’ve been together before. I’m just a dumb kid thrown into the mix.” It was self-deprecating, but that was exactly how he felt.
“They said this?” Shim asked, the playfulness had gone from her voice.

“No,” Stiles sighed. “They’re trying to make it work but it feels a little…” he trailed off, unsure of how to phrase it.

“Hopeless?” Miricle offered. There was a gentleness in her voice as well. It wasn’t quite pitying, more understanding.

“Yeah,” Stiles breathed. “It’s silly because everyone keeps saying we’re so alike and I do want it to work out. I’m just scared and it’s stupid.”

“It isn’t stupid,” Shim said. Stiles looked over as she moved closer. She was frowning as she reached out and took one of Stiles’ hands. “It’s normal to be scared, especially of something like that. Have you told them that you’re scared?”

“No,” Stiles said, a humourless chuckle following the word. “How am I meant to tell them that I’m scared they’ll –” Stiles cut himself off, unsure if he should be venting as much as he wanted to.

“They’ll what?” Miricle prompted as Shim squeezed his hand.

“I’ve seen soulmates fall apart, I’ve seen them leave and I don’t want that. I’m not strong enough for that,” Stiles forced out, blinking rapidly as his eyes began to well up. “They seem nice enough, they even helped me get out of bad situations but what if,” Stiles said, the words were falling faster than he thought possible as he finally let the words leave the confines of his mind. “Then my friend suggested therapy,” he added. “Ok, not a bad idea, I am fucked up but I can’t do therapy.”

“It isn’t so bad,” Shim offered.

“I’ve been before,” Stiles explained. “Not good, at all. And ok, I know it would be different, I wouldn’t have a psycho dealing with me but I’m scared of that as well, what if I’m still a stupid kid. What if I go and get better and put my all into my soulmates and they just leave? What – what if they don’t even like me? They could be doing this as some fucked up –”

“Honey,” Miricle interrupted him. She pressed a hand on Stiles’ shoulder, pulling his attention solely on her. “Breathe. You aren’t stupid, and maybe therapy isn’t the right step for you. There are other ways to get the help you need.”

“You don’t understand,” Stiles shook his head. It was easy to give advice when you only knew half of the story.

“What I think,” Shim cut in, she squeezed Stiles’ hand again. “I think you need to talk to these soulmates of yours. Maybe not everything, but be honest with them about how you feel. Let them know that you don’t want to rush anything. If they don’t understand, we can set all the ladies on them.”

It was silly and unrealistic, but it helped calm a portion of Stiles’ mind.

“Everyone keeps telling me to just try it and see if it will work out,” Stiles sighed. He leant back against the back of the seat. “I don’t know how to do that.”

“Finding ways to quiet your mind helps,” Miricle offered. “Do things you like, wear something comfortable that you feel safe in. Be yourself, it’s cliché but it is helpful.”

“Ew,” Stiles smiled. “Myself? No one wants that.”
“You would be surprised,” Miricle laughed. “Now, let me make you look like the angel you are. You’ll knock everyone dead.”

“He could do that already,” Shim pointed out, she gave Stiles a wink, finally letting go of his hand. Like magic, the easy atmosphere returned, as if Stiles hadn’t just bared his heart for them to see.

“I think you see something no one else sees,” Stiles laughed. He still felt a little raw, but laughter was a good medicine for that.

“Sugar, we shouldn’t ever let anyone forget how drop-dead gorgeous you are.”

“I am underage,” Stiles pointed out.

“Jailbait is fine,” Shim laughed earning an eye roll from Miricle as she set to fixing Stiles’ face once again. The emotions having ruined a bit of her work, it wouldn’t take too long to fix. They’d have the teen ready to dance the night away before the club opened.
So my doggo is ill and I thought between letting him out back to make sure he doesn't make a huge mess in the house (again) I would edit this and actually start writing again. So here we go!

Chris didn’t know what to think. He was in the passenger seat, still reeling from the wave of feelings Stiles had been sending them. Peter, being the more stable of the two was driving. Chris knew the club, he had been inside of it a few times as a teen himself. He didn’t know Stiles frequented the club though.

John had given them specific instructions. Actually going out of his way to call Chris to make his demands like a drill sergeant. Stiles hadn’t returned home, which was a little worrying. Scott had called John, apologising and warning him about Stiles’ sour mood. Of course, the Sheriff, realising that his son hadn’t come home and could have run away, completely legally tracked Stiles’ phone. Apparently, they both had agreed to leave the GPS on, on the off chance something happened to either one of them, which was genius and a little concerning. Stiles hadn’t grown up as a hunter, even if his father was in the police force, they shouldn’t have had such precautions in place. Perhaps it had been John’s idea though, aware of what darkness could lurk the world.

Chris looked down at his phone again, the call to Stiles going through to voicemail. There was a chance Stiles hadn’t left The Jungle. There was a big chance that he had just gotten caught up in the loudness and chaos and hadn’t thought to check his phone. It didn’t quite ease Chris’ worry though. It was second nature to him to stay in contact, to always have that open line to people. The fact Stiles was silent was worrying, before he knew that Stiles was safe, either at home or with a friend.

“He’ll be fine,” Peter soothed. He was projecting, great. The fact Peter felt the need to attempt to console him didn’t help Chris’ ever-growing fear. He didn’t want to find someone else he cared about dead, he had lost too many people, even if most of his family he hadn’t cared for. That was a lie. Even with them dead, Chris wanted to cling on to that little bit of hope that they were good people overall. It was a stupid hope, and one he would never admit out loud.

“Can’t you go any faster,” Chris mumbled, the words loud and clear to Peter. It was strange for Peter to see Chris so wound up with anxiety. The man had normally been so level-headed, even as a teen. There was very little Peter could do to ease him, words would only do so much and in this state of mind, Chris had never responded well to contact. He preferred to be confronted with the reality of what he had been focused on. Peter knew it wasn’t just Chris’ anxiety that was leading him, Stiles’ had only been adding to it.

“We will be there soon,” Peter tried to say calmly, it didn’t quite have the desired effect as Chris continued to glare out of the window. Peter was worried, not that he would admit as much to Chris, he didn’t need to fuel the man’s own fear. He made a point to keep his own emotions to himself, he had experience with the level of control needed, even during times of stress. He didn’t know what he would be walking into, there was a huge possibility of things and that did nothing to help Peter’s own mind race. Sure, he tried to pretend that he didn’t care, in a way, he couldn’t begrudge Stiles the chance to act like a teenager, it was only fair.
Thankfully, they had pulled up into the fairly deserted parking lot. At least the population of the club had enough sense not to drive after a night of drinking and grinding against whatever they could. Peter had barely turned the engine off before Chris was out of the car. Peter took his time, taking note of how Stiles’ jeep was parked near the entrance, how it had probably been there for a while, under the bouncer’s watchful eye. A little reassuring to Peter’s own protective nature, Stiles would have been crushed if something had happened to his vehicle.

“Hurry up,” Chris mumbled. Peter held his tongue as he made his way around the car to join the hunter. “Where is he?”

“Can I look through walls now?” Peter drawled, not wanting to poke too much fun at Chris, but unable to hold himself back.

“His scent,” Chris snapped back, not rising to the bait and relaxing. It was almost cute how uncomfortable Chris looked, almost like the first time they had been able to go out in each other’s company alone. The constant looking over his shoulder and wariness of everyone around them. It was neither the time nor the place for that memory, Peter had to remind himself.

“There are a lot of people,” Peter pointed out. He had locked onto the faint trace of Stiles as soon as he stepped out of the car, it was barely there, anxious and scared. The closer they got to the building, the more it changed. Happiness. It shouldn’t have been as shocking as it was, of course for Stiles to have turned here, there had to be some good connection.

“What are you getting?” Chris asked, there was a hint of curiosity around him. Peter would never tire of how intense Chris’ emotions could be when he opened them.

“He’s here, happy,” Peter said, it was all things that Chris knew. Stiles hadn’t blocked them out, they could feel his unease and his joy, all jumbled and entwined together.

“How are we going to find him?”

Peter knew that Chris was expecting an answer, but he was unable to give one. Even with his enhanced senses, the club was intense. The fog, the noise and the scents all mixed was a lot for a regular human. It was dizzying, and Peter struggled to hold onto Stiles’ scent.

“Why did we ever come here?” Peter almost shouted to Chris. The deeper into the club, the louder everything became, giving Peter a headache.

Chris’ eyebrows furrowed, he turned to ask Peter what he had said when something caught his attention. There was a vague memory of Stiles mentioning Drag Queen’s, and Chris had an idea. Maybe they knew where Stiles was. There was nothing to lose by asking them. Chris moved to touch Peter to get his attention, but the man was focused on one of the people in the cluster Chris had seen. Deciding to take the plunge, Chris made his way over.

