

Pulling the Pieces Together

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by [fireflystiles \(cuddlehazz\)](#)

Summary

“You never have hurt anyone. Not then and not now. You just made Coach piss his pants and that’s funny shit there.” Jackson told Stiles. They all underestimated how responsible Stiles felt for the Nogitsune and what happened. No wonder he was afraid to go near the pack, not to mention the whole no control over magic thing. He felt Stiles huff out a breath at the part about Coach which was a good start.

Or after the Nogitsune, Stiles keeps secrets, there are new people in Beacon Hills, and the Pack has fallen apart. Stiles starts to figure out his role in the pack, piecing it back together, and trying to keep everyone safe.

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

Remembering is hard, especially when Stiles doesn't want to. Some images will never leave him. Not ever.

Stiles, from his time with the Nogitsune possessing him, only remembers through flashes of images. The flashes are of the time Stiles was Stiles and not Void. They are few and far between. The Nogitsune only let Stiles in control to see the aftermath of what the fox had done to his family. The fox took a step back letting Stiles see the destruction his body left when the Nogitsune was in control.

What he does remember are the emotions: fear, power, control, anger, anxiety.

Stiles watched everything that happened, everything the fox did, but none of it seems real to him because he watched it like he was watching a horror film. He was permanently caught in the worst nightmare he could imagine. He developed emotions second hand because the fox made it so. The Nogitsune wanted him to suffer, to watch his pack crumble, but to make sure it was like a nightmare for Stiles. Nightmares leave lasting impressions, remnants of emotions from what played out, and lapses in true memory leaving Stiles to doubt what was real and what wasn't.

He remembers the feel of the blade in Scott as the fox pulled Scott's pain. He can still feel the rush of power the fox gained from it. He feels Aiden's death. He feels the foxes anger at Kira for foiling his plans. He feels his dad's anguish at almost losing his son so many times. He feels Melissa's worry for him. He feels Lydia's scream quake through his body and her fear rocket the foxes power higher and higher. He feels the weight of Allison's body in Scott's arms most of all.

He feels what the fox felt through it all. Stiles wasn't Stiles so he doesn't have any of his own emotions about that happened. He only holds remnants of the nightmares' aftershocks. Until now.

Now, the Nogitune is gone.

The Nogitsune left Stiles with memories of feelings. Now, he is making his own emotional response to what happened in the last months. Now he is free to feel for his friends, his family.

All he feels is responsible.

The images come. They pop up in his head unexpectedly. Some are triggered by seeing a person, place, or thing reminding him, some aren't.

He sees Allison's body in Scott's arms. He sees Derek trying to protect him. He sees Kira fighting to save everyone from what he caused. He sees Isaac fighting for his life. He sees Lydia scream for her best friend. He sees Ethan howl for his lost brother.

Flashes of images from the worst nightmare of all.

The Nogitsune left Stiles with the memories, feelings and the images of what the fox did to his family.

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For a month after Allison died Stiles was in the hospital.

No doctor could figure out what was wrong with him. His symptoms had no conclusive meaning, nothing added up. Stiles body temperature was well below normal. He needed heated blankets and the room at a certain temperature or his body would start to fall into hypothermia for seemingly no reason. Stiles was in pain. Physical pain. Yet the doctors could not find the source. Stiles never slept. It got to the point where they induced him into a coma so his body could recover. The lack of sleep of the last months maybe years had taken a toll on him. Another thing the doctors couldn't understand were the scars. Scars covered Stiles' skin. He had a large one on his abdomen. But the most concerning or odd was the one that crept up his back and neck. At first they thought it was a blood infection, but his blood tests came back normal. They did another MRI and his brain was normal. The doctors didn't understand.

The pack knew how it came to this, but they didn't know why he was still so ill after the Nogitsune was gone. They had Deaton come in to look at Stiles.

"His scars healed nicely... considering." Deaton told the pack. Everyone was there that could be. Stiles' dad, Lydia, Scott, Derek, Isaac, Kira, Malia, Peter, Danny, Ethan. Even Jackson came back. The pack couldn't stand that they let this happen to Stiles. They all blamed themselves. Many of them had trouble looking at him because they felt so guilty.

"What about--" Lydia started then stopped speaking. Lydia's devastated. She lost her best friend. Stiles was... he wasn't good.

"The Letharia Vulpina supposedly left him. It goes away over time. It keeps the fox out so long as it's strong in his system." Deaton answered. He knew the pack wanted answers. Deaton had a theory, though. Deaton thought that Stiles Spark was fully woken up by the Nogitsune, that the Spark was the reason Stiles was even alive. Stiles' Spark used the power of the plant to form a permanent way to keep anything from possessing Stiles again. Stiles' Spark was protecting him. Deaton thought that Stiles deep inside never wanted anything like this to happen again so his Spark acting on that belief made it so.

"You know something," Derek growled at Deaton. Derek hated seeing his pack so hurt. Stiles was dying as far as any of the wolves and doctors knew. The rest were writhing in pain, anguish, and guilt. Derek knew they needed Stiles to stay alive. Stiles held them together.

"I believe I know why the marks didn't leave, although I will only be able to tell for sure when Stiles wakes up." Deaton needed to talk to Stiles first before he drops the whole magic thing on the pack. It was too soon.

"When?" Isaac, who recovered, although still very weak, asked. It was the most hope any of them had had in a long time.

“Mr. Stilinski is going to have a long hard road ahead of him. He is the only known survivor of a Nogitsune possession. He will need time and support, but I believe he will get better in time.” Deaton answered. He knew Stiles’ Spark would not give up now after fighting for so long and being so close. The problem was that pushing the fox out took up all of the magic leaving the body to deal with the effects alone. The magic needed to grow back. There was no telling how long it will take after months of extreme use on non-existent training. Deaton felt guilty for not working with Stiles sooner. Stiles might be better now. Stiles body would have to heal on its own until his magic got to a sustainable level. He needed time and pack.

“What do we need to do?” Derek asked because Scott could only stare at Stiles seemingly lifeless form. Scott was no longer the Alpha. When he lost Allison his wolf lost control. The power of the True Alpha no longer felt secure with Scott and moved to a stable werewolf. Derek. Scott and Derek talked about it. Scott felt relieved he no longer held the responsibility. Scott’s wolf has never been at more peace with Scott than when it relinquished being Alpha.

Now it fell on Derek to keep the pack together except Stiles was the piece that held them. They needed Stiles. Derek needed Stiles.

“Stay with him. Pack helps pack heal. And I would suggest not looking at him like he’s something breakable. After all of this, I think we all can agree Stiles is anything but weak. This is not your fault. This was the Darach and the Nogitsune. Not you. Not Stiles.” Deaton could see none of them believed him but it was the truth. The needed to see that before Stiles woke up or the pack really would fall apart. The only thing holding anyone together was the fact that Stiles was still alive. Deaton didn’t know what condition Stiles would be in when he woke up.

None of the pack answered Deaton, they just stared at Stiles.

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Stiles started to improve slowly. The pain started to fade some and his body temperature started to rise. The doctors did not think either would ever be normal, but it gave the pack hope.

Stiles remembered going to the hospital. He remembered hearing conversations. He knew the pack was with him.

Stiles also remembered all the pain he caused them.

With every flash of an image, Scott and the sword, Lydia seeing Aiden’s body, Allison dead, Stiles fell apart a little more. They never stopped. The feelings from the Nogitsune never lessened. The riddles in the foxes’ voice never stopped playing on loop.

Stiles felt nothing like himself.

For the life of him, Stiles couldn’t figure out why they were still there. Why did they still care about him? He was nothing. He killed so many.

He was nothing.

--

Stiles blinked his eyes open for the first time, since the night Allison died, twenty-four days later.

The white hospital room was blindingly bright, it made him nauseous or maybe that was the pain or survivors guilt. If anyone would call this surviving. Stiles didn't.

The first thing the pack heard was Stiles shuddering breathing. The first change in weeks. Everyone was standing and the Sheriff was by his son's side holding his hand looking more hopeful than he had ever been.

Their eyes connected and the Sheriff started to cry.

"Son." Was all the Sheriff could get out as he held Stiles' hand.

"Dad?" Stiles croaked out. Was his dad here too?

There was movement off to the side and suddenly there was a pink hospital cup with a white straw sticking out of it, being held for him.

Stiles realized how thirsty he was.

When he looked away from his dad he saw that it was Lydia holding the cup and straw for him.

"What are you doing here?" Stiles asked when he finished taking a drink to sooth his dry throat. He saw Lydia flinch away and the tears gather in her eyes. Now, he held, even more, guilt in him.

Stiles looked around at all of them. Why were any of them here?

"Why are any of you here?" Stiles asked aloud. His voice was low and cracking from disuse. How long had he been out? He had no sense of brain to mouth filter at all.

No one answered. They all looked pained.

"Why don't you hate me?" Stiles screamed at them. His voice broke and his breathing was erratic. Stiles' heart monitor was going crazy. The panic started to crawl up his throat.

Melissa ran in and Stiles was once again in darkness with only the images of his friends, now with new ones of pained expressions, the ghost of the Nogitsune's feelings, and riddles slurred at him over and over.

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The next time he woke up was very much like the first. Everyone gathered around him. He kept his mouth shut this time. He didn't need any more images to haunt him.

Once again, Lydia came over closer to him. Stiles was staring at the wall behind the pack. He was afraid to look at them. He heard Lydia pour water and then shuffle over to his bedside. The same colored cup and a blue straw showed up in front of him. He drank once more.

Stiles felt... not better, no definitely not better, but more in control. He's tired of causing them pain.

"How long?" Stiles asked when he went back to staring at the wall. He realized no one was going to speak first.

"Twenty-four days. It's been a few hours since you first woke up." Derek answered. Derek couldn't take his eyes off of Stiles. Stiles was *awake*.

Stiles' eyes snapped to Derek then back to the wall when he realized what he had done.

Derek lost all the air in his lungs when Stiles looked at him. Stiles' eyes were dead. There was nothing there. Derek's wolf wanted to howl for his pack. This was only the shell of Stiles. Derek broke a little more. They were so worried he wouldn't wake up that they hadn't considered the state he would wake up in. Did he blame them? Probably not, that isn't who Stiles is.

Stiles didn't speak anymore and neither did the pack. No one knew what to say.

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Two days later they released Stiles from the hospital with the help of Melissa. The doctors never found out what was wrong with him. The pack knew, but who was going to believe them. The Sheriff was there when they discharged Stiles, ready to take them home, but he wanted to make a stop first.

Stiles didn't speak anymore, hadn't since he asked how long he had been out.

The Sheriff drove them to Deaton's without telling the pack he figured this conversation should be between Stiles and Deaton, alone. Maybe, Stiles would talk to Deaton. The Sheriff hoped Stiles would.

"Sheriff to what do I—Stiles. Nice to see you up and about." Deaton said as he watched Stiles shift and stare off to the side after following his dad into the office, never really looking at anything but the wall.

"I figured a check-up by you might do more good than by the doctors at the hospital." Sheriff answered. "I'm going to wait in the car." The Sheriff said aloud before turning to leave.

"Mr. Stilinski, if you would follow me," Deaton said. He noticed Stiles didn't even seem to acknowledge what he said, but as Deaton started to walk Stiles followed after, slowly.

"How is the pain?" Deaton asked once they went back into the examination room in the far back where no one could disturb them.