There was one of the group that didn’t quite fit in. They had the hair, a bright wig, not too obvious that it wasn’t real, but surrounded by a couple of overly flamboyant people, they did stand out. The clothes that this person was wearing was enough to make Chris realise that they didn’t often dress up, or perhaps they hadn’t brought everything they normally did, since the clothes were nothing like the others.

Chris was just a few steps away when the person turned. They both froze, staring at each other before Chris broke the silence.

“You’re in a wig,” he said loudly, aware that there was an almost protective circle surrounding
Stiles’ back.

“And makeup!” Stiles grinned, seemingly unfazed by Chris’ sudden appearance. “I look pretty!”

“Why are you in make-up?” Chris’ mind could not leave that simple fact alone. It was almost short-circuited on the fact Stiles had bright lips, blue eyelids and a tint of pink on his cheeks. Was that make-up, or due to the heat in the building?

“They didn’t have a dress in my size,” Stiles laughed. “They wanted to make me look pretty.”

Chris had felt Peter move steadily closer as he tried to comprehend just what he was seeing, so it was no surprise when Peter had injected into the conversation.

“They succeed.”

Both men watched as Stiles wobbled on his feet, unable to hear the laugh that escaped the teen.

“Have you been drinking?” Chris wasn’t sure how they would explain that to Stiles’ dad, it would probably result in some form of threat being thrown at them.

“I’m emotionally drunk!” Stiles all but screamed at them. “Too much feelings and talking, I want to party. Don’t send me home,” he had finished with an exaggerated pout, pushing his cherry red lips out. It was a childish move, but adorable all the same. Chris sighed to himself, admitting that he wouldn’t likely leave until Stiles wanted to, and he could feel Peter’s own resignation at that fact.
Tired

Chapter Notes

We are in the final running now, and whoa am I a little happy about it, still at least 6 chapters, maybe one or two extra but there are six planned and ready to write up fully.

Stiles felt light-headed. He was in Peter’s car, it was a lot quieter and smoother on the roads than his Jeep. It was almost like he wasn’t even moving, if he didn’t look out of the window or pay attention to the low hum of the engine, then he wouldn’t have thought they were moving at all. It was silent around him, even Peter, who was driving, didn’t make any noise. Stiles wanted to say that Chris was following them in the Jeep, but he wasn’t completely sure. The past few hours had been a bit of a blur. Stiles remembered dancing with Peter, the man’s hands on his hips as they laughed and then Chris had appeared, taking Peter’s spot. Both men had been a little uncomfortable, but still trying to be happy and calm around him. It hasn’t worked, Stiles could still feel their unease, but it was a nice gesture. Stiles even thought he remembered Peter laughing and talking with the Queen’s at one point when Chris had coaxed Stiles into drinking a bottle of water.

Stiles felt the world freeze from the gentle spin that was happening. He didn’t know where they were but they had stopped moving. Had he taken his wig off? He briefly remembered hugging Miricle and Shim on the way out, but was he still blue haired? Groggily he lifted his hand, patting his hair for a second before concluding that it was his own hair. That was a relief.

“You feeling ok?”

Stiles answered Peter’s question with a groan, not bothering to lift his head from his arms, which were bracketed on the dash. He hadn’t been wearing a seatbelt, but Peter had probably taken that into account during the drive, supernatural senses and whatnot.

Stiles faintly heard his Jeep, the sound coaxing a half smile out of him before it cut out into silence again.

“Maybe that’ll work,” Peter heard Stiles mumble as Chris came closer. “I could just emotionally drain myself and then all is good, no thinking and no blah.”

Peter shook his head, rolling his eyes when Chris peaked through Stiles’ opened window with a frown.

“He’s emotionally drunk still,” Peter explained.

“Crashing from the looks of it,” Chris sighed. “Are we getting him inside?”

“’m not moving,” Stiles grumbled.

“I feel like your neighbours will have questions,” Peter pointed out.

Stiles turned his head, groaning at the amount of energy it took and how much it hurt to just move. He blinked several times, trying to clear them before he glanced past Chris, and yes, that was his street. There was the police cruiser and the light on just behind the door, making the whole frame glow faintly.
“I don’t want to human,” Stiles mumbled, rowing even more at his house.

“You have to,” Chris said, trying to tamper down his amusement. From the half-hearted glare on Stiles’ face, it didn’t work as well as he wanted it to.

“You need to move to your bed at the very least,” Peter tried to reason.

“Carry me?” Stiles asked, there was a softness to his voice that almost melted Peter’s heart. He agreed without hesitation.

Chris rolled his eyes as Peter made his way around the car, opening the passenger door and easing Stiles out and into his arms. This was the man that had pretended he had a heart of ice, and here he was carrying Stiles because he had mumbled a question his way. Adorable.

“I will shoot you with your own gun,” Peter called back. Chris didn’t justify the threat with a response, only sending a pulse of amusement at Peter.

John wasn’t amused as Peter carried Stiles through the house. Peter could hear the frustration as he quietly told Chris that he didn’t know what to do. Peter just tried to focus on Stiles, how different the teen was to the previous night. He trusted Chris to bring John up to speed without causing any issue at all. Focusing on Stiles was the nicer choice, it was nice how he was just sinking into the hold, rather than fighting against it. How he was almost already asleep, his breath heavy and his eyes fluttering with the effort of keeping them open.

“m’ s’ry,” Stiles breathed as Peter placed him down on the bed.

“Nothing to be sorry for,” Peter whispered back, not wanting to pull Stiles out of his blissed-out half-asleep state.

“I’as sc’rd.”

The words were almost inaudible with how much they slurred together, but Peter knew what Stiles was trying to say. He was scared. It wasn’t something that Peter or Chris didn’t know, but for Stiles to admit it so openly was a shock.

“We know,” Peter spoke softly. He pulled Stiles’ shoes off, gently placing them on the floor. “It is scary, we want to try though,” he continued. Peter reached for Stiles’ duvet, moving it over Stiles’ body and tucking it around him ever so slightly. As much as Peter wanted to press a kiss to Stiles’ face, he restrained himself. It wasn’t the right time for that.

“’m g’n tr’,” Peter heard Stiles mumbled. A promise, he would try. Peter hadn’t doubted that, there might have been a wait for it, but he had been positive that Stiles would do his best, even if it didn’t work out.

“Did you even bother looking in a mirror before you rolled out of bed?”

“What?” Stiles blinked his eyes open, having wandered into the kitchen with them closed. He still felt tired, more so than he had ever thought possible after just waking up.

“You look like a clown.”

“Make-up?” Stiles asked, raising a hand to rub at his eyes. His dad hummed in a positive response and Stiles saw the blue against his hand. He hadn’t dealt with that before he had left the Jungle then, it could have been worse though. There wouldn’t have been an easy way to explain the full get-up,
and no doubt he would have ruined the wig during his sleep.

“What happened?” John asked, holding a cup of coffee out for Stiles, who had almost leapt for the mug.

“I talked a lot about feelings and then I danced. A lot. With a few people,” Stiles said before taking a long drink. “I was being safe, no alcohol, surrounded by protective people that glared at everyone who even looked at me once. It was nice.”


“You’re glad?” Stiles repeated doubtfully.

“You were sensible, in a safe place with people who took care of you. That is a lot better than disappearing without that.”

“I should have told you,” Stiles admitted after a moment. He chewed on his lip, wondering just how worried his father had been.

“Scott told me you left upset, and then three hours later you still hadn’t come home or contacted anyone,” John sighed. “What was I supposed to think?”

“I’m sorry. I – I just needed some time to myself without anyone breathing down my neck,” Stiles shrugged, he knew it wasn’t a proper apology, only an excuse, the least he could do was make a promise though; “I’ll keep you in the loop if it happens again.”

“I can’t keep worrying about you,” John admitted.

“It’s exhausting,” Stiles agreed. “I’m really trying.” Stiles turned the cup in his hands, watching as the liquid spun. “I was – I was thinking about something Scott said. I was wondering – no, I want your opinion on it too,” Stiles explained, stumbling over his own words. “It doesn’t have to mean anything and I know –”

“Spit it out,” John said. Stiles looked at his dad, mirroring the smile he saw before it quickly left his face. It was so much easier to think about saying it than actually saying it. Stiles closed his eyes, taking a deep breath.

“Do you think therapy is a good idea?” he said the words slowly, taking care not to rush them, or have them fade into mumbled nothingness.

“Therapy,” John repeated, his voice a little too even. Stiles narrowed his eyes at his dad, dissecting every bit of him. He was tense, his face a little too neutral and his hands hovering next to his own cup of coffee. “Scott mentioned it?”

“Yeah, I know other people have thought about it,” Stiles said carefully. He was positive that his dad had thought about it, and the reaction in front of him, the overly constructed calmness was telling enough.

“Is it something you feel ok doing?” John asked, catching as Stiles’ eyes darted away from him, and his whole posture shrunk.

“There are other options,” Stiles said, repeating Miricle’s words. “There are websites where it’s just a person that you type things to and they can help you look at a problem from another point of view. Plus, there is different types of therapy.”
“Stiles,” John interrupted, pulling his son’s attention back onto him. “Do you want to do that?”

Stiles swallowed.

“No,” he answered honestly. A wave of shame washed over him, “I don’t but – but I - I think I should,” he added.
Taking The Leap

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Stiles felt tired. He was home alone, a few days had passed from him talking to his dad about the possibility of getting some help and he still felt lost. Sure, there were websites that he now had, that he didn’t know had been a thing before. Shim and Miricle had been wonderful in setting him up with possibilities. It was nice to get the text message of resources that they had sent over to him.

Stiles had even gone to one of the websites, he hadn’t spoken to anyone, the first look had been just to see what the actual site had to say about itself, plus googling the site for other people talking about it through reviews and recommendations. The second visit hadn’t been too eventful either. He had asked for a chat with a ‘listener’ and then closed the page down before anyone had replied to him. Even in the comfort of his own room, he didn’t know how to handle it. He felt stupid and weak in a way, as if everyone would know about his moments of weakness.

This time, however, Stiles was sat on his bed, he had a blanket around him, and he had his laptop on his lap, his fingers hovering over the keys. He was determined to stick through it and at least no back out of the site in a panic like before. He didn’t have to say anything. Wasn’t that what every therapist said in the movies? He didn’t have to talk, he could stop it when he wanted to, and he was in control.

He hit the button to connect with someone, worried about just what would come from it. Maybe it was someone he knew. Perhaps they would find him. Maybe they would post what he said all over the internet, or even use it for blackmail. The possibilities were endless at the end of the day.

Hi there. My name is Jake.

Stiles’ fingers twitched, he almost closed it. It was too soon, he had barely waited for a minute, last time he had waited for almost three before he chickened out. It was so tempting. He sat there for a few minutes, just staring at the screen, trying to come to a decision on what he should do. Before he managed to type a single word, another message appeared.

I guess you’re a little nervous. I know I was the first time I came here, but everyone is really nice. Nothing from our chats are saved either, which is what I was scared of, it’s all deleted when we’re done.

Unable to help himself, Stiles’ fingers moved, his own curiosity stronger than his anxiety. You have used this site? There was hardly another second before Jake’s response came.

Yeah, I still do sometimes, it’s nice to talk to someone that you don’t know. No one is too judgemental, and we’re all just normal people.

Stiles didn’t know what to make of that, it felt rather rehearsed, as though this person had just pulled it from a guide document or even something that was said to everyone, but it still managed to ease some of the unease.

My name’s Stiles. I don’t know what to do, or if anyone can really help me. Stiles cringed as the message sent, it felt pathetic to admit, and even more so that another person would see it.

Sometimes talking helps. I’m not allowed to give you advice, since I don’t know your
circumstances, but I can offer another perspective on it, if you think that will help?

I honestly don’t know. Stiles let his fingers shift over the keyboard again. He licked his lips and asked another question; Do you have to be anywhere? It’s a long story and I don’t want to keep you longer than you need to be.

I don’t have a set time to come off, it’s all volunteered time, so I’m all yours for the next few hours if you want.

Stiles gave the laptop screen a smile, as much as it felt forced, there was some truth behind it. Steeling himself, he began to type. He told Jake about everything, how his soulmates had appeared, how there was a conflict between them, how he lost his soulmate, the pain he felt how his soulmates managed to come back to life, as if Stiles hadn’t just felt him die. Stiles managed to talk about how things just continued to go wrong at every step possible. At one point, Stiles had even stopped wiping away the lone tears as they fell. He still censored himself, keeping werewolves and hunters out of it, but admitting what Gerard had done, that Gerard was now dead and just how guilty he felt over everything around him.

For the most part, Jake didn’t talk, letting Stiles explain his situation as best as he could. There were a few times that Jake had interrupted him, asking for clarity or even to voice a few words of sympathy. It was freeing, more so than Stiles had ever thought possible. Typing should not have that power, but he was glad it did.

It was almost an hour after he had started, that Stiles bid farewell to Jake. They had made tentative plans for Stiles to go back online, having created a profile, and talk to Jake again in a few days. They had discussed a week, but Stiles asked for a sooner date. A few days gave Stiles enough time to try and plan something with Chris and Peter, and it even gave him time to come to terms with what had just happened. Jake seemed fully aware that Stiles would feel strange when he realised how much information he had shared. It was nice. Stiles hadn’t expected such a human to talk to him. He had imagined the typical “How does that make you feel?” or the “What could you have done differently?” talks.

They had even discussed possible date ideas before they had said goodbye, Jake offering ones that enabled Stiles a little more freedom if he felt overwhelmed or nervous. It was Stiles who decided to listen to someone else though.

I’m sorry I ran out. And that I bailed today. Was hoping that you’d help me set up something tomorrow after school though? Stiles sent the message off to Scott, worrying at his lip as he fidgeted with the blanket. His dad had been the one to suggest not going into school, Stiles had just agreed.

I’ll be there, Scott’s simple response made Stiles smile. He didn’t doubt that Scott would be there for him, although he didn’t feel like he deserved his friend’s support.

“What are we looking for?” Scott groaned. He pushed the shopping cart further away from himself, lowering his head against the metal bar. “It’s been years. Years.”

“Shush, I need specific – I don’t even know what this is,” Stiles sighed, he narrowed his eyes at the list and checked the other one he had. A backup list. Scott had laughed but it seemed like it could be useful. Currently, Stiles was only so far away from climbing into the cart and deeming the whole exercise a failure.

“What is yeast?” Scott asked, his eyes narrowing at the box. “I know you need it but what is it?”
“It’s a living thing – I think,” Stiles answered.

“So what is it you’re trying to make?”

“I told you it’s Piragi –”

“That means nothing to me, sorry but it doesn’t even sound like a word,” Scott mumbled.

“It’s kind of a bread thing,” Stiles said, his voice a little unsure. “It has a meaty filling and it’s meant to be really nice but they’re finger foods that shouldn’t kill my dad. Hopefully,” Stiles added. “It’s Latvian, one of dad’s deputies mentioned it and why not.”

“How long does it take?” Scott asked, sending Stiles a slightly judgemental look, which surely wasn’t warranted. Sure, the last time Stiles ‘why not’ed a recipe, they had fumbled for hours before giving up and ordering a pizza, but they had been kids. It had been a year ago. He had matured a lot since then.

“The directions say about three and a half hours,” Stiles said quickly, anticipating Scott’s horrified face. “But!” he stressed. “About two of them is for the dough to rise.”

“I’m not helping you,” Scott said firmly. He had learnt his lesson, even before the last time. He refused to look at Stiles’ face, just in case that look was there, the pout that made Scott want to drop everything and help his friend.

“I wasn’t asking you to,” Stiles huffed. “I was thinking about Chris and Peter,” he admitted. He caught sight of the dopey grin on Scott’s face and scowled. “Shut up.”

“I’m not saying anything.”

“Your smile says it all.”
Stiles had everything set up. Instructions printed out, and almost laminated before he stopped himself. He hadn’t measured everything out just yet, but he had fiddled with the different bowls and pans. He just kept trying to remind himself that it wasn’t a big deal. They would talk, probably make a mess, and then it was over. He shouldn’t be nervous. Why was he nervous?

The knock came and Stiles told them to come in, trusting that Peter would hear him without a problem. He was still nervously fiddling with the different bowls.

“That is a lot,” Chris observed as he made his way into the kitchen, Peter not too far behind him.

“What are we making?” Peter asked, already rolling his sleeves up. He had a grin as Stiles watched the movements with wide eyes. Chris rolled his eyes as Peter chuckled, the sound soft and teasing. Stiles’ cheeks flushed as he looked away, focusing back on the ingredients.

“It’s a Latvian thing,” Stiles mumbled, still a little embarrassed. “I’ve been told it’s really good and I thought…” he trailed off, suddenly doubting himself. What if they thought it was a stupid idea? Stiles should have double checked before inviting them both over.

“It sounds like it’ll be fun,” Chris said, stopping Stiles’ spiral into his thoughts. “Is it difficult?”

“There’s a lot of steps,” Stiles admitted.

“So you might as well sit out darling,” Peter teased, nudging Chris as he passed him. He stepped closer to Stiles, noticing the paper on the side. It pleased Peter’s inner ego when Stiles didn’t shy away from him approaching as he read over the instructions quickly. “This seems manageable, are you a good cook Stiles?”