“Good,” Stiles said without looking at Deaton. The pain was terrible. Stiles could hardly breathe sometimes, but he loved it. The pain kept him grounded, reminded him that he was human again. The pain was punishment. Stiles wasn’t going to tell Deaton that. Stiles didn’t feel any of the pain the Nogitsune endured, only the power that came from others pain. Stiles knew that if he was in pain he was alone in his body.

“The cold?” Deaton asked as he noted the multiple layers of clothing.

“Chilly,” Stiles replied. He didn’t want to be here. Nothing was going to help him.

“Stiles, I want to help. I did—The Lichtenberg marks reappeared on your back and neck.” Stiles was not expecting that to be what Deaton said to him. Stiles was expecting some round about attempt at a rousing lecture about hope or something.

“Yeah.” Stiles was too tired to figure out where this conversation was going. Nothing really mattered.

“Do you know why?” Deaton asked as he watched Stiles. The usual wheels turning in the kids’ head were seemingly at a standstill. Deaton continued, “I have a theory. You don’t want to be possessed again. I think the Nogitsune unleashed your Spark. You are determined to survive for your dad, for you pack. The Spark made that happen. It has taken you so long to heal because your Spark is weak from expelling the Nogitsune from your body. Your Spark latched on to your fear of possession again and thus made what would basically be a permanent protection sigil out of the dormant Letharia Vulpina left in your body. You can never be possessed again because you willed it so. You have the mark to prove it.”

Deaton watched Stiles the whole time he spoke. The kid froze in place. Deaton saw a spark of something akin to the Stiles he knows. Something like the old Stiles.

“Your Spark is unbelievably strong. You survived on sheer force of will. To create a mark like that in your condition is indescribable. Even the strongest most trained Mages could only dream to be able to create such a mark. It is rare. More than rare. You have power in your own right. I’m sorry. I let you down I should have started training you immediately after the Mountain Ash incident at the club. I apologize. There is no manual for your type of magic. Think of it as there being no rules. You are your only limit.” Once again Deaton got no response, but he knew Stiles heard him.

“You have used a lot of magic in the last few months without any training. You need to start training immediately. When it comes back it will be very unpredictable and there is no telling if you will have control over ---”

Stiles stood up and looked Deaton in the eye. Deaton couldn’t believe how blank he was even in his anger there was nothing recognizable.

“You mean I could hurt more people?” Stiles screamed at Deaton.

“I will train you, Stiles. The pack can--”

“The pack! The pack is dead. I killed so many people! No! They can’t help! I can’t do this, do that to them not again.” Stiles couldn’t wrap his head around what was happening. It wasn’t over. Stiles felt a panic attack coming on. His breathing was erratic. Stiles felt his legs give as he collapsed against the wall behind him.

“I will help. You don’t have to tell them, though I think it would be best. You don’t have to. You’re okay. You won’t hurt anyone.” Deaton repeated until Stiles calmed down some his breathing was slowing.

“How?” Stiles asked. He wasn’t sure what he was asking about. How could this be happening or how could he change it.

“I’m going to give you some books to read while you are on bed rest. They are on basic skills and about Sparks. I have been collecting them for you.” Deaton should have started training much sooner.

“I don’t want to hurt anyone again--” Stiles whispered as he went back to staring at the wall across from him, behind Deaton’s head.

“How about we meet every day and talk about it, about magic, about what you went through?” Deaton asked. There wasn’t really any other option for Stiles. If he didn’t want to rely on the pack, then he was Stiles’ only option.

“Okay,” Stiles whispered. Stiles refused to get the pack involved. What if he hurt them again?

“I will see you tomorrow after closing then. If you don’t come I will show up at your house.” Deaton replied.

Stiles only nodded.

Deaton helped Stiles up. Stiles heard Deaton shuffle around gathering what sounded like books. It was easier to stare at blank walls. He couldn’t hurt them. They didn’t flinch. They didn’t give him new images to flash through his nightmares.

Together, Deaton and Stiles walked out to the Sheriff with a load of books.

“Stiles is going to be coming here every day after closing to talk,” Deaton told the Sheriff who looked relieved. The Sheriff didn’t know how to help his son. He was glad that Stiles was going to talk to someone. The Sheriff didn’t think he could be that for Stiles. It would hurt them both too much.

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Stiles and the Sheriff came home and got the books into Stiles room.

The Sheriff asked if Stiles needed anything.

He got no answer.

The Sheriff said goodnight and left Stiles’ room.

Stiles continued to stare at the wall for a long time. He, eventually, took off his shoes slowly. He looked over at the books. Stiles didn't want any of the pack around. He didn't know why they would want to see him, but for some reason, they seem to want to stay. Derek always had a habit of coming in through his window.

Before Stiles went to sleep he laid a line of Mountain Ash on his window sill and closed his drapes.

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Stiles fell into a routine.

Wake up after his dad went to work.

Lay in bed for as long as possible trying to keep warm, then get up to piss.

Go back to bed and read the books Deaton gave him all day.

Make dinner for his dad for when he came home and try not to gag at the smell of food.

Leave for Deaton's before his dad got home so he didn't have to see the look on his dad's face.

Let Deaton talk at him about feelings and guilt and magic and pack.

Go home.

Sleep.

Wake up from nightmares.

Read till he fell asleep.

Repeat.

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Stiles got texts and calls from the pack. He refused calls. But sometimes would answer texts.

The first one he got was from Derek asking why he couldn't get in Stiles' window.

All of the pack would text every day. They tried to visit too but that was painful for everyone involved. No one knew how to help anyone else. They were all sitting in their own misery.

They had pack nights. Stiles did start to go to them because Deaton threatened to tell the pack about his magic studies if he didn't go.

For a while, things seemed to be getting better. The pack would just lay around and watch movies. The first few pack meetings had everyone walking on egg shells. Eventually, after a few weeks, they could all sit in the McCall house and watch a movie or two without someone having to leave early or have a panic attack.

No one could step foot in the loft. Too much happened there in the past. Stiles didn't want them at his house for a lot of reasons. His dad, the books, and the smell of magic was so strong sometimes his dad could smell it, so a werewolf would have no trouble sniffing out what he was up to. Stiles started to keep cloths in a box on the roof of the Jeep to keep the smell out of them for pack nights.

Stiles started to feel guilty for hiding his magic from them. But that just added in, it wasn't enough for him to actually talk to them. He's terrified of that. Stiles was always waiting for the other shoe to drop. He was waiting for them to well and truly leave him. He didn't understand why there were still there in the first place.

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Deaton said he was doing really well. It turned out that Stiles had pretty good control because of his fear of not having any. He believed he would have control so he did. But that was in a calm setting with just him and Deaton. Stiles could do basic skills, but anything above that went to hell. And adding Druid therapy on top of that only made his magical reactions worse.

When Deaton would ask him to talk about what he experienced things would break. Windows would shatter, books would fly off the shelves, and the sinks would overflow with water.

Every time something went wrong Deaton told him he needed the pack for stability.

Stiles would turn and walk out of the office.

He always returned the next day but never apologized.

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No one was getting better. Not really.

The pack didn't talk about what happened. No one mentioned it for fear of hurting someone.

They all just went on blindly trying to forget what happened.

Lydia had a hole in her chest and longed to talk about Allison, but no one dare mention her name. She also lost Aiden.

Isaac had nightmares every night, but instead of telling anyone he just laid in bed and cried till morning.

Scott slept too much and wouldn't get out of bed unless he had to.

Kira blamed herself and her family for all of it, she hadn't spoken to her parents in weeks.

Derek was losing his mind. The pack was falling apart and he couldn't stop it. No one spoke.

Jackson became even more of an asshole except now he was downright mean.

The Sheriff threw himself into work. No one saw him much.

Melissa wasn't much different.

Malia was struggling to stay human.

Peter was losing all his bonds he had started to rebuild.

Ethan wouldn't leave Danny for fear of losing him too.

Stiles was only buried farther under the weight of his thoughts.

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Everything went to hell at a pack meeting at the start of August.

There was an actual threat in Beacon Hills again. This pack meeting was not for movies it was to protect the town.

Stiles rushed over from Deaton's when he got the text from Derek calling for an emergency pack meeting.

"What did you role in, Stilinski?" Jackson sneered at Stiles when he walked up to the old burnt out shell of the Hale House. Stiles didn't have time to shower and change when he got the text.

"Jackson enough," Derek commanded from the bottom step he was standing on as he waited for everyone to get there. Stiles was the last to arrive.

"Why are we here?" Danny asked. They hadn't met for any reason other than a movie every week or two.

"There are a few Alphas circling Beacon Hills as well as some new people."

"Excuse me?" Lydia said. None of them wanted to believe something was going wrong already. What the hell did they do to deserve this. Always a constant threat looming over them.

"They have been here for a week or so. Originally, it was only one it's up to four. They seem to have one or two of their pack member's with them. The new people seem like regular humans, but they smell of wolfsbane and other things. We can't stop them from coming into our territory." Derek said as he looked at the blank faces of his pack. They weren't ready for this.

"They seem to be waiting from something or looking. They are not one pack, it's not an Alpha Pack, they are separate." Peter chimed in. He was the one to notice the new smells in the first place. Stiles' heart started to beat frantically. It already had been from the text then it only got worse.

“Seriously Stilinski, it’s like you decided to go dumpster diving. Maybe you went to dig up some graves.” Jackson broke in from the serious talk. Well, that was it. Stiles lost it.

Stiles started to hyperventilate. Panic heavy in his chest. Air wasn’t coming only going. His hands shook enough to rattle the rest of his body. Tears welled in his eyes and his throat closed off. Graves. After he put so many people in graves.

Derek tried to move to Stiles, trying to help him, to calm him, to do something.

“No!” Stiles screamed at them as he saw their figures through his misty eyes try to move around him. When he screamed the ground between them cracked in half. Trees fell and the pack had to dodge them. A literal crack in the ground separated Stiles from the rest of the pack.

All Stiles could think over and over: I hurt them. They hate me. They hate me. No. No. I’m sorry.

He started to back away the shock of his magic stopped the panic attack enough for his tears to clear and his hands to stop shaking as violently. The use of magic calmed him. It expelled the nervous tension and helped his ADHD.

Derek once again tried to come close. He couldn’t believe what just happened. Something was going on with Stiles, something more than the aftermath of the Nogitsune or it was connected. The smell that was on Stiles only grew stronger. Something was wrong.

Derek got to him and pulled Stiles into his arms. Derek didn’t know how to help. He was so lost.

None of the pack were harmed, but for Stiles. It was the what if.

“Stiles. You’re okay. I got you. What’s going on? You’re okay.” Derek kept repeating as he held Stiles. Stiles had once again started to cry. He didn’t understand why Derek was being so nice to him. Stiles was a threat. Stiles was bad.

“Stop,” Stiles whispered as he tried to push out of Derek’s hold. Derek tried to hold on but it only made Stiles thrash more. Derek let him go.

“Just leave me alone,” Stiles whispered as he stared past them. He had stopped doing that as often, but not anymore he couldn’t, absolutely wouldn’t dare look at them. Stiles needed to leave.

“Stiles.” Derek tried.

Stiles only shook his head as he backed away to his Jeep.

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The pack fell apart after that night.

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The Alphas are still toeing the boarder of the territory, but the territory has no one to defend it. There were new people around town but no one was there to stop them or even figure out what they were doing in Beacon Hills.

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The pack ceases all communication with one another.

Everything that needs to be said it too hard to say.

So they say nothing at all.