“I know my way around the kitchen,” Stiles huffed, a smile on his face as Peter moved even closer, letting his side touch Stiles’. “I do a lot of the cooking around here, but this is new to me.”

“Wonderful,” Peter grinned. “We can do the bulk of it and Christopher can handle the meat, he is fairly good with a knife,” he added, throwing a wink over to Chris.

“Yeah, yeah,” Chris laughed, and it was a sound that made Stiles’ grin grow. There was a growing smugness in Chris as he took his jacket off, feeling Stiles’ eyes on him. Unlike Peter, in his long sleeved sweater, Chris had worn a short sleeved t-shirt with a light jacket over the top. They hadn’t known what Stiles had planned, so they wanted to be ready for the outdoors if needed. He made his way over to the other two, pulling the chopping board close to him and the knife. “What am I cutting?”

Stiles blinked for a moment, his eyes refocusing as he looked down to the paper.

“The filling,” he said, “so bacon, ham and onions. It all needs to be chopped up and fried before leaving it to cool.”

Chris just nodded, already reaching out for the ingredients he needed before getting to work. It was calming to him, the repetitive nature. It was normally the most he did in regards to cooking as well.
“We’ll start on the dough?” Peter suggested, getting Stiles’ nod of agreement before he set about gathering things.

“I have the yeast water all ready,” Stiles pointed out, already reaching for the bowl he had put it in. “It’s activated and everything, just needs everything else added.”

“So we need to heat up the milk?” Peter pointed out, checking the recipe. Stiles hummed, already pulling the pan closer to him, he had it all measured out and ready. Under Peter’s eye, he added the milk, sugar, salt and butter.

“So why this?” Peter asked.

“One of dad’s deputies mentioned it in passing, saying how much she missed them and that none of the shops do it justice so I wanted to try it out,” Stiles explained, giving a little more detail than he had to Scott.

“Bacon’s all chopped,” Chris pointed out, moving the meat from the board into the frying pan. He reached for the ham, and began to cut that as Peter moved the pan to the stove-top. “Are you going to take some in for her?”

“I need someone to tell me if I ruined it,” Stiles pointed out. The three worked together in silence for a while, Stiles moving the mixture off the heat when it had started to bubble gently. He watched as Chris added the ham before chopping the onions up. The man knew what he was doing, and Stiles struggled to believe just how effortlessly it seemed. He knew that he still struggled chopping onions and other things, they weren’t the easiest to handle but Chris made it look easy. Before too long, the onion was added into Peter’s pan as well, and Chris stepped around the wolf and over to Stiles.

“What now Chef?”

“Everything else needs adding together and mixing into dough,” Stiles read.

“Is it cool enough yet?” Chris asked, peering into the pan.

“I don’t know,” Stiles admitted. He pulled the bigger mixing bowl towards him, adding the flour, yeast and eggs into it and the yeast. “It’ll probably be fine,” Stiles shrugged. That had always been the turning point for cooking when Scott joined him. As soon as one said ‘it’ll probably be fine’ with a shrug, the whole thing went downhill.

Chris carefully added the warm mixture to the flour and started to stir it together.

“How are we wanting this?” Peter asked, pulling Stiles’ attention from Chris and over to the frying pan.

“That’ll be fine, it is cooking more later, we just need it mostly done,” he pointed out. “Now that needs to cool down.”

“Are we kneading the dough before or after it proofs?” Peter asked. “I can never remember the right way.”

“I’m sure it’s before,” Chris answered before Stiles could. “Kneading it gets air in, and if you left it until after, you just ruin the work leaving it did.”

“Fair point,” Peter said, inclining his head slightly. “Are you anywhere near ready?”

Chris took just rolled his eyes as an answer, he pulled the dough apart, handing a portion to Stiles
and Peter before taking his own portion. The three of them set about kneading it, with Stiles hitting a timer.

“So, we will have like an hour and a half to kill after this,” Stiles pointed out. “What do you fancy doing?”

“You didn’t plan that much?” Peter teased, looking frustratingly effortless as he worked the dough. It made Stiles a little jealous as he already felt a twinge of pain in his wrist.

“This was more of a spur of the moment thing,” Stiles admitted. “I wasn’t sure what to do and it wasn’t until almost a thousand people told me to stop being a baby that I even made an attempt at figuring something out.”

“You weren’t being a baby,” Chris protested.

“You were a little,” Peter shrugged. “You’re young though, so it’s understandable.”

“Har har,” Stiles said blandly. He focused down on the dough, rolling it out a little as he weighed his words next. “I started talking to someone,” Stiles said finally. “I don’t know if it’s something that will help but I don’t want to hide,” he said. “I actually arranged to talk to him tomorrow,” Stiles added.

“You’re going to gossip about us?” Peter asked, but there was a gentleness to his voice that eased the tension in Stiles’ body.

“A little,” Stiles admitted.

“You sure about this?” Chris asked, unable to help himself. He knew how much of a big step this must have been for Stiles, even if there was nothing official about the talking or even the someone themselves.

“I think so. It’s at least worth a try,” Stiles shrugged his shoulder. “He seems nice, I want to ask about his training because he mentioned it in passing but he let me talk.” Stiles explained with a small smile. “It was nice to admit it all and not worry about how he would react, you know? He didn’t judge - or at least I don’t know if he judged me. I don’t think I can handle actual therapy, so this is a trial thing.”

“It was your choice?” Peter asked, trying to just confirm that.

“Kind of,” Stiles bit his lip. “No one is forcing me into it but it was suggested,” Stiles said, mentally adding the air quotes since his hands were busy. “You mentioned it, so did Scott and I had been thinking about it - a little bit,” he added quickly. “It’s terrifying but I’m willing to try,” which seemed to be Stiles’ whole life motto at the moment.

“I’m proud of you,” Chris said gently, and Stiles caught the grin the man had. He turned away quickly, a little too embarrassed about it, but also a little pleased. It was nice to not have something weighing him down, and to have them both accept it and actually be happy for him.

Peter took over the kneading as the time ran out, adding all three portions back into one and rounding it out a little. He added it to the bowl, letting Stiles put a damp dish towel over the top of it. The three of them made their way into the living room, settling down together and just enjoying each other’s presence. They shared stories about their past, about their family and in seemingly no time, Stiles was cursing at the time, rushing to check on the dough. It was nice, easier than he had thought it would be and nowhere near as scary. Stiles enjoyed the time together as they had talked.

After that, it was an easy system, Chris rolling the dough out and cutting it into circles before passing
the dough over to either Peter or Stiles, who added half a teaspoon of filling before sealing the circle into a half moon shape. They didn’t talk much, settling into the rhythm as they worked with a low volume of music on in the background. It was nice, domestic and something that made Stiles hopeful. He could see it working, however strangely it would be.

Chapter End Notes

I'm already starting to miss this, and I have two and a bit chapters left to truly write out. There are at least another two dates, one between Stiles and Chris, and one between Stiles and Peter, maybe another between all three of them again, but I am a little unsure about that last one. There's just a few last things I want to tie up and add but it's truly almost done. From the looks of it, the chapter numbers won't increase unless the last chapter gets truly out of hand but I am tempted to do a longer chapter for that one anyway.
Stiles didn’t quite know how he ended up in the woods with Chris and a range of different weapons. He had assumed that the man had been joking when he had suggested it. Nobody trusted Stiles with a weapon, even his dad hesitated when he had originally shown him how to properly disarm and use a gun. He could do it if he needed to, but this was almost for fun, which seemed foreign to Stiles. Weapons were tools and were dangerous, it had been ingrained into his mind as a non-negotiable fact.

Without the weight of knowing this was preparation for a possible life-or-death situation, Stiles couldn’t help but worry. He had thoughts of accidentally shooting Chris, or even an animal around them – or what if one of the werewolves were out for a run and Stiles hit them, he would be dead before they even thought about it — it wasn’t until Chris had moved closer that Stiles’ mind quietened.

“Breathe,” Chris said softly, tapping Stiles’ arm for him to lift it. “I’ve seen you shoot, there’s nothing to worry about.”

“Easy for you to say,” Stiles huffed back, following Chris’ gentle touch until he was aiming at the paper target. “I’ll feel it if I hit you.”

“I trust you not to hit me,” Chris said with a laugh. “We can take it slow, maybe start with some of the knives if you want?”

“Yeah, still can’t see that going well either,” Stiles mused. A throwing knife, or even a regular one still had a lot of ways he could accidentally hurt the man trying to train him to use them properly. “I should just pull?” Stiles asked, moving his hand slightly as if to stimulate the pistol’s fire.

“Whenever you’re ready,” Chris agreed. “Try and aim, we’ll see where to go from there.”

Taking a breath, Stiles pulled the trigger. It brought back a flash of Barnes as he body had toppled backwards, blood not yet pouring from the impact. Blinking, the forest came back into view, the sight of Barnes lasting for only a second. Chris’ hands on his shoulders grounded him as he sucked in a shaky breath.

“You alright?”

Stiles nodded once.

“No you’re not,” Chris sighed. “What was it?” Chris had expected Stiles moving away from him, but it still stung when it happened. He watched carefully as Stiles bit his lip, opening his mouth before closing it and exhaling through his nose heavily.

“I – I saw him,” Stiles forced out. He stayed silent after that, not wanting to say too much or show just how weak he was.

“That’s a normal response,” Chris said after a moment when it was clear that Stiles wouldn’t offer any more information. Chris wasn’t stupid, he knew what Stiles had seen, he knew that there was a chance that it would trigger the memory. As harsh as it was, it was better for the flashback to happen during training than in a life-or-death situation.
“It’s stupid,” Stiles snapped.

“It’s human,” Chris argued. “It’s not stupid, or pathetic.”

“It is when you think about how many people you’ve killed, it doesn’t haunt you like that,” Stiles pointed out, meeting Chris’ eye with a defying stare, almost daring him to deny it.

“You’re right,” Chris said simply. He lent against the tree, watching as Stiles’ whole body seemed to sag and deflate. “I have learnt not to think about it, to pretend that each and every person was less than me. They were creatures,” he said with a sneer. “That’s how hunters get by. Otherwise we would drown in guilt.”

Stiles’ eyes were back on Chris, unwavering as he spoke. There was an obvious tone of disgust in the older man’s voice.

“Do you ever think about that woman – the omega?” Stiles asked, unable to stop himself. He was curious, Chris had mentioned her, but had still kept many of the details to himself, Peter stepping in before Chris said too much.

“Sometimes,” Chris admitted. “Not as often as I used to, she was a big reason I stuck to the code so much. For months, after she was killed every time I heard a gun shot I thought of her.”

“Do you regret it?” Stiles asked, that hint of vulnerability in his voice.

“No question about it,” Chris shrugged. “I regret not letting her go. There is no way to confirm she was telling the truth but I wanted to believe her. It’s a part of the job, those hard choices, the guilt around it all. I won’t say it gets easier, even knowing that they weren’t good people doesn’t help.”

“I wouldn’t change it,” Stiles said, his voice wavering as he tried to keep it steady. He didn’t want to think about Barnes living, about him walking away from that encounter. It made his skin crawl and his heart rate increase a touch.

“I wish you didn’t have to do it,” Chris said honestly. “It taints a part of you, it’s a darkness that lingers.”

“I’m not exactly innocent of wishing death on someone,” Stiles pointed out. He had a part in Peter’s death, and even planning out how to help kill Jackson. He wasn’t as innocent as people thought – yet actually killing someone had been different. Being the one to end it was something that Stiles hadn’t even considered.

“It’s different,” Chris said gently. “Thinking about it and actually doing it are completely different.”

“I think I realised that,” Stiles said humourlessly. He sank down and sat on the ground, stretching his legs out. “I don’t know how to move forward sometimes,” he admitted. “I feel like it should be easy to say he was a bad person and move on.”

“It isn’t easy,” Chris said with a grim smile as he pushed away from the tree and settled down in front of Stiles, his legs crossed. “It says a lot about who you are as a person that it is a difficult thing to move on from. You’re kind and compassionate, even if you have a short temper sometimes.”

“I don’t think that compassionate sums me up,” Stiles rolled his eyes. He pulled a blade of grass from the ground, fiddling with it as he thought. He cared about people, but not everyone, not all the time. For him, the people he truly cared about were few and far between, although the amount had increased in the past year. Everybody else in the world, including himself, were second place to that slim list.
“You went out of your way to talk to Allison and tell her the truth,” Chris reminded him. “Even with the history at that house.”

“That was only to shut Scott up,” Stiles mumbled. He had wanted to help his friend out of his funk, and it wasn’t fair for Allison to not know the full story. She at least deserved that much. She knew her mother wasn’t a saint, and she needed that shake out of her own ruthlessness to start to deal with her own emotions. Holding onto the rage that she had was going to do her no good as time passed by.

“You aren’t a bad person,” Chris said again, wanting to let that sink in before Stiles could really think anything different. “You stood up for yourself and yes, it ended up in a person dying. If you hadn’t have done it, I’m sure Peter would have. Had I been aware, I would have.”

“That doesn’t make it right,” Stiles pointed out. “Just because you would have –”

“No, it doesn’t,” Chris agreed. “There’s no easy way to make it right.”

“At least you can’t judge me,” Stiles tried, aiming to tease Chris but falling short as he voiced an insecurity. He couldn’t help but worry that people would judge him. Scott had been a big advocate on keeping people alive, even with his hand in Peter’s own death, and his dad’s job was to keep people alive and safe. Even if they said they didn’t, they had to judge him at least a little.

“No one will judge you,” Chris said firmly, as though he was so sure in his words. “It was self-defence, you moved to protect yourself and me.”

Stiles nodded. He knew it was true. He hadn’t thought, just moved automatically. The night was still a blur in his mind, facts jumbling together and not quite making sense. The actions were there but they were distant to Stiles, as if someone had told him what had happened but he had not been present. It was easy to blame himself though, to say it was all his own fault. He just had to remember that there were other circumstances in play and that it doesn’t mean Stiles was going to go on a mindless rampage where he killed everything in his path.

The day out in the woods didn’t return to the weapons as Chris and Stiles talked more about Chris’ own past. Chris had made a promise to himself, and mainly to Stiles, to be honest. Chris admitted his ulterior motive in getting Stiles to test out the weapons, that he had expected some type of post traumatic stress, it was only natural. Along with that, Chris spoke openly about his own pain at being the cause of people dying, how it had haunted him a lot, and how he hated that Stiles had to have a hand in that so early on in his own life. It wasn’t the closure Stiles needed, but it was a push in the right direction in getting it.

Chapter End Notes

So I'm currently working on the last chapter - the others need editing but still, and I am feeling rather nostalgic. This was one of the first 'big' stories I've truly tried to write, and certainly for this fandom. I don't know if it's hormones or just tiredness that's making me a little upset but still. We've come so far, and I am still a little awestruck that people still read this after all this time.

On a happier note; I really loved Chris and Stiles' bonding, it was nice and they got to talk, which is always a plus. Honesty is key and now I'm just rambling.
You are all so amazing.
“How was your day with Christopher?” Peter asked, opening the door for Stiles to step into the store. *Casual Coincidences*, a strange name for a bookshop. “I haven’t gotten around to asking either of you yet.”

“Didn’t you see him after?” Stiles shook his head with a smile. He had met Peter on the street, rather than being picked up from home, since he had wanted to run his own errands first, his Jeep was stationed near the bookstore, and Peter had met him with a smile. Stiles’ day with Chris had been two days ago. Stiles’ hadn’t had the energy to do much the day after, he had spent the day in bed. Scott had arrived not too late in the evening, shaking his head at the Stiles shaped lump in the bed before climbing in with him. They had laid together, not talking for the night. Stiles could still see Scott’s blinding grin when Stiles had pushed him out of bed so he could get ready for his date with Peter.

There was a moment when Stiles stepped into the almost normal bookstore that his smile fell. The air around him seemed too thick to breathe and if it wasn’t for Peter’s body right behind his own, Stiles would have fled.

“I should have warned you,” Peter murmured, his hands on Stiles’ upper arms. “Try and breathe, deep breaths, nothing too quick, it will pass in a moment.” Thankfully, Peter’s hands on him did help Stiles regain his sense of being. He tried to stay calm, doing his best to inhale, hold the air, and exhale. True to his word, the feeling did pass, even though there was almost a heaviness that sat at the back of Stiles’ throat.

“What was that?” Stiles asked.

“The protections, the owner is rather superstitious, she doesn’t trust many people. Anyone that doesn’t know about the supernatural tends to avoid this place,” Peter explained as he guided Stiles over to the shelves of books. “Anyone with impure intentions tend to stop breathing.”

“So why did I -” Stiles didn’t quite know how to describe what he had experienced, it was almost like a panic attack, the sudden difficulty breathing, no doubt it would have triggered one if he hadn’t had Peter around. It felt as though his lungs had frozen, perhaps turned to stone with no give.

“I’m not sure,” Peter answered anyway, even though Stiles hadn’t fully voiced his question. “You might just have the potential, which isn’t surprising. It does feel different here though,” Peter mused, letting his hand drift over the spines of a few books.

“I should think so,” a sharp voice snapped, making Stiles jump and spin around to face the woman. She wasn’t as Stiles had imagined, although he hadn’t known what to expect. The lady looked young, barely older than him, but surely having to be if she was the owner, and Peter did seem to
recognise her if the bubble of amusement was correct.