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School starts back up at the end of August so they have to see each other. The first day back everyone kept their heads down. The other students whispered about them, that they were no longer friends. The worst whispers were about Stiles. He was no longer there. The first day he didn't get there until the bell rang signally the start. Everyone was on their way to class, packing the halls. He made it to class and to his second one. By his fourth, he was ready to run to the bathroom and puke. He took one step into the cafeteria and looked around he saw everyone the rest of the pack all looking around at each other trying to figure out what to do. He ran.

Stiles went home early that day.

Eventually, school became a part of the routine. Go to class. Try to focus. Breathe. Hide from the cafeteria during lunch. Go to class. Go home. Do school work. Go to Deaton's. Go home. Read. Sleep. Nightmares. Read. Sleep. Repeat.

Little did Stiles know that everyone else had a similar routine. None of them ate in the cafeteria. None of the spoke to anyone. No one slept.

They were all lost in their own grief.

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A few weeks into the school year, Stiles was walking in from sitting in his Jeep, where he spent his lunch break because it was too cold to sit in there for him when he heard crying. He walked till he saw a familiar figure curled into a ball under the stairs.

Isaac.

Stiles was suddenly extremely upset. What caused this? Who? Stiles didn't want his pup crying.

"Isaac? Hey, Isaac, you're okay." Stiles started to chant as he got closer. When he got close, Isaac looked up with teary eyes at him. The surprise on Isaac's face was evident. Isaac never expected Stiles to be the one to find him and try to help. Stiles was who he needed and now he was here.

“Stiles.” Isaac whimpered.

That was all Stiles needed before he crawled under the steps with Isaac. Isaac was still crying but it was less. He felt better having Stiles around. Eventually, Stiles wrapped his arms around Isaac.

Neither knew how long they sat there before Isaac spoke, “I loved her and she’s gone.” Stiles flinched. It didn’t take much for Stiles to figure out Isaac was talking about Allison. He’s the reason Isaac’s upset.

“I miss her too,” Stiles whispered back as his eyes got teary. The image of Allison flashed through his mind. He saw Isaac in the hospital bed. He saw the havoc he caused at the hospital. The images didn’t stop.

“She would be so upset with how we are acting,” Isaac whispered back. That hit Stiles halting the images flashing through his mind. Because Allison would be whipping everyone for acting like children. She would have never let it get this far.

“You’re right,” Stiles said, his voice held more emotion and realization in it than it had in a long time. Isaac was right.

“None of us blame you for anything,” Isaac whispered as he lifted his head to look into Stiles’ eyes. Stiles saw the flash of Isaac laying in the hospital bed unconscious. He couldn’t believe that.

“Stiles. We don’t blame you. I don’t blame you for any of it. Not for me getting hurt. Not for Allison. None of it was your fault.” Isaac could hear Stiles heart racing so he pulled Stiles into his arms. He kept repeating to Stiles that it wasn’t his fault.

Eventually, Stiles pulled away and looked at Isaac.

“When was the last time you slept?” Stiles asked because there were dark bags under Isaac’s eyes and his cheeks were gaunt.

“When was the last time you slept?” Isaac asked in return.

Touché.

Stiles almost smiled at his pup.

“You having nightmares again?” Stiles asked instead. Was everyone hurting as bad as him? Of course, they were. But was he the one to fix it?

Isaac only nodded as he looked at Stiles. This was the most present Isaac had seen Stiles since before everything happened.

“You can call me when you have one.” Stiles said without looking at him but then Stiles’ eyes snapped to meet Isaac’s and he repeated it with more conviction almost pleadingly, “You can call me anytime.” Chances are Stiles would be awake anyway.

Isaac nodded. He couldn't believe that this was real. Stiles was here, with him, offering to help. Stiles was Stiles. Isaac started having nightmares about his father again only now it was Allison in the freezer and he couldn't get to her in time. He woke up every time with the image of her lifeless body on his mind.

"Come on, it's time for class," Stiles said as he pulled Isaac up. They had their next class together but also with Scott. When they walked in together the only person who noticed was Scott. He watched as they took the seats they had been sitting in since school started but something had changed.

--

That night Stiles got a text from Isaac and they ended up texting until they both fell asleep. Stiles woke up from a nightmare about Isaac burning from the electricity.

Stiles started reading one of the books Deaton gave him until it was time for school.

--

When Stiles got to school Isaac was standing by his locker.

"You know texting when you have a nightmare goes both ways," Isaac said. He could tell Stiles didn't sleep. The thing was Isaac slept for the first time in a long time. He actually got a few hours of sleep.

That made Stiles freeze. He hadn't even thought. He didn't want to bother Isaac.

"You didn't know that? Stiles, we care about you. We want to help you. We don't blame you." Isaac said. He was starting to get how deep Stiles guilt went. Probably as deep as his own guilt went, if not more.

"I blame me," Stiles whispered before he walked away leaving Isaac to stare after him looking like a lost puppy.

--

Stiles spent lunch away from everyone again.

He couldn't stay in the Jeep even though it was only the beginning of September his body temperature went down too much and far too fast from the outdoors. A slight breeze felt like a winter blizzard. He wore more layers than he ever had.

--

Training with Deaton was going nowhere. He read all of the books multiple times but his magic remained erratic. Every time he got frustrated Deaton said the pack would help. Stiles would walk away.

Deaton stopped pushing it.

--

The next week, Coach started talking about lacrosse and tried to joke with Stiles about the fact that he didn't even try out. They were well into the season training and all.

"Of course, Stilinski just quit. I lost my best bench warmer." Coach had said. Stiles was pissed. He didn't want to be the way he was. He was drowning in his own grief without a life raft.

Stiles could feel his magic starting to boil. The papers on coach's desk suddenly exploded with a deafening boom and floated around the room in the shape confetti. Images of coach with the arrow in his stomach appeared in his head. Stiles ran.

Stiles couldn't get very far. There were people everywhere and Stiles was having a panic attack.

Stiles felt himself being grabbed and hauled away from the scene. Stiles tried to struggle but stopped when he heard a growl, "Stilinski stop."

Jackson.

Jackson saw Stiles run out of the room and followed. The same smell from the night at the Hale House surrounded Stiles. Jackson knew he had to help Stiles get out.

Jackson pulled Stiles outside and into the trees surrounding the school. When they were far enough in not to be seen Stiles wrenched himself out of Jackson's grasp.

"Don't touch me!" Stiles screamed as he staggered away from a shocked Jackson and caught himself on a nearby tree. The tree, upon Stiles contact, started to lose its leaves. First, they fell one by one then more and more till they are all gone and the tree shriveled and turned black.

"Just stay away! I don't want to hurt you!" Stiles sobbed out as he lost control. Stiles didn't know what to do. He didn't know how to reign in his power. He didn't have an ounce of control in him.

"Stilinski!" Jackson screamed over the whirling wind that was kicking up the leaves from the tree Stiles demolished. Jackson was completely dumbstruck. He couldn't believe what the hell was happening. He just knew Stiles was in pain. Something was very wrong.

Jackson started to make his way through the flying debris to Stiles. When Stiles saw him he tried to back away.

"Stilinski! Stiles! You won't hurt me!" Jackson yelled over the wind. When he got within reach of Stiles he pulled Stiles into his arms and held him. "You won't hurt me. You won't hurt anyone." He kept repeating it till long after the wind calmed and Stiles sobs turned to sniffles.

"You didn't hurt anyone Stiles," Jackson said to Stiles. He was so glad Stiles calmed down some.

“I did.” Stiles rasped back. Stiles knew he hurt people.

“You never have hurt anyone. Not then and not now. You just made Coach piss his pants and that’s funny shit there.” Jackson told Stiles. They all underestimated how responsible Stiles felt for the Nogitsune and what happened. No wonder he was afraid to go near the pack not to mention the whole no control over the magic thing. He felt Stiles huff out a breath at the part about Coach which was a good start. It felt right to be near Stiles.

Jackson’s phone ringing startled them both.

“Hel--” Jackson tried to answer but the other person cut him off.

“Is he with you?” Lydia’s frantic voice asked.

“Yeah, I got him out we are in the woods on the edge of the clearing past the tables.”

“On my way,” Lydia replied before she hung up.

Jackson refused to let go of Stiles, afraid of what might happen. And he was happy to be near Stiles again. His wolf felt at peace for the first time in a long while.

Behind them, Stiles heard footsteps getting closer.

He’s pulled out of Jackson’s arms and engulfed in a different pair of arms. He could smell Lydia’s perfume. He realized that it was Lydia who called Jackson asking about him. She came out here and she was hugging him. Stiles was so confused. He tried to step out of her hold but she only held tighter. Then he could hear small snuffles. Lydia was *crying*.

Stiles pulled away enough to lift her face to him. She was looking right at him and he was looking back. He raised his hands to her face and thumbed the tears off of her face. He didn’t know why she was crying.

“I was so worried, I couldn’t find you guys and you were supposed to be in that class,” Lydia said as if she knew what he was thinking.

“He blew up the papers we had turned in at the start of class after coach said some stupid shit to him,” Jackson answered because Stiles wasn’t about to.

“Coach should keep his mouth shut or he’s going to lose another testicle,” Lydia mumbled into Stiles’ neck. Over her head, Jackson and Stiles made eye contact and they both started to lightly laugh until it turned into full blown laughter. It was the first time Stiles laughed since before he woke up in the hospital. Jackson was behind the two leaning against a tree and started to laugh hard enough he had his hands on his knees. Stiles was breathless, the good kind.

“We were let out early. Um--” Lydia started then looked down before she spoke again, “Would you like to go for lunch with us, Stiles?” She softly asked him. She had no idea how he would react.

“Um. S-sure.” Stiles stuttered out in surprise. He was waiting for them to say jinx or something but instead Lydia linked her arm in his and then grabbed Jackson’s hand as they walked back towards the school.

“I got both of your bags already. How about we take my car? I can drop you back here?” Lydia asked. Both boys nodded in agreement.

It was the first full meal Stiles ate without it feeling like he was eating sand.

--

Stiles was at his locker two days later when he felt someone stand close to him.

“I think I’m failing history.” Malia moaned at Stiles from her close position to Stiles. She was holding a stack of books and her back was against the locker beside his. Stiles looked over at her. He’s amused by her. She wasn’t nervous around him, she was herself. She acted normal. Well, normal for her.

“Did you ask Lydia?” Stiles asked her as he got his books out of his locker.

“Yeah, but she is already tutoring me in everything else. I think if I asked her she might actually kill me.”

Stiles snorted. “I doubt it, but um, do you want to meet in the library after school?” Stiles asked her. He shut his locker.

“Yes! Thank you!” Malia yelled as she walked shoulder to shoulder with him leaving her scent.

Malia wasn’t holding on to her humanity well. She was trying. The study sessions with Lydia helped. But she had no other contact. Her father wouldn’t look at her. Her relationship with Peter was a work in progress, very slow progress. She was lost and the only people who could help and understand her were falling apart in their own ways. Stiles always helped her the most since Eichen, she felt best with him. She was the one who really saw the toll of the Nogitsune when Stiles was Stiles, but it was still in him. She and the coyote in her respected him. He helped ground her just as much as Derek did as the Alpha.

--

“How are you dealing with the “Peter is my dad thing”?” Stiles asked Malia when they were in the library. They had gone over her recent history paper and Stiles honestly couldn’t see that much wrong with it which was odd because Malia should have gotten a much better grade for it. Maybe Mr. Yukimura was being hard on her for some reason.

“We try to meet up, but someone has to be with us because we end up fighting. Derek usually ends up separating us.” Malia replied rather nonchalant. “It’s better when we text, less fighting than when we are in person.”