“Cat, how nice to see you again.”

“Don’t you ‘Cat’ me. How many people have you killed?” she asked sharply. She stepped forward and looked Peter up and down with narrowed eyes. “I didn’t think you would ever actually do that, and bringing one so young here too, I ought to tell your mother,” the woman said, her eyes almost glowing green, a stark contrast to her white hair.

“Hi?” Stiles offered, shrinking back towards Peter when the heaviness of her gaze landed on him. “You.”

Stiles wasn’t sure what type of statement she was making, but it unnerved him all the same. He wasn’t unused to people recognising him, or even coming up to him saying the same word with a lot more contempt, but this woman - Stiles wanted to stay away from her. There was something about her, it was almost the same urge that had driven him away from staying at Scott's workplace too long.

“Cat,” Peter said waringly, “this is one of my soulmates. We just want to restock a few of his things.”

“You shouldn’t have brought him. It is not his time, he has yet to go through everything,” Cat said, her eyes not wavering from Stiles’ face. “You know I hate meeting people before they’re ready. I always feel compelled to make things better,” she paused before sighing. “I’ll see what I can do,” she said more to herself in a resigned voice than to either Stiles or Peter, although maybe she meant for Peter to hear. She turned and disappeared behind a door that Stiles hadn’t noticed.

“That was weird,” Stiles said slowly, still looking over to the door with a frown. The whole exchanged had left Stiles unsure and eager to leave, even as a part of him wanted to explore. He was just a little too over all the different surprises and bad things in the town.

“Don’t worry too much about her,” Peter said gently, nudging Stiles. “She basically accosted me on the street the first time we met and demanded that I take care to wear a bracelet because it would help me live longer. Now, let’s have a look for something that catches your eye.”

Stiles cast another look towards the door before looking back at Peter, his nervousness was dying down, whether due to Peter’s own influence or just the woman being gone, he wasn’t sure. He looked around again, truly taking in the shop. It was cozy, no table in sight, but two armchairs in the corner of the room. There were shelves, almost another foot high than Peter’s head, all around the room.

“So what is this place?” Stiles asked, Peter had said that it was a reliable, safe place to gather supernatural items, even more so than the vet clinic.

“Talia used to come here often,” Peter explained, “she said it was an Alpha-only area, which only made me more curious, I never did make my own way around the protections.” Peter shrugged as he pulled a book from one of the shelves, he flipped through the pages. “It’s been awhile since I’ve been back, Chris has his own suppliers, of course, so he’s never needed an alternative.”

“Why bring me then?” Stiles asked, he reached up to take a book. Kitsune and Other Tricksters, Stiles intended to grasp the spine, to ease it from the shelf, but couldn’t bring himself to, there was something stopping him from making contact. His hand fell. “Are there books for everything? Are all the myths real?” He could recall hearing the word Kitsune, it was a Japanese Myth, he believed.
“There’s something for everything and if you can’t find what you want, Cat will be able to find it. As for why you, I felt like you could do with another place to get your information, the Internet isn’t always accurate, although you do seem to have an incredible knack for finding the right information,” Peter grinned. “What are you interested in?”

“I don’t even know,” Stiles laughed, he hadn’t really researched anything, not since finding out that Jackson was a Kanima. Since then, he had been more focused on Chris and Peter being nearby. Stiles didn’t even know where he could start. “Any chance of an A-Z guide?”

“A slight chance but unlikely,” Peter explained honestly. “Most packs and hunters keep their own records but they are sacred.”

“Damn,” Stiles hummed more to himself. He let himself wander from Peter, nothing in plain as he searched. Stiles didn’t get too far, stopping in a row of shelves two away from Peter. Stiles barely looked at the books around him as he reached out again, this time sliding the book from the shelf. 

*Sacrifices and Beliefs*, it weighed heavy in his hands, almost warm to touch.

“That is an interesting first book,” Cat’s voice said from next to Stiles. Stiles didn’t startle, too engrossed in the book’s cover to be wary of her. It was leather bound, with an intricate detailing on the cover, one that didn’t mean anything to Stiles but felt familiar all the same.

“What is it?” Stiles asked, unwilling to put the book back on the shelf. In the back of his mind, he wanted to be suspiscious of the shop, how it seemed to compell him.

“You’ll have to read it to find out,” Cat said, frustratingly cryptically.

“Are you always like this?” Stiles huffed, looking at her, and narrowing his eyes at her amused grin. “You’re as bad as Deaton.”

“I’m nothing like that Druid,” she said scathingly.

“Ouch,” Peter cut in, turning around the shelf edge and observing the two of them. Cat was giving Stiles an unusually wide berth, which was strange, she had never shown that restraint before around Peter. Granted, Peter’s experience with Cat had been limited to a few people at most, she had willingly touched Talia, dragged Peter by his arm and even embracing Derek as she cooed about how the world had treated him badly. That memory was fond, seeing a fourteen year old Derek with his terrified expression as Talia just shook her head. Cat was gifted, that was true, she had a nack for knowing the things a person needed.

“And you should remember that Peter,” she huffed before refocusing on Stiles. “You should get it, it chose you, it will help you,” she said seriously, making Stiles’ unease rise again. “Take this,” she added, holding her hand out, a chain dangling from her fingers. “It will protect you from possessions.”

“I - why do I need that?” Stiles asked, taking a step back, there was a charm on the end of the chain.

“The same reason he had a fire charm,” Cat said solemnly. There was regret in her voice, and a look of sorrow in her eyes. The hairs on Stiles’ neck rose, and his skin prickled at the thought, how had she known? Was Stiles close to being possessed? With a shaky hand, he took the necklace from her. Just like the book, Stiles found himself not wanting to release it. He looked back at Peter, who looked vulnerable, Stiles wanted to say scared, but that didn’t fit.

“What’s coming?” Peter asked.

“You know I can’t answer that,” Cat sighed, a hand coming to Peter’s arm. “Tough times, but you
are all capable.”

Stiles swallowed, he could feel Peter’s unease, and it did help to calm him, knowing that he wasn’t the only one that was unnerved by this woman. *Sacrifices*, did the book have anything to do with what was coming?

“I think we have everything,” Peter said, he nodded to Stiles and then lifted the book in his hand. “What do you want?”

“Ah, Peter, dear, this time is on the house,” Cat smiled. “I will be holding a favour, there is never a bad time to have werewolf fur around, but I don’t need to restock just yet.”

“That’s all?” Stiles asked, unable to hold it back as he looked between the two adults. “You want fur?”

“The exchanges vary,” Cat said gently. “Sometimes a person’s energy is a good price, fur and hair is always useful from the supernatural beings, venom is almost priceless. I do have a business to run after all. Off you go,” her tone changed, the gentleness fading into something more serious. “I don’t expect you back for another year, either of you.”

Peter, not waiting for Stiles’ response, moved forward, placing a hand on Stiles’ lower back. He said his goodbye, letting Stiles add his own over his shoulder before Peter almost pushed him through the door. Neither said a word as Peter and Stiles breathed in the fresh air. Stiles, thankful for the weight being lifted from his throat, chuckled at the bizarreness of the whole situation.

“That - she -” he couldn’t quite get the words out.

“She is different,” Peter agreed. “I didn’t expect her to treat you like that though. She is normally more friendly.”

“I’m going to be possessed though,” Stiles pointed out humourlessly. Peter’s head snapped to look at him. There was a considering look on Peter’s face, he didn’t say anything, but Stiles could see the questions running around his head, they were probably the same ones in Stiles’ head.

“What Cat has feelings for aren’t always true,” Peter said slowly, he gestured with his head for Stiles to walk with him. “She’s interesting but fate and destiny aren’t as sure as it sounds. They are just chances that are more probable.”

“It’s weird though,” Stiles mumbled. He replayed the whole conversation back in his head, trying to dissect what he could remember about her, but the details were fading with each step away from the shop. One thing stood out as even stranger, unable to stop himself, Stiles asked; “why did she threaten to tell your mother about the killing?” Stiles wasn’t sure about what the answer would be he wasn’t even sure what had happened to Peter’s mother, he had never heard anyone speak of her, it had always been Talia.

“She claims she is in contact with the dead, not sure I believe her but it wouldn’t surprise me,” Peter shrugged. He continued to lead Stiles down the road. “Now, how about we find somewhere to eat?”

Stiles nodded, still wondering about Cat. The strange woman was out of Stiles’ mind by the time they walked into a small café. Peter let Stiles find a table as he went to order them both drinks and food. It wasn’t exactly the day Stiles’ had thought it would be, but it was nice all the same. Peter was a comforting presence, a good soundboard for Stiles’ rambunctious emotions to balance themselves against. As rocky as their date had started, it ended on a peaceful note, both discussing their knowledge on different things, mainly supernatural, as they ate.
Chapter End Notes

You have no idea how much restraint I needed to not make this longer, having Cat play a bigger role in their lives, maybe a one-shot will come from it some-time, but oh boy it was difficult.
“Derek?” Stiles questioned, frowning at the man. Derek was probably the last person Stiles had expected behind the knocking.

“Can I come in?” Derek asked, ignoring Stiles’ question on his presence. Derek seemed less… Derek-y than normal. Stiles couldn’t quite place the reason. He was in his usual clothes, he hadn’t shrunk at all. It must have been something else.

“I suppose,” Stiles frowned. He couldn’t place it, there was just something different. “Do you want a drink?”

“No, no, I just want to talk,” Derek said carefully, his lips twitching, which only added to the strangeness.

“About?” Stiles asked, drawing the word out as he let Derek in. Maybe Derek had been sacrificed? The book had mentioned something about changeling’s, which were when a person had been replaced, although that wasn’t quite a sacrifice. Maybe Derek had been turned into a vampire, he had asked to enter rather than just breaking-in like he had before. Could wolves be vampires? Would being a vampire cancel out being a werewolf? Or would it be like the films, where the person would die due to the battling afflictions trying to win the body?

“I just wanted to make sure you were aware of your choices,” Derek sighed, he suddenly looked as though he wanted to be anywhere else but Stiles’ living room. Granted, at least the man looked like himself now.

“What do you mean?”

“I know what it’s like being in a relationship with someone older and feeling like you have no say in it, I doubted my own choices but didn’t think about it because of how lucky,” he sneered, “I was. Kate -”

“Derek, whoa,” Stiles quickly cut in, his hands up as if that would calm the wild man in front of him. “I know all of this, you don’t need to tell me anything.”

“Just listen,” Derek huffed. He didn’t meet Stiles’ eyes as he continued. “Kate was - she was great in the beginning, she listened to me and let me make choices. I thought it was healthy, we just hid it because I was young. It turned quickly once I was used to hiding it away.”

Stiles shifted in his place, unable to truly name the uncomfortable feeling that settled into his stomach. Derek spoke with nostalgia, and whilst logically, Stiles knew that missing what someone thought they had, and what they actually had, was different, it still didn’t sit right. He kept his mouth shut, knowing that pointing this out wouldn’t be received well.

“I don’t remember exactly what it was but one of my choices ended badly, we were almost caught and it all changed,” Derek cleared his throat before he continued. “She pointed out how I couldn’t decide something safe for us and she would use that every time I suggested something. I didn’t notice - or at least I cared about her too much to realise what she was doing. She was older, it made sense that she would know more and that she should have a bigger say in what was happening.”
Stiles shook his head, knowing that Derek caught the action without looking. The heaviness in his stomach didn’t dissipate. He couldn’t make his mouth move, or even push the words from his mind. She was dead, that much gave Stiles a bit of closure on Derek’s behalf. If she hadn’t been, Stiles didn’t know how he would handle the situation. Maybe tell his dad, or get Peter and Chris to go along with his plan of killing yet another Argent.

“I knew something wasn’t right, not all the time,” Derek admitted, “but when she told me I couldn’t talk to my family or when she convinced me to stop going to school clubs, I knew something wasn’t right,” Derek’s tone turned bitter as he continued. “I was just in awe that she was giving me the time of day. Just - I just want you to know that it isn’t right if you feel like that. You shouldn’t ever feel inferior to your partner – or partners. It isn’t healthy,” Derek settled on, and Stiles could feel the change in his energy. Derek seemed sad, and not just the angry sad that they had seen before. This was new, almost raw emotion.

“Derek -” Stiles tried, the word croaking in his throat as he tried to process what he wanted to say.

“You don’t deserve that,” Derek continued on, almost determined as he met Stiles’ eyes. “If you need a way out I can help, I’d rather not sit ideally by as another relationship ends like mine did.”

Stiles almost felt his insides melt at Derek’s words. It clearly took him a lot to say and he didn’t want to be there but out of some sense of need, he was. If Stiles hadn’t already accepted his fate, then maybe he could have snapped Derek off the market. He hadn’t seen Derek express himself in such a way before, and it was adorable - or as adorable as a deadly predator could be.

“Jeez,” Stiles managed to stutter out. “Dude - I - God I want to hug you. If I didn’t think you’d rip my throat out, I would be all over you. I am mentally hugging you right now and you’re squirming out of it,” Stiles continued, a huge grin on his face as the words came back to him. Derek’s determination turned into a scowl, which only made Stiles’ grin widen. He was such a softie. It seemed like all the Big Bad Men were lately.

“Don’t.”

“I won’t,” Stiles promised, his smile not fading. He felt a questioning pulse from Chris but brushed it off to focus on Derek. “If you had said that all a month ago, I would be on my way to Mexico with you right now.” The teen shook his head, still slightly confused about Derek’s presence. “Thank you,” he added, stressing the words as he met Derek’s eyes. It couldn’t have been easy, the man had kept his thoughts and feelings to himself, and Stiles had never expected that to change.

“What changed?” Derek enquired, eyeing Stiles critically as if expecting to catch him in a lie.

“They helped me,” Stiles said simply. His wide smile fell to a smaller one, one Derek hadn’t seen before. “It’s been a crazy time,” Stiles pointed out, still smiling to himself as if he held a secret. “I mean, this past week - it’s been the quietest time and I loved it. We’ve done nothing but talk and it’s sickeningly sweet.”

Derek watched as Stiles shook his head at himself, the teen rolled his eyes before speaking again. “I trust them, even before. I just thought - I didn’t want to believe it.” Stiles lent on the back of the couch. “I have just started to see what Allison and Scott were saying before, maybe - maybe the three of us do balance each other out. It isn’t just a mental thing, we’re all so different but similar. Honestly, though, I probably should have talked to you ages ago,” Stiles admitted. “I knew about her, and I didn’t even think - they haven’t - they never did anything that made me feel less than them, I can’t see them doing that either.”

“Good,” Derek nodded. The last bit of tension in his shoulders eased, “you know where I am if that
“Thank you,” Stiles said again. The words meaning more than just Derek coming to offer him an out, more than just him sharing his past. Stiles couldn’t help but wonder if Derek had left talking to Stiles for a while just so he could sort his own mind out - it was almost scarily in time with Stiles deciding that it was truly worth giving the three of them a chance for a happy ever after.

Derek nodded again, turning to leave. Stiles quickly made a noise in the back of his throat, rushing forward to grasp Derek’s arm.

“Just - I know you’ll hate this but you need to hear it - it wasn’t your fault,” Stiles rushed the words out, scared that Derek would flee. “You didn’t deserve that and it was all her fault. She manipulated you and used you. You - no one blames you.”

For the first time, Stiles saw the vulnerability in Derek’s eyes, and it hurt his chest to see. He looked young - ignoring his whole being and just focusing on his eyes. They were so expressive that Stiles didn’t know how he had not noticed before. Derek didn’t say anything, his Adam apple bobbed as he swallowed before he turned from Stiles again and left the house.

Stiles stayed stood for several minutes after Derek had left, unsure of what to do. He made a mental note to ask Peter if he blamed his nephew for what had happened to his family, not sure when he would broach the topic but wanted to make sure that Derek wasn’t blamed for what had happened. He had meant what he said, Kate Argent had been at fault, and Peter knew that. His whole crusade after healing had been to kill her after all. Trying to push those thoughts away, Stiles tried to focus back on his plans for the day. He was meant to meet Peter and Chris, they had plans to see a movie, and then go and get something to eat. Everything else could wait, he still had to get ready.

Chapter End Notes

Ok, I have a lot of feelings about this one. Mainly because it's one of the first times I've written Derek easily. I normally struggle a lot with his character and whole being - so it might be widely out of character but I thought it was important for him. He does deserve good things, and to not drown in guilt.
I forgot about today. I'm sooo sorry! Stiles typed quickly, he added a quick; I didn’t want to just not show, but I completely forgot and it’s a sucky thing I know but hopefully last minute is better than nothing.

Stiles had done his best to stay in touch with Jake, they had spoken more often when they had begun to speak, it wasn’t too long before they settled on one or two times a week. Like every other time, Jake’s reply wasn’t too far away.

That’s alright, I’m happy you let me know. I would have worried if you just missed today. Just quickly, how are you feeling?

Stiles paused at Jake’s message. How was he feeling? That was the million dollar question that everyone seemed to be asking. Stiles had pushed it away, never truly thinking about it, but he didn’t want to do that to Jake. So he took a second to consider himself, to think about the past month and he wrote. Good. Honestly. Which is still crazy. Things have been really good, it’s been a month, so it’s still new but it’s a lot better than I thought it would be.

I’m glad to hear that.