“Huh. Well, at least you can talk right?” Stiles was trying to be sympathetic, but Peter still was not his favorite person. Stiles saw a flash of Malia attacking him in Eichen as she blamed

him for ruining her life. He saw her strapped to the chair with a drill at her temple. He's pulled away from that image when she spoke. Stiles noticed Malia relax more and more the longer they were together sitting across from one another in the back corner of the library.

"Derek asks about you a lot. I mean he asks about everyone, but especially you." Malia said suddenly as she looked at him for his reaction. Stiles still didn't understand why people cared about him after all he did. At least with Malia, it was her getting something from him.

Stiles wasn't ready for this conversation.

"Can I have Peter's number?" Stiles asked Malia.

"Why?" Malia looked at him like he had two heads.

"Lydia and I were talking the other day about the Bestiary and he has a lot of information that could help us," Stiles replied with the truth.

"He would like that." Malia softly replied. Peter didn't really see anyone but her and Derek. This might help him.

Stiles left with Peter's number and some suspicion about Mr. Yukumura.

--

Stiles went to Deaton's every day after he closed up to train. Deaton noticed that his magic was responding to Stiles better but after the last time he brought it up to Stiles he wasn't about to do it again. The inspector had yet to finish the paper work to fix the back wall Stiles had all but demolished.

Stiles recent interactions with the pack were helping him with his magic. It still wasn't enough.

Deaton gave Stiles a book on tattoos. Many of the books Deaton got for Stiles were still too advanced but many magic users had tattoos. They helped channel magic, enhance human abilities, and offer more control. The ink could be imbued with things like Mountain Ash for protection. Once Stiles read the book he came to Deaton asking about the tattoos. Stiles studied up on them and even designed his own.

The first tattoo Stiles got was a wolf. He continued to gather a collection of various runes. They did little for his control now, but Deaton knew that in the long run, they would help Stiles. No one could see the tattoos, anyway, because Stiles always wore so many layers because his body temperature never returned to normal. Deaton kept giving Stiles books that he could handle and kept the ones he couldn't for later.

He had been collecting more books for Stiles but knew Stiles wasn't ready for that level yet. He needed control. Stiles needed stability. Stiles needed his pack.

Stiles was opening up to Deaton more about what he remembered of his time with the Nogitsune, he didn't say everything but more.

“I see them,” Stiles said to Deaton unexpectedly.

“Who?”

“The people I killed.”

“What do you mean?”

“Like I get these flashes of images. When I see the pack I see the image of what I did to them.”

“Every time?”

“No.”

“It’s a remnant of the Nogitsune. Like the rest of the symptoms, they will ease with time.” Deaton knew they wouldn’t entirely go away, just like his body temperature would never be that of a regular human. Stiles would always have lasting effects, but he was making progress.

He stared behind people less. He could actually look at them. Deaton wasn’t sure what it was if it was his confidence building or that he was realizing he was pack. That never changed, he just didn’t know that.

The pack needed each other and ever so slowly he could see they were building back up from what Stiles told him. Stiles was the center piece and he was slowly pulling the pieces together.

--

“Stiles!”

“Yes?” Stiles stopped on his way out after his history class when Mr. Yukimura called him.

“May I speak to you?” Mr. Yukimura asked. He looked pleadingly at Stiles.

“Uh, sure,” Stiles said as he turned from the doorway and back into the class room to the seat he had just vacated.

“I was wondering if you could talk to Kira about well. She won’t talk to her mother and me.”

“That’s not really my problem,” Stiles said bitterly. He didn’t understand why Kira’s dad was coming to him with this. Was he blaming Stiles? What did he think Stiles would do?

“I know. I know. Noshiko and I were wrong we thought we were protecting her but we only made things worse. That isn’t your fault. Could you talk to her?” Mr. Yukimura was pleading with Stiles.

“Okay, how about this. You stop grading the pack, like Malia whose last paper was not D worthy and you know it, so hard.” Stiles bargained.

“I’m sorry, I just. You’re right I will look over the grades again. I-- I took my feeling out on them, on you.”

“You do that and I will talk to Kira but I’m not going to fix your relationship with your daughter. That’s up to you.” Stiles told him as Stiles started to walk out the door again.

“Thank you.” Stiles heard from behind him as he walked out of the room.

--

Stiles texted Peter one night in late September after he got home from Deaton’s. He asked if Peter would meet him and Lydia for coffee at a local café so they could go over the Bestiary.

Peter agreed immediately.

They met up on a Saturday. Lydia arrived first and picked a table in the far back away from anyone who could hear them talking about seemingly mythical creatures. Peter walked in at 10:00am on the dot when they had agreed to meet up. He slowly walked up to Lydia. Peter had no idea how to deal with her now after he got the name of his daughter from her.

“Stiles isn’t here yet.” Lydia chirped out uselessly when he came near. She was nervous to be around him alone.

“Have you finished translating the Argent’s Bestiary?” Peter asked trying to keep away the awkwardness.

“I have. Stiles and I talked about it a few weeks ago during lunch.” Lydia replied. They started talking about some of the things she found. Neither noticed when Stiles came in.

“Uh.” Stiles uttered out once he reached their table. He couldn’t believe Lydia and Peter were having a civil and interesting conversation.

“Stiles!” Lydia yelled when she noticed him and got up to hug him. Stiles was surprised by her enthusiasm to see him.

Peter, after the hug, nodded his head at Stiles. This was the first time Peter and Stiles have seen each other since the night at the Hale House. Stiles was frail looking like the slightest breeze could knock him over.

“How about we get some food and drinks?” Peter asked as he was getting up. It wasn’t really up for discussion. Stiles looked like a walking zombie.

When Peter came back from getting various kinds of food and drinks, the three started discussing creatures. Each was on their own side of the table, Stiles faced a wall while Lydia and Peter were across from one another. It felt right for Stiles to be surrounded by pack.

“I think we should make a Hale Bestiary.” Stiles started. They had the Argent’s, but it was mostly about kills and how humans kill creatures. It wasn’t from the prospective of pack. They had experienced so much that the pack could really offer so much knowledge. Through

his magical training, he has read and learned about even more creatures. The Hale's could have one hell of a Bestiary.

Both Peter and Lydia looked at him. Peter spoke first, "Really?"

Stiles looked at them nervously. Maybe this wasn't such a good idea after all. "Um, I was just. Sorry, it was--"

"That is a great idea!" Lydia said then continued, "Why didn't I think of that?" She mused lightly.

Peter continued to stare at Stiles. Stiles said *Hale* Bestiary. That meant something. Pack.

"I just thought it was fitting. We have been through so much, we know a lot, I have been studying and learning new stuff. Then we wouldn't be relying on a Hunter's Bestiary." Stiles answered as he looked at his trembling hands.

"Stiles--" Peter started as he continued to look at him in surprise, "Thank you."

"What?" Stiles uttered in surprise as his neck snapped up to face Peter.

"Thank you for caring about us still."

"Still?"

"We let you down, Stiles," Lydia whispered.

"No! Why--"

"We weren't there for you. We let this happen." Peter said leveling with Stiles. Peter could hear Stiles heart rate kick up into overtime.

"No! I'm the one that—Not you! You didn't ki--" Stiles couldn't believe they blamed themselves for what he did.

"Stiles. Hey, breathe you're okay. We will stop talking about it okay?" Lydia said noticing Stiles panic. His hands were shaking and his eyes were wide saucers.

"No! I don't want you to feel guilty for what I did! I don't want anyone to feel guilty for what I did!" Stiles said as he tried to calm down. He was taking deep breathes. He was angry at them for thinking that.

"Stiles maybe everyone should consider that none of this was our fault. Not yours, not mine, not anyone in the pack." Peter said trying to put the truth out there and to try and calm Stiles.

"I don't know if I can believe that," Stiles whispered. What Peter said rang in Stiles' ears. Maybe—but he saw the images of the lifeless faces of his friends.

"Stiles just try and think about it okay?" Lydia interrupted the constant stream of images. He didn't know how long he had spaced out.

“What made you think of making our own Bestiary?” Peter asked trying to get passed a rough topic. Stiles' heart started to beat faster again and Peter frowned.

“Reading the books Deaton gave me,” Stiles answered as he went back to staring at his hands. He didn't know how much to talk about his magic training. He didn't even know how to talk about it.

“You must have a lot to add then. How were you thinking we do this?”

“Maybe Danny could help?” Lydia jumped in, “if we had a digital one anyone on the pack could access it when needed.”

“That is a great idea,” Stiles answered looking at her in surprise. Why didn't he think of that?

“We could have key searches. And then all of us could add our own information. I'm sure Derek and I could add stories of the Hale's and things.” Peter mused.

“I will talk to Danny about it then,” Stiles said with a smile. He had calmed down some and they had a solid plan.

For the rest of the time in the café, they talked about the various creatures. No one mentioned Stiles training although it was clearly where he learned a lot from.

Peter and Lydia shared a smile when they saw Stiles reach for one of the bagels Peter bought.

“Are there still new people circling Beacon Hills?” Stiles suddenly asked when there was a lapse in conversation.

“Yeah. There are a few more newcomers. None of the Alphas have come into the territory but others have.” Peter tentatively answered. Peter and Derek have been running the territory lines each night to make sure. Derek did that instead of sleeping and Peter followed so nothing would happen to him.

“Oh. Could you um maybe keep me updated about it? Like if more come or if they cross the line?” Stiles asked as he ripped apart his second bagel into tiny pieces.

“I can do that,” Peter answered. Stiles was handling the information really well in comparison to the last time.

“Thanks.”

“Maybe you want Derek--” Peter started to say. Peter knew that not having Stiles around was hurting his nephew. Derek still went to Stiles house to check on him everyday even though he couldn't get in. Stiles was the first person Derek let behind his walls in years. Derek trusted Stiles and Stiles wasn't around anymore. Even more, Stiles was hurting. The pack was hurting.

“No!” Stiles interrupted brashly. He looked up and saw Peter's surprised and hurt face. “Not yet okay? Just not yet.” Stiles said looking at Peter.

“Okay. Not yet.” Peter agreed.

--

Monday found Stiles at his locker with both Isaac and Malia. No one spoke but just being around each other was enough. The weres just wanted to be around Stiles.

“Do either of you know where Kira goes for lunch?” Stiles asked them. He hadn’t seen Kira at school at all but he told her dad he would talk to her.

“I think she stays in the auxiliary gym,” Isaac answered in surprise. Stiles usually doesn’t speak first let alone ask about anyone from the pack.

“Okay, I will check it out. Thanks.” Stiles said as he bumped his shoulder with Isaac before he walked into his first class.

At lunch, instead of going to the Jeep or the empty classroom he had been staying in when it got too cold for him, Stiles went to the auxiliary gym.

The door was locked.

No one answered when he knocked. Stiles during one of his all night internet binges learned how to pick a lock. He never had the chance to use that particular skill, until now. He could probably use magic but the door would probably catch on fire.

When he went in he couldn’t see anyone at first, but then he saw Kira practicing with her sword. He tried to call her name but she had the music playing as high as it would go from her headphones.

Stiles walked over to her which was probably not the best idea. He reached out to her but before he could touch her she whipped around smashing her foot into his stomach. She held her sword to his neck where he lay on the floor.

“Stiles!” Kira squeaked when her eyes stopped glowing orange and she realized what she did. “Did I hurt you! I’m so sorry!” Kira said as her sword clattered to the floor and she knelt beside him.

Stiles started to laugh. He wasn’t sure what to do he was just so surprised.