So are my friends, they’re downstairs at the moment. Stiles admitted. He hadn’t told them why he had suddenly ran upstairs, only that he quickly needed to do something. I might tell them about what we discussed, they don’t know that yet, and I think I’m going to tell my soulmates too.

If you think that’s a good idea, then do it. I don’t think you have anything to worry about, from what you told me the other day.

Stiles grinned. He still felt nervous, but Jake had helped him rationalise his fears.

If you want we can talk tomorrow?

That might be good, I’ll have a lot to just sort through… Stiles admitted. He was always shocked at how Jake seemed to be able to read him so clearly through the screen. Thank you again, for everything. I know you don’t get paid for this but you’ve really helped.

They both said their goodbye’s and promised to reconnect the next day. Stiles shut the website down, closing his laptop as he thought. It had been roughly a month after his first true date with Chris, the thought still made Stiles’ insides squirm with embarrassment and eagerness. He had come so far from when he first met then both, even further from when he had first spoken his words to them both. He didn’t regret the journey, but he did wish he hadn’t been so stubborn in the process, a lot of time and pain could have probably been saved.

“Dude, we don’t have much time!” Scott moaned loudly, shaking Stiles out of his mind. He needed to get back to Scott and Allison, it wasn’t fair to leave them to set up. His dad had left for a double shift not too long ago, making Stiles promise to not trash the house with his plan.

“Sorry!” Stiles called back, he pushed himself from his desk, and made his way back down to his
friends. It was amusing how Scott had managed to get canned snow all over himself, how it wasn’t anywhere that Stiles had asked him to put it, but rather across the TV, over the couch and even on the ceiling.

“I tried to help him but he refused,” Allison said quickly. Her quick words did nothing as she hid here own can behind her back. Nor did it make the lines of snow over her and Scott’s clothes disappear.

“Mhmm,” Stiles hummed, fighting back his smile.

“Honest! He got me and I tried to stop him but he was out of control.”

“Mhmm,” Stiles hummed again.

“It was all Scott!”

Stiles didn’t bother humming, already seeing Allison’s composure crack.

“He made me so angry. He wouldn’t listen,” Allison admitted. “He threw one of the cans at me and I just reacted.”

“You’re such a bad liar,” Scott grumbled.

“As if you can talk,” Stiles laughed, he wasn’t upset. He didn’t expect the house to look as he planned, it rarely did. He just wanted a bit of fun for them all. It was his turn to plan something after all, and he couldn’t compete with the expensive restaurants, or the weapon training, or even taking them to a place that they had never heard of. So Stiles had done his best to dive into his creative side.

“What were you doing?” Scott asked. Allison, acting as though she wasn’t as interested in Scott’s question, turned to rearrange the pillows again. They had pushed the couch out of the way earlier, it’s back pressed against the wall to leave the space on the floor behind. Allison and Scott had brought a range of pillows and blankets to add to Stiles’. He wanted the floor to be covered. It was a little silly, but Stiles wanted to do a picnic, he had gotten Scott and Allison on his side, aiming to please both men with the winter theme. The AC was on, making the house just a touch chilly.

“I just needed to get back to someone before I forgot,” Stiles shrugged. “I - we - I - oh, I think - I think I might actually try real therapy, with a professional,” Stiles stumbled over his words, trying to get them out and have them make sense in a way that both Scott and Allison would understand. He was so focused on his words that he didn’t notice both teenagers freezing and staring at him. “Jake has been wonderful and so helpful but Peter mentioned a few options about someone in the know and I think I’m brave enough to try it. I want to try it,” he said, the words strong and sure.

Before Stiles had managed to look up at them, he stumbled back with the extra weight on his front. He couldn’t see through the dark hair in his face. Stiles’ knees gave way at the sudden attack and he and Allison fell backwards onto the, thankfully, pillow covered floor.

Allison laughed, loud and carefree as she held onto Stiles. Taking a peek over her shoulder, Stiles noticed Scott watching with his own wide grin.

“I’m so proud of you,” Allison hugged him. “We have your back if anything happens -”

“Don’t,” Scott warned her. “Honestly though,” he added, meeting Stiles’ eyes. “Anything and anywhere, we’re there for you.”
“Come here you lump,” Stiles huffed, reaching a hand out for Scott. It wasn’t long before Scott had joined the two teens on the floor, all taking a moment to hold each other close, and Stiles couldn’t even consider pushing the loving feeling away from him. It consumed him and he wouldn’t have it any other way.

The three teenagers had worked together, wiping the TV, setting up the fairy lights around the room and closing the curtains to dim the house. Allison had even helped Stiles make some of the smaller finger foods, some that she knew her father loved to snack on. Scott had left the two of them to the food as he worked on finalising the room. He had managed to put the winter decorations - staying away from the Christmas things that the Stilinski’s normally used. He and Stiles had gone out of their way to buy some disposable things; snowflakes, autumn leaves, and even a small inflatable snowman. The living room looked good, if Scott said so, near the door to the hall, it was more of an autumn setting, the leaves slowly turning snowy before it was just the instant snow coating the blankets near the snowman, who was guarding the kitchen. The walls even were decorated with the snowflakes.

Stiles thanked his friends, quickly ushering them out of the house moments before Chris and Peter were meant to arrive. Although, it didn’t work too well, as they had shown up as Stiles was saying his goodbyes. Neither man seemed considered at the sight of the teens, saying their own greetings as they passed, before focusing on the blushing Stiles at the door.

“Hi,” Stiles said.

“Hi,” Chris mirrored him.

“Are we staying, or going?” Peter asked, brushing his hand down Stiles’ arms to take his hand. “We’re all yours, and you’ve been rather tight-lipped about tonight.”

“Peter,” Chris sighed.

“Christopher,” Peter mocked Chris. “I am just curious.”

“He’s been asking me if I know anything the whole ride over,” Chris said with an eye roll.

“I - we’re staying,” Stiles nodded. “I thought - you both said you liked winter, and I thought we could do something like that?” he posed it as a question, the blush still on his face, but he took strength from Peter gently squeezing his hand. “Scott and Allison helped me set up,” he added, gesturing for the two of them to head in before him. Peter let go of Stiles’ hand, leading the way as Chris gave Stiles a hug. Stiles let himself melt into the embrace for a second, regaining his strength. He pulled back, urging Chris into the house.

“This is -”

“Wonderful,” Chris completed, moving to stand by Peter. They both looked around the room, and Stiles let himself enjoy the moment. They were shocked, surprised and happy. It was a nice feeling. Squeezing between the two of them, Stiles took their hands, leading them into the room.

“It’s a bit of a mess,” he admitted. “I shouldn’t have let Scott and Ally have the snow. We spent about an hour cleaning it all up. There are a few films that we can watch, but I thought an indoor picnic was a fun idea. The floor is covered in pillows and we have food already. There is a pizza in the oven -”

“What films do you have?” Peter asked, letting Stiles’ rambling die off before the teen dived right into the thirty films he had put aside for them to pick from.
It wasn’t perfect, and Stiles remembered the two of them ganging up on him to watch an older movie that he hated for the following years. He was sure that Scott had included for the sole purpose of annoying him, but it was nice. It felt comfortable, even in the moments of awkwardness. Stiles trusted them, he didn’t know how to not.

The date night did not end after the film, nor did it end when the Sheriff finally returned the following morning to find his son asleep on the floor between the two older men. The date ended with Stiles requesting a kiss from each man, bidding their farewells.

Their lives weren’t easy, but Peter and Chris promised that living alongside the supernatural was never easy. There were trials and pain in their path but they managed together. Stiles had spent more and more time at Peter and Chris’ apartments, that is was hardly a surprise when he moved out of his dad’s house on his eighteenth birthday - he had barely slept at home anyhow. The three of them were stronger together, relying on each other and sharing their burdens without fear. There were still days that Stiles shied away from both men, but they got fewer and less likely as the years passed. Stiles learnt how Peter would shy away in his own way, denying himself the comfort of touch on days that he hated his own actions in the past. Even Chris had days that he wouldn’t bring himself to relax in their own space. The days following each of those moments were always tender, easing the self-loathing with gentle touches and calm words. They weren’t perfect. Chris still managed to burn toast, Peter still rolled his eyes at the softer moments between them, and Stiles just enjoyed the moments he could. The future was rough, but they managed together. They had each other to fall back on, and regain their confidence after the negative moments. They shared in the positive and wouldn’t want it any other way.

Chapter End Notes

I did mean to have this out before the New Year, but editing got held up with everything going on.

This is the end though. There might be the odd one shot that appears, I have a few ideas for possible Peter/Chris moments before this story when they were younger but it honestly depends on how I feel. I’ve had a lot of ups and downs with this story, and whilst I am happy it’s finished, I am a little upset too.

I really hope that you all have enjoyed it and thank you so much for sticking with this rollercoaster.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!