“Remind me never to sneak up on you again. Although, usually I’m the one being snuck up on by supernatural creatures.” Stiles said through his laughter.

“Did I hurt you?” Kira asked. She had no idea what he was doing her. That last thing she wanted to do was hurt Stiles. Stiles had been hurt enough as it is.

“I’m fine,” Stiles replied. He was sure he would have some serious bruises but that was okay.

“What are you doing here? How did you find me?”

“I asked Isaac. You haven’t talked to your parents in weeks.” Stiles rushed out. He had no idea how she would react to him interfering

“Did my dad ask you to do this?”

“He mentioned you hadn’t spoken to them but I told him I wasn’t going to fix what they did that’s up to them. I want to know how you are?” Stiles asked. He could see the hurt flash through her eyes at the thought he only came because of her dad.

“I’m alone,” Kira replied not looking at him.

“Well, not right now,” Stiles said. He felt responsible for breaking the pack a part. This was his fault.

Kira gave him a small sad smile.

“Would you like to come to the library with me after school? Isaac, Malia, and Lydia are going to be there.” Stiles asked. He didn’t know how to start a conversation with her especially about her parents.

“That would be nice. Will you stay with me?”

“Always. Your dad did ask me to talk to you and I’m sorry that’s what it made me seek you out. But that wasn’t all it was the fact that you must be having a really hard time. I’m sorry.” Stiles knew how bad all of this sounded but he was basically doing the same thing with his dad.

“Have you spoken to your dad?” Kira asked seemingly reading his mind.

“I don’t know how.”

“Then you understand. They lied to me! They didn’t even tell me I was a mythical creature or that my mom was 900 years old or any of it! And you got hurt because of my family!” Kira rushed out.

“I’m sure that conversation would have gone spectacularly “how about I tell you about the time I was 900 years old and made some mistakes during World War II while in a camp and by the way you’re the same creature as me but different so I don’t actually know what power you have to help you” yep would have gone well.”

“When you say it like that,” Kira said bashfully. “They still should have told me. Maybe you wouldn’t have gotten hurt. I’m sorry.”

“I agree they should have. Don’t beat yourself up for that, for the maybes. You have no blame in what happened.” Stiles told her. He understood that her parents probably didn’t know how to turn their daughter’s world upside down but they should have told her. He didn’t blame her for anything that happened. He wasn’t about to go be chatty with her parents or anything but Kira had no fault.

“Thank you, Stiles,” Kira said as she pulled him into a hug. She released him quickly and sat beside him. They didn't touch, but it was just nice to be around someone. They sat together until the bell rang.

--

Stiles is running late to his magic lesson.

The study session with Lydia, Isaac, Malia, and Kira turned into a twice a week thing. Sometimes it would be more based on when exams were and papers were due. The study sessions were at the same time as lacrosse practice.

They had a history paper due the same day as their exam, which Stiles thought was cruel. Stiles hadn't spoken to Mr. Yukimura since he stayed after class but knows something changed. One day, Malia came and found him after her history class and all but tackled him into a hug. Her grade changed to a B.

He hasn't outright asked Kira about her parents, but she will sometimes text him for advice, he would try to show her their side when they said something stupid, which was pretty often.

At least they're talking.

Stiles pulls haphazardly into the parking lot of the clinic. He completely missed what time it was. He and Isaac feel asleep as they were working on their papers. It was the best sleep Stiles has had in a long, long time. Stiles rushed out of the Jeep and stumbled before he got to the door.

“Sorry, I'm late!” Stiles yelled as he pushed open the back door of the clinic. He saw a flash of images from the times he had been here in a panic. This was the first time that happened. But then again it was the first time he was running into the clinic.

“Mr. Stilinski.” Deaton greeted from inside his office. Stiles walked in and saw him sitting behind his desk finishing up some paper work.

“Sorry, I'm late,” Stiles repeated.

“You should have called. I expect you to take this seriously.”

“Okay first, this is the first time I've ever been late. Second, I feel asleep during a study session with some of the pack.” Stiles was getting annoyed. How the hell could Deaton think he wasn't taking this magic stuff seriously. This was the first time he was ever late! He started the magic lessons at the end of June and here it was at the end of October! The last thing Stiles wanted was to be a threat to others. The best way to not do that: training.

“Study session?” Deaton inquired with a small smile.

“Lydia tutors Malia in everything but history, and I tutor Malia in that, and Isaac and Kira started to fall behind so we study together a few times a week,” Stiles answered. So they wouldn't be trying magic this was a therapy session.

“You fell asleep,” Deaton stated.

“Yeah.” Stiles had no idea where this was going. Deaton had lost some of his sketchy ways but not all.

“You fell asleep surrounded by four members of the pack.”

“Yeah.”

“Did you have a nightmare?”

“No.”

“Interesting.”

“What are you getting at?” Stiles is frustrated, he knew exactly where Deaton was going with this. Stiles, while surrounded by pack, was calm enough to sleep. He felt safe with them. Not only that but every time he reconnected with the pack he could feel the pack bonds strengthening. He could feel them better now that he was practicing magic than he ever could before. Each time he reconnected with a pack member a bond was reformed. Everytime he hung out with the pack the bonds strengthened.

“It just proves you need your pack.”

“It’s not that easy.” Stiles sighed. Reconnecting to the pack took time and there was a lot of mending to be had. Stiles knew he was doing a little better now that he started to reconnect with the pack. He hoped they were doing better too. He still woke up from nightmares each night but he was getting a little more sleep than before. Food, for the most part, continued to feel like sand in his mouth, but not all the time. He was hoping the pack would get to the point of eating lunch together, he noticed he ate best around them. The panic attacks were nearly unbearable. The smallest thing could trigger them, but he was learning to move past some of the lower lever panic-inducing things so that was a start. He could actually hear the words World War II and Japanese in the same sentence without having to leave the class.

“I suppose not. I have two new books for you to read. You can take them and go. I will see you tomorrow. I expect you to be on time.”

“You got it, teach,” Stiles said as he took the books from Deaton and turned to leave.

--

During the next study session, Lydia asked him if he talked to Danny yet.

He hadn’t.

He was terrified. With Danny came Ethan. He didn’t know if he would have be ready to face Ethan. He tried to come up with a way to get Danny on his own but it didn’t feel right. Not that any of this felt right.

Stiles was relearning how to interact with everyone. Some people came easier than others. Lydia was a goddess. She took everything in stride. One day he wanted to ask her how and why, but he didn't think he was ready for the answer. Malia was happy to have people around her. For her it was easier to hold onto humanity with other close. Kira didn't talk much, she no longer rambled awkwardly, but she would add a comment into the conversation at hand when she felt like it. She was listening that he knew but beyond that she kept to herself. He noticed when she sat down with them in the library a few seconds later she would lose the tension in her body and finally relax.

Isaac needed his friends. He had been abused and alone for so long and then had friends. When his friends disappeared there was no support for him anymore. Jackson and Stiles were never close to begin with but he would stop by the library to walk Lydia to her car after practice and he always made a point to touch Stiles in some way be it a shoulder bump or a brush of the hand. Peter kept his word and updated Stiles on the Alpha's circling Beacon Hills and the new comers. None of the Alpha's had stepped into the territory yet they seemed to still be waiting for something. He didn't know how many new people came in though. Being closer to the pack didn't fix anything, it only made things a little easier to deal with. They could go forth better together than apart.

Stiles and Danny hadn't been close before all of this. Danny was the only real human in the pack now. Stiles understood how that went. Danny had apparently come to the hospital when Stiles was there and told everyone he knew about werewolves and that his boyfriend was one. He asked Derek to be pack.

Stiles decided against trying to get Danny alone.

On the Wednesday of the last week of October, Stiles got to school early and went to find Danny at his locker. He was nauseous and his hands started to shake more now that he didn't have the steering wheel to grip.

Ethan's head snapped up looking to him the second he turned the corner to the wall of lockers. Danny noticed the change and looked at Ethan. Stiles saw his lips move, but couldn't hear what he said. Ethan didn't answer but Danny followed Ethan's line of sight to see Stiles walking towards them. Danny broke out into a grin.

"Stiles." Danny greeted with a smile when Stiles got close enough. He noticed that Stiles wouldn't look at either him or Ethan.

"Uh. I was um wondering if we could meet up after school to talk?" Stiles muttered out. He was afraid to look up at them and he was afraid to speak too much, he might puke.

"Yeah of course!" Danny said looking from Stiles to Ethan who still hadn't taken his eyes off Ethan. "We could meet in the library?" Danny suggested.

"Uh sure. See you then." Stiles said before he all but ran from them. He felt pathetic. Now he had to wait all day to meet them. Stiles wanted to leave he couldn't handle this.

Stiles spent his first class in the bathroom trying to calm a panic attack.

He did the same at lunch after going to a few classes.

Finally, it was the end of the day. Stiles walked towards the library once again ready to puke. He was trying to breathe like Deaton taught him. It wasn't working particularly well.

He walked in and saw Danny and Ethan sitting at the table in the back corner where the study sessions took place.

"Stiles, you okay man?" Danny asked when he saw Stiles. Stiles looked about ready to be sick.

"Uh." Stiles blinked up at the two. He wasn't expecting that. He looked at Danny who had worry written across his face then at Ethan. Ethan looked like he was holding himself back. Stiles didn't know from what.

"You look like you are going to puke." Danny pointed out.

"Good. I look like how I feel." Stiles replied without thinking. None of them were sitting, just standing on each side of the table. Danny and Ethan together on one side, Stiles on the other.

None of them knew what to do with that.

"I'm sorry," Stiles whispered. He didn't know what he was sorry for. For getting Aiden killed. For having a panic attack. For bothering them. For Danny getting involved. For breaking the pack apart. For killing people. For not being able to look at them. For his hands shaking. For not being normal.

"You have nothing to be sorry for," Danny answered as he took slow steps around the table towards Stiles.

Stiles only shook his head. This was a mistake. He wasn't ready for this. He would never be ready for this.

"He's right." Ethan murmured as he continued to stare at Stiles. That got Stiles to look at him and when he did Ethan said, "You have nothing to be sorry for."

What. Stiles would think he was dreaming except he never had dreams only nightmares.

"No one blames you for what happened," Danny said as he reached for Stiles and pulled him in for a hug. They stood like that till Stiles breathing evened out some.

"So what was it you wanted to talk about?" Danny asked as he slowly moved from Stiles to take the seat at the end of the table between Stiles and Ethan. Ethan followed suit and sat down. Eventually, Stiles sat too.

"Uh. I was hoping you guys could help. I'm—I want to make a Hale Bestiary."

"They don't have one already?" Danny asked. No one really explained a lot about the Hale's or about werewolves he only got the story of how it all went down. He did get some

specifics on what it's like to be a werewolf from Ethan but he knows nothing about the Hale history.

"I'm sure they did. The fire destroyed everything except the things in the Hale vault under the school, but I've been there and there aren't any books. I'd ask Peter but that would mean bringing up the fire so that's a no-go." Stiles answered with surprising ease. The conversation was something he could focus on. A distraction from the fact that he is talking to the twin one of the people he killed.

"Oh. That makes sense." Danny said, he knew about the fire but he didn't really know how much was really lost or that it wasn't something anyone talked about. He figured but to know for sure is different.

"Peter is willing to help add the Hale history and knowledge to it. Lydia finished translating the Argent Bestiary and I have done enough research to be an encyclopedia on creatures that go bump in the night." Stiles felt like he was using Danny for his knowledge of technology. "Anyone is welcome to add what they know. We've all been through a lot. Danny as the only human in the pack you could add an interesting point of view."

That got the others attention. Ethan snapped his head straight up from where he was looking at his hands listening to the conversation.

"Only human?" Danny asked confusedly.

"That's why you always smell li--" Ethan started to say but Stiles interrupted.

"Like I rolled in a dumpster like Jackson said." Stiles sighed.

"Like magic." Ethan finished. That surprised Stiles, but as he thought about it, he was in the Alpha pack and Morell was a part of that. Ethan knew the smell because of her.

"Yeah." Stiles didn't know what else to say about it. He definitely wasn't ready for that conversation yet.

"So how can we help with the Bestiary?" Danny finally asked.

"Lydia thought you could help us make it all digital. So everyone would have access." Stiles said looking up at him. "I want to try and get everyone involved. Let everyone give something to it. If they want that is." Stiles said the last part as he looked at Ethan.

"I can do that," Danny said with a smile. He was happy to be involved in something.

"Uh, maybe we can meet up again but with Lydia and Peter to talk more."

"What about Derek? Isn't he involved?" Danny asked curiously.

"I don't know if Peter told him or not. I haven't even seen Derek since the night at the Hale House." Stiles choked out. He hated talking about that night. He broke the pack that night.

“Oh,” Danny said surprised. Danny thought at least some people stuck together. Or that they at least talked one on one or texted or something.

“Yeah.”

“We can meet up with you guys then for coffee maybe?” Danny asked hopefully.

“That would be great. How about Saturday?”

“Perfect.” Danny beamed at Stiles.

After a pause Stiles said, “Lydia, Malia, Isaac, Kira and I have been having study sessions a few times a week after school here if you both want to join us. You are welcome to.” Stiles didn’t want them left out. They were the newest members of the pack and everyone was completely neglecting them.

“Sure just text me we will be here.” Danny said the added after a thought occurred to him, “wait, do you have anything to do with our grades changing in history?”

“Uh, technically that was Kira. Her dad asked me to talk to her I said I would. I found out he was handing out lower grades for the pack because Malia asked me to tutor her. Kira did it really.” Stiles felt surprised he helped a few more of the pack long before he actually talked to them directly. It felt good to help, to be useful.

“Okay well thanks.” Danny figured that Stiles had more to do with it than he was letting one but that was okay. He was just happy that Stiles was talking to them and that the pack was slowly coming together even if it was through thinly veiled excuses of asking help from a digital book. He figured Stiles didn’t know how else to approach them. Still didn’t not really.

“Okay so the next study session is Thursday night and I will see you both Saturday,” Stiles said as he was getting ready to leave. He’s exhausted after spending literally all day in a state of panic. And he still had magic training tonight to get through.

Stiles was standing up getting ready to walk out when he felt a hand on his shoulder.

Stiles was pulled into a hug and heard, “It wasn’t your fault.”

Ethan had pulled Stiles into a hug. Ethan said it wasn’t his fault Aiden was dead.

Stiles still didn’t believe it.

Stiles brought his arms around Ethan but didn’t say anything. He couldn’t even if he had the words, even if he believed he truly wasn’t at fault. As Ethan hugged him he could only see the image of Ethan holding Aiden’s body.

They let go and Stiles left without another word.

--

Stiles woke up with a scream on his lips. He came home from Deaton's and crashed after his long day with Danny and Ethan.

His nightmares warped their time in the library. Instead, it was Danny and Ethan yelling at him for killing Aiden. He woke up just as Ethan lunged across the table at him.

--

When Danny and Ethan joined the study session in the library no one questioned it. They all went on like they had, but it was better somehow. It felt closer to being right.

That night as he drove to Deaton's he was calmer than he had been in a while.

His magic showed it. Stiles was able to light a candle without it blowing up or without lighting Deaton's shirt sleeve on fire. Deaton pushed him more than he ever had. Stiles went right along with it, as did his magic. But that was only the basics: lighting a candle, having a breeze through the room as if a fan was on, levitating a pebble, moving water so it swirled. It was all elemental and utterly basic.

Stiles left Deaton's feeling proud of having magic for the first time.

Sure it was the basics, but before today the basics had been disastrous.

--

Saturday came. This time Stiles was on time for the meeting. His hands still shook but he wasn't about to puke everywhere. He considered that a win.

Lydia and Peter were already there when he walked in. Peter had once again bought a boat load of food and drinks.

And once again Lydia and Peter were debating over some type of creature.

It felt oddly normal.

When he moved to the table and took the seat he had occupied the time before he didn't look at the wall across from him he looked nodded his head to Peter and smiled at Lydia.

"Stiles tell him he's wrong!" Lydia said as a greeting.

"You're wrong," Stiles said looking at Peter who was looking at him in amusement. "What are you wrong about?" Stiles asked.

"Lydia here thinks that Nemeton's are inherently evil," Peter replied. At the mention of the Nemeton Stiles saw the flash of the image from his dreams when he couldn't wake up. He pushed them aside.

Oh. Stiles has an entire book on Nemeton's that Deaton gave him for the very same reason.

“As much as I like to say you're right Lyds but you're not this time. I thought so too originally. I have a book on them if you want to read it.”

Peter looked smug.

“Stiles! You're supposed to side with me!” Lydia said starting to crack a smile.

“I side with the facts,” Stiles replied. That made Peter look at him intently. No longer with a smile, more calculating. That comment took Peter by surprise. He hadn't thought about what Stiles was training for. There was a specific place for someone like him in the pack. Well considering Stiles and who he is there were several places in the pack for Stiles.

“Stiles, what have you been study magic for?” Peter asked curiously. He saw Danny and Ethan come into the café and head over to order drinks. Ethan was clearly listening to the conversation Peter and Stiles were having.

“For control. Which I'm not good at.” Stiles didn't want to talk about this.

“You know an awful lot of information, not just magic.” Peter egged on. He wanted Stiles to realize that maybe Deaton was training him for more.

“What does that mean?” Stiles is confused. What the hell was Peter getting at?

“Have you researched about pack dynamics much? The various roles?” Peter asked thinking maybe Stiles just needed a hint before he truly realized that Deaton was essentially grooming Stiles to be Emissary without Stiles knowledge.

“Yeah.” Stiles did not like where this was going. His heart rate started to become irregular. He knew what position he could fill, but he needed control and he was nowhere near that. He could kill the pack if he didn't learn, that is a far cry from well what he could be.

“Stiles! Thank you for inviting us!” Danny interrupted the conversation with Peter after Ethan said Stiles heart rate was going nuts again.

Stiles was startled but grateful to be out of the conversation with Peter, “Hey guys! Glad you could make it!”

“Okay, so I roughed out a base code for you guys to look at and I figured we could do from there?” Danny said as he set up with computer.

“We were thinking of a section chapter whatever for each creature.” Lydia pointed out.

“And we need a section for plants. If a plant is named in a section for a creature we can link it so the reader can find out more. Some plants work for multiple creatures.” Stiles added.

“Maybe in the beginning we start with the Hale's history and then have werewolves first.” Peter said.

“Okay, that makes sense.” Danny started taking notes on everything they said.

“Each person can add stuff so everyone will need access. Some people have more experience with certain things.” Stiles said then added, “I hope we can add some more personal touches I mean for all the shit we have been through we have a much different view than some.”

“I can write the section on the Alpha Pack.” Ethan whispered. He hadn’t really looked at anyone since he came in but having people around, people he knew helped.

“That would be great.” Lydia softly said as she reached over to cover Ethan’s hand with hers.

“Lydia don’t freak out on me or anything but how are you so damn calm?” Danny asked. Stiles had been thinking the same thing. He didn’t understand how she took things in stride.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“You are so able to deal with things and just go along with all the changes.” Danny pushed.

“I don’t want to talk about this.”

“Lyds, you don’t have to.” Stiles interrupted as he watched her start to shrink in on herself.

“No this was some of the problem right, no one asked so no one told their feelings. I lost my best friend. I loved... Allison. I will always love her. But she’s gone. Aiden’s gone too. And that hurts like hell. I realized that not everyone is gone, though. I still have family members that are each falling apart in their own way. I’m so worried about everyone all the time. I can’t lose any more of you. I won’t. I’m not calm. I just want any piece of my family I can get.” Lydia had started crying during her speech. She figured out the Stiles was the key to getting the pack back together. She knew he was more important to the pack than he could probably ever realize. She needed pack. They helped keep the voices in her head to a dull murmur instead of a roaring inferno. She needed them.

Stiles stared at his hands. He felt responsible for everything.

“I think we all should probably talk about everything more, better,” Danny added.

“We’re getting there I’d say, we are at least better than we were. Just give it some more time.” Peter consoled them.

Stiles blamed himself for all of this. It was his fault the pack was so fractured. What was he doing? He couldn’t even help himself, how could he think he could help everyone else?

“Stiles, I’m going to tell you this again, it not your fault,” Danny said as he bumped his shoulder with Stiles. “Get out of your head for a while.”

“I can’t.” Stiles whispered, then added, “I don’t know how.”

“You talk less. Did you notice? You don’t twitch anymore, instead, your hands shake.” Danny voiced his observations. Everyone was still dancing around Stiles. That’s what got them into this mess.

“I--” Stiles didn’t know what to say to that. He hadn’t noticed. He knew his hands shook but so often Danny noticed? He was a mess. Just a shell of his former self.

“You can talk to us,” Danny said when he realized Stiles wasn’t going to say anymore.

“How about we go back to working on the Bestiary?” Ethan suggests. They weren’t ready to deal with all of this yet. They were slowly working on it. Things were getting better the more the bonds came together. Everyone would have short conversation checking in now and then and it was working. The conversations weren’t stressful they were just short and ended up being helpful. Those were enough for now. No one was ready for a long emotionally draining conversation. Yet.

They left after a few hours with a solid start on the Bestiary. Eventually, everyone would have access to work on it. For now, Stiles, Lydia, Peter, Danny, and Ethan had access. Stiles planned to tell Kira, Malia, and Isaac about it at the next study session.

--

Stiles parked behind the clinic a few days after the café meeting for his lesson. He walked in and started to get his stuff out but he heard a crash behind him. Swinging around he sees Scott staring at him from the doorway. Stiles saw the flash of the Nogitsune stabbing Scott and stealing his pain. Stiles felt the rush the fox got from it all over again. Stiles took a step back. His heartbeat increased but when he looked back up he saw the pained look on Scott, different from before. Stiles remembered he was no longer the Nogitsune.

Scott was never at Deaton’s when Stiles was.

“Sorry,” Scott said as he continued to stare at Stiles.

“It’s okay.” Stiles sighed out. The tray Scott dropped scared the hell out of Stiles. He could blame the uptake of his heartbeat on that instead of the gruesome images flashing through his head. Scott bleeding out on a sword that Stiles held the other end of.

“I’ll just um go.” Scott nervously said. Stiles noted that Scott looked horrible. His hair lost its sheen and he was pale except for the large bruises under his eyes from lack of sleep. Stiles avoided Scott just like he did everyone else. Stiles hadn’t really seen Scott at all. Stiles wasn’t that good at avoidance.

“Wait. Uh.” Stiles started. He didn’t know what to say. Scott had been his brother. And Stiles killed the love of his life. Stiles missed Scott so much. He’s one of the hardest people to confront. He had no idea how to be anything to Scott anymore. Could they be friends again?

“I miss you,” Scott said looking more like a puppy than he ever had. Scott was lost without Stiles but he thought that Stiles would be better if he avoided him. Scott blamed himself for not being there for Stiles when he truly needed it. Over the last few months, Scott realized how much he needed Stiles. Scott took Stiles for granted so much in the past that he thought Stiles would be better off without him.

“I miss you too,” Stiles whispered back. It was the first time he felt close to tears that didn’t involve a nightmare or panic attack. Stiles looked up at Scott and made a decision.

Stiles walked over to Scott and pulled him into his arms.

“I’m so sorry.” Stiles all but sobbed into Scott’s shoulder which had tensed further at the contact.

Scott’s arms lifted around Stiles and squeezed.

“It’s not your fault. None of it was. I don’t blame you. I should have been there for you. You were always there for me but I wasn’t--” Scott pretty much sobbed back.

“I missed you so much,” Stiles said again interrupting Scott.

“Promise you won’t leave me again?” Scott asked as he pulled back to look Stiles in the eye. Stiles initially left Scott like he did everyone else but Scott stayed away all on his own instead of pushing Stiles.

“I’m so sorry I did that.”

“Hey no not what I—listen we all kind of left each other I left you just as much as you left me. I stayed away. I could have done more. I don’t blame you. So how about we promise not to leave each other again?” Scott rushed out he should have worded that better. Scott was done sitting back and not working towards fixing things.

“Yeah. Yes. I promise.” Stiles said as he pulled Scott in for another hug.

“Well, it’s about time,” Deaton said from behind them. Both boys turned to see him holding a few jars of what Stiles could tell to be Mountain Ash. “Scott, would you please stay for Stiles lesson?”

Scott didn’t answer. He looked to Stiles first. Stiles was not expecting that. He wasn’t sure he was ready for anyone to be there during a lesson. What if he hurt Scott? But then Scott was looking at him with puppy eyes, but more than that he looked so hopeful.

“Okay.”

Scott beamed.

“Right well, today we are working with--”

“Mountain Ash.” Stiles finished.

“Correct,” Deaton answered with a small smile directed at the two. Deaton had grown quite fond of Stiles through his training.

“What am I going to fail at this time?” Stiles asked Deaton. He still sucked at almost everything. On good days after he hung out with the pack and nothing bad happened he could do the basics flawlessly, but good days were hard to come by.

“You are going to learn how to battle with Mountain Ash.”

“Excuse me?”

“You can shape Mountain Ash. That time in the club where you finished the circle was nothing. You as a Spark are only limited to your imagination, Stiles how many times do I have to tell you.” Deaton sighed. Stiles had so much potential but he wasn’t stable mentally, emotionally, physically. Not yet. He may never be after everything he has been through. But that doesn’t mean Stiles won’t be able to ever accomplish great things. He just needed an anchor.

“You said battle.”

“Okay, so we won’t do that today. Today, we will mold it.”

“Should Scott really be here,” Stiles said before he realized what that must sound like to Scott. Stiles looked over at Scott who looked like a kicked puppy, “Not that I don’t want you here! I—my magic doesn’t work well. I could hurt you.”

“I trust you,” Scott said so earnestly it blew Stiles away. Scott still trusted Stiles. How?

“Why?” Stiles asked in disbelief.

“You’re my brother. I know you would never hurt me.” If Stiles was a werewolf he would have heard Scott’s heartbeat stay even.

“Stiles protect Scott.” Deaton suddenly said.

“Wha--” Stiles started to ask what the hell Deaton meant when he saw Deaton slam one of the jars of Mountain Ash at Scott’s feet.

Before Stiles even knew what he was doing he felt his magic react. Stiles felt his Spark wrap around Scott making sure none of the Mountain Ash got on him or surrounded him. He didn’t stop there. Once Stiles saw that his magic was, well working, Stiles thought about what Deaton said. Stiles thought about all the Mountain Ash going back into the jar except the jar was broken.

Stiles watched as the glass jar pulled itself together even the tiniest of shards. Once the glass jar was whole again he thought about the Mountain Ash filling it. Sure enough, the ash started to work its way back into the jar. Once all in, the metal lid rolled over and twisted itself back onto the jar.

Stiles stared at the jar.

“Dude, that was awesome!” Scott yelled excitedly.

“Very good Mr. Stilinski.” Deaton said then added, “Again.”

Deaton took two jars off the counter and threw them to the ground where they promptly shattered except not.

This time, Stiles pictured nothing happening to the jars or the ash. Everything stayed in place on the spot Deaton threw it at. The jar landed perfectly fine, not even a crack.

“Dude!”

“Well done.” Deaton praised. Deaton knew Stiles had it in him. He also knew Stiles needed his pack for support. Stiles still didn’t have an anchor but he Stiles would never let anything even himself hurt his pack ever again.

“Now let’s try molding the ash.”

By the time the lesson was over Stiles was exhausted. He used more magic than he had since fighting off the Nogitsune. Deaton said eventually Stiles will be able to do more and more without becoming fatigued, but it came with practice. The problem was Stiles magic didn’t always respond so he couldn’t actually practice.

Deaton disappeared as Stiles and Scott gathered up the supplies.

“That was so cool,” Scott told Stiles. Scott couldn’t believe what Stiles could do.

“It usually doesn’t work.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean usually, I do the opposite of the things I’m supposed to and not because I want to either. My magic is unstable. There is no manual for my magic, no laws like a Druid has. My magic is based on me and only limited by me.” Stiles continued to organize the items on the counter even though they didn’t need it. He needed something to do, he was anxious.

“Then why did it work tonight?” Scott asked watching Stiles move about the room.

“Because of you,” Stiles said with his back turned to Scott.

“What?” Scott asked taking a step closer to Stiles.

“The pack, Deaton told me and he was right, helps me. I need the pack.” Stiles' magic was unstable because Stiles was unstable. He needed his pack for stability.

“And we weren’t there for you,” Scott said dropping his head to look at his feet.

“No! No, I didn’t want to tell you guys about my magic in the first place!” Stiles rushed out, he hated that everyone blamed themselves for things he did.

“Why not?” Scott asked looking up at Stiles who had turned around to stare at Scott.

“Because I was terrified I would hurt you guys again!” Stiles screamed out.

“You didn’t hurt us,” Scott said confusedly.

“I didn’t hurt you? Are you kidding me? I let that thing in! I wasn’t strong enough! I killed so many people. I stabbed you! I KILLED ALLISON!” Stiles screamed as tears began to run down his face.

“No,” Scott whispered then walked over to Stiles who tried to step back. Stiles backed into the counter behind him. Scott stepped right in front of him. “That wasn’t you. You didn’t do any of that. You are the strongest person I know, Stiles. No one blames you.” Scott said before he pulled Stiles in for a hug.

Stiles was sobbing and Scott was crying for how much pain Stiles was in.

“I don’t blame you,” Scott repeated as he pulled away. “I hope you can believe me.”

“I’m working on it,” Stiles replied with a small but sad smile.

Deaton came back into the room with a large pile of books. “I think you can read these now. Just don’t try any of it.”

“Really?”

Deaton nodded, “Go home you two.” Deaton said with a smile.

“Does this mean we are talking again?” Scott asked when they got to the parking lot.

“Yep.”

“Good. See you tomorrow.” Scott said with a smile.

--

Stiles woke up screaming after having a nightmare of all the things he did to Scott, and Allison. Which wasn’t unusual. Only this time, the last thing he saw was Scott drowning in Mountain Ash.

Stiles read the new books from Deaton until it was time to get ready for school.

--

Stiles got to his locker early. As he was getting his stuff out Scott came over to him.

“Dude you smell awful,” Scott said scrunching up his nose.

“What? I showered this morning!” Stiles said confusedly.

“Did you sleep at all?” Scott asked. Scott could smell the anxiety, lack of sleep, and distress rolling off of Stiles.

“Yeah, some,” Stiles answered as he went back to getting his stuff out of his locker.

“How much is some?”

Stiles did not want to answer that. “Don’t worry about it.”

“I thought we agreed not to keep things from each other?” Scott asked. He had hoped Stiles meant what he said.

“I—dammit. Okay, so I don’t sleep much or at all sometimes. It’s getting better I promise. It’s just slow like everything else.”

“Is there anything I can do?” Scott asked.

Stiles was not expecting that. He has been taken by surprise a lot lately. Maybe telling his friends things won’t hurt them as much as he thought. “Meet me in the library after lacrosse?” Stiles asked. They were having a study session and he figured Scott should be there. It could finally be a pack study session.

“Uh sure. But I don’t see how that helps--”

“Just wait and see.” Stiles interrupts Scott with a small smile.

--

Everyone was already in their respective seats when Scott walked into the library looking confused. Malia had taken a seat at the short end of the table to sit in between Lydia and Malia. Kira often sat in a cushy chair just off to the side but very much a part of the study session. Isaac sat next to Stiles. Jackson took the seat next to Lydia once practice was over. Danny and Ethan sat at the opposite end from Malia. They always had books and papers scattered around. It had gotten to the point that people would bring drinks and snacks for everyone too.

“What?” Scott asked when he saw everyone. Looking at Kira until she looked up at him. Neither knew how to talk to the other.

“Welcome to the pack study session Scotty!” Stiles greeted when he saw Scott.

“Pack?” Danny asked with a raised eyebrow he was new to this stuff still even though he has been reading everyone’s entries into the Bestiary.

“Well everyone is here right?” Stiles asked with a smile. This felt right. “Well at least everyone that goes to high school.” Stiles amended, not all of the pack was here.

“Come on McCall,” Jackson called from his seat next to Lydia.

“I—When?” Scott started to ask.

“Not very long. Some longer than others. Danny and Ethan joined last week.”

“Okay.”

That was it, Scott dropped down in the open seat between Isaac, who gave Scott a one-armed side hug, and Danny, who smiled at him.

“So what do you guys do?” Scott asked as he looked around.

“Study, talk, mess around. Pretty much whatever we want.”

The pack did just that.

“So how’s lacrosse going?” Stiles asked Scott and Jackson. Isaac and Danny hadn’t gone out for the team either.

“We are good this season especially with that new kid,” Scott answered.

“New kid?”

“Yeah, he never talks to anyone but this one girl. He’s a freshman and already on varsity.”

“Huh.” Stiles had been so caught up in his own stuff for the last few months that he didn’t notice anything around him. He spent his school days trying to avoid the pack. With the contestant anxiety, he was feeling and still does everything is like a fog, fuzzy with white noise. Stiles, looking at the pack, is starting to realize how deep he has been in his own head, how much he has missed. He is slowly starting to get out of the fog.

Stiles looked at the time and realized he needed to leave for Deaton’s.

“Hey, guys I have to go,” Stiles said as he started to clean up his stuff.

“Where?” Scott asked then added, “Do you train with Deaton every day?”

Woop there it is. Busted. Everyone was looking at him.

“Yeah.”

“Can I come again?” Scott asked.

“Wait again?” Lydia asked.

“He was there when I got to Deaton’s yesterday,” Stiles answered her.

“Can we all come?” Danny asked. Everyone was still looking at Stiles.

Stiles was not ready for that. “Not yet,” Stiles answered.

“Okay.” Kira replied then asked, “But soon?”

“I’ll try.”

They all said their good byes one after the other: Isaac pulling him in for a tight hug, Lydia giving him a kiss on the cheek, Kira nudging her shoulder with his, Danny a one-armed hug, Jackson and Ethan brushing against him, and Malia putting her face in the crook of his neck.

--

Stiles practice with Deaton went pretty well. Not great like the day before but he didn't break anything unintentionally.

--

Peter had been texting Stiles updates since Stiles asked him to the first time at the café. Peter and Derek had counted around six Alphas each with at least two Betas circling Beacon Hills. More new comers entered Beacon Hills every week. Derek and Peter picked up the scent of magic in several places. There was no telling how many people were in Beacon Hills. The scents were all different. None of them had come into Beacon Hills either. It seemed like one long waiting game. Only Stiles didn't know what exactly they were waiting for.

--

Members of the pack started to drop in on Stiles training sessions with Deaton completely unannounced. At first, it scared the hell out of Stiles.

Lydia was the first to drop by.

"What are you working on today?" Lydia asked from behind Stiles, who hadn't heard her come in.

Stiles jumped spilling crushed lavender all over the place.

"Ms. Martin." Deaton greeted, not the least bit fazed by her appearance.

"Um," Stiles muttered.

"Clean that up," Deaton told Stiles. Stiles' shoulders dropped as he sighed. He knew Lydia wouldn't be leaving. Stiles thought about the crushed lavender going back into the bottle spilled from and sure enough, the bottle filled back up.

"Huh. So what are you making?" Lydia asked again.

"A gift for Isaac actually. His birthday is coming up." Stiles answered without looking at her. He went back to what he was doing.

"Oh. Well, what is it?"

"It's a sort of calming talisman. Ancient peoples would make them for young children to help them sleep at night. Warriors would also carry them during battle or hunts to calm their fears."

"Are you making one for yourself?" Lydia asked.

"They won't work on Mr. Stilinski," Deaton answered for him.

"Oh." Lydia thought that was unfortunate if there was anyone that needed one it would be Stiles. "I think Isaac will love it."

From then on Stiles worked in silence with Lydia and Deaton watching him work. Once all the ingredients were made it was time to put everything together. Stiles dripped a piece of obsidian into the boiling pot he had added the lavender, lemon balm, and other calming things too. The obsidian would fuse with it. Then he started to chant the words in a language even Lydia didn't recognize. He used his Spark to hold the shape he wanted the talisman to be.

Stiles pulled out the talisman and hooked it onto a leather cord charmed to never break. He held it up for Lydia to see.

"Isaac is going to love it."

--

Isaac's birthday was two days later. They had asked him what he wanted to do and he said he just wanted to hang out in the library.

They had a cake for him and everything.

Stiles pulled a small box from his backpack and gave it to Isaac.

Isaac looked at Stiles.

"Oh just take it." Stiles laughed at Isaac who was so surprised.

Isaac reached out and took the gift and opened it slowly.

When he got to the talisman he looked up at Stiles.

"It's a talisman for protection and calming," Stiles said.

Isaac held it up and everyone started to compliment it. The talisman was a beautiful shiny black. But what really caught everyone was the shape it was in, the triskele.

"Thank you," Isaac said as he got up to hug Stiles. "It's perfect."

--

Most of the pack had come to watch Stiles train with Deaton. Every time Stiles would get better and better with his control. His magic was stabilizing. None of the pack had been at Deaton's when Stiles got there.

"So why exactly is the pack helping my magic?" Stiles finally broke down and asked Deaton. It was undeniable now that Deaton was right.

"You have bonds with your park right. The pack bonds. Well, those help stabilize your magic."

"But that would mean--"

“You’re training to be Emissary.” A new voice answered.

“When did you get here?” Stiles asked.

“Been here the whole time,” Peter answered. “I thought you already knew what you were training for.”

“I’ve been training to not kill anyone accidentally or at all,” Stiles answered.

“Well, yes control and all but you’re smart you had to have known you would get control. What did you think would happen? Magic users especially someone already trusted in the pack would, of course, be the Emissary.”

“I didn’t— It takes trust. I didn’t think I would ever get it.”

“You never lost our trust, Stiles,” Peter replied.

“Why are you here?” Stiles asked Peter avoiding the issue Peter was pushing.

“Isaac showed Derek and I the birthday gift you gave him,” Peter answered.

“Oh.” Stiles' heart started to beat wildly at the mention of Derek. Stiles has been having less panic attack since the pack is more together and his magic seems to be stabilizing some. He reacts better to the hard topics now but Derek is still one he hasn’t reconciled with.

“It was very thoughtful of you.” Peter continued as if he didn’t hear Stiles heart beating erratically. “Using the pack symbol and all.”

Stiles only nodded at Peter.

“So what are we working on today?” Peter asked.

Stiles lessons have become more use of magic and less therapy because he was talking to the pack more.

“Today is Stiles first attempt at advanced magic.”

“First?” Peter asked.

“It’s been slow going,” Deaton replied.

Peter nodded.

“Well, shall we go outside?” Deaton asked Stiles.

“I guess.”

“Stiles is going to try his hand at wards,” Deaton told Peter as they walked to a nearby tree with Stiles trailing behind them.

“Okay, Mr. Stilinski.”

Stiles slowly walked up to the tree.

“You want the tree to grow. You want to give it protection. You want it to live and thrive.” Deaton said.

Stiles nodded and took a deep breath.

Stiles pulled out a knife and started to carve into the tree. Once the runes were in place he carved them into his hand.

Peter took a deep breath through his nose when he saw Stiles start to do that. It was his instinct to stop Stiles from getting hurt. Deaton put a hand on Peter’s shoulder.

Stiles pressed his hand to the tree and let his Spark go. Stiles thought of protection, life, growth, warmth, and good.

He felt the tree start to move under his hand.

When Stiles finished he turned to where Deaton and Peter were standing. Stiles' eyes were glowing white. The white started to fade and Stiles started to sway. Peter brushed Deaton’s hand off of his shoulder as he went to steady Stiles.

Deaton walked over to the tree and pulled off a perfect apple taking a bite of it.

“Well done Mr. Stilinski,” Deaton told him with a smile.

Stiles turned to see a beautiful apple tree with delicious looking red apples ready for picking.

“Did I?” Stiles whispered looking at the tree. Surely he didn’t do that.

“That’s all you kid.” Peter said from his spot by Stiles. Peter was still worried Stiles was going to keel over but he seemed steadier now.

“Oh.” Stiles did it. He helped something. He did something good with his magic. Stiles felt right. He could feel his magic ready for his command. He could feel the pack bonds. But most of all he felt the happy side of calm instead of waiting for something to go wrong. For once he didn’t see any flashes of bad memories.

Stiles smiled.

--

That night Stiles went to sleep late after reading more about wards.

His alarm for school woke him up.

--

It was two weeks before Thanksgiving.

Stiles and the pack started hanging out every day after school and lacrosse.

Stiles training continued to go well and more and more of the pack would join him.

Stiles decided one morning that he was up early from a nightmare that he would go visit his dad.

The Sheriff had been taking long shifts and Stiles was rarely home between school, studying, and training. Stiles really didn't want to go to the station after how many officers he had killed after the bomb he set off.

Stiles drove to the station and pulled into the parking lot. Stiles sat staring at it. The panic had been there since he came up with the idea of going to see his dad but now he was ready to puke.

One step at a time.

Stiles walked into the station and headed to his dad's office. He saw the flashes of the officers dying, the bomb going off. He saw the images of pain and death.

"Hey, kid you can't be back here." An officer Stiles didn't recognize said.

"I'm here to see my dad." Stiles replied.

"Who's your dad?" The officer asked.

"Stiles?" The Sheriff asked. He had been walking out of his office when he saw Stiles talking to one of his officers.

"He yours?" The officer asked.

Stiles wanted to ask how he was a cop because his dad's office was covered in pictures of him and any cop worth their snot should pick up on that. Then the thought occurred to him: what if his dad took down his pictures?

"Yeah. Let him through." The Sheriff replied as he watched Stiles.

"Hey, dad." Stiles said once they were in his office.

"Hey, kid." The Sheriff looked like he wanted to say more but wasn't sure what.

Stiles noticed his pictures were still where they always were and calmed down. This place was familiar to him.

"I was wondering if we could have dinner together tonight?" Stiles asked.

The Sheriff looked surprised.

"Yeah. That would be great son." They smiled at each other.

The Sheriff pulled Stiles in for a hug. "I'm glad you came by."

"Me too."

“You’re going to be late for school.”

Stiles checked the time and realized how long he had taken to get through his fear.

“I’ll see you tonight at the house?” Stiles asked.

“See you then.”

--

Stiles ended up having to go grocery shopping there was little to no food in the house and what was there had mold covering it.

Stiles ended up buying ingredients for spaghetti and salad. He figured his dad could have a cheat day except every day has probably been a cheat day.

“Son.” The Sheriff called when he got home.

“Kitchen.” Stiles answered letting his dad know where he was.

“That smells good.”

“I’m just about to dish up.”

The Sheriff nodded, “Anything I can help with?”

“Carry in the salad?”

“Got it.”

Stiles had set the table and everything. He wanted this to go well. Stiles spent the day going through various scenarios on how this conversation could go. The both sat down and started to eat but neither spoke.

“So not that I’m not happy about having dinner with you but what brought this on?” Sheriff asked.

“I’m sorry. I... things have been really hard lately.”

“How about you tell me about it?”

So Stiles did. He told him about the Nogitsune, the pack, school, magic training, and the new threat. Everything.

“Kid, you could have come to me sooner.” The Sheriff had gone through so many emotions while Stiles told him everything. He’s hurt and angry for his son. He knew Stiles wasn’t doing well he just didn’t know how to help let alone approach him. Plus, he was dealing with the fact that supernatural creatures are real, his son runs with them, and he is one of them. That’s not easy to come to terms with.

“I didn’t know how.” So they were in the same boat. Like father like son.

“Well, I’m telling you now you can come to me with anything.”

“Thanks, dad.” Stiles smiled at his dad. He felt so much better now that everything was out in the open. He didn’t downplay anything as he told his dad.

“So why don’t you have training with Deaton tonight?”

“Oh, I canceled. Told him I wanted to have dinner with you,” Stiles said grinning.

“He didn’t mind?”

“No, he was all for it. Wants me to reconnect with everyone.”

The Sheriff raised his eyebrow.

“I know, I know,” Stiles said.

“So there’s something new going wrong again?” Sheriff asked. Stiles honestly didn’t know that much about the new comers to Beacon Hills. The Alphas were staying just outside the territory, the magic users were as well or hiding themselves well, and the others haven’t tried anything that they knew of.

“Apparently. We don’t know much but--”

“You have a gut feeling?” The Sheriff smiled at his son. They were often very alike.

“Yeah, it was just something Scott said about this freshman making varsity. Isn’t that, I don’t know odd?”

“It can happen.” The Sheriff appeased.

“Yeah, but it just that not that normal.” It just didn’t sit right with Stiles.

“If you really believe it’s them keep on it eventually they will screw up.”

“You’re right.” Stiles sighed. He needed to be more vigilant there has been a threat for months yet nothing has happened. There is only so long people can wait. Then Stiles remembered one of the things he wanted to ask his dad, “Could we visit mom’s grave tomorrow?”

Stiles heard a fork hit a plate. He looked up and his dad was staring at him.

“Sure kid.”

Stiles nodded.

They ended up in the living room watching some game but really Stiles was fielding his dad’s questions about magic and werewolves and everything.

--

They walked in silence to Claudia's grave. Stiles and the Sheriff stood side by side in front of her grave.

"Her favorite flowers were poppy's." Stiles said. He looked over to his dad and saw him nod.

Stiles bent down and put his hands on the ground on either side of the head stone. Stiles pushed his Spark into the ground and asked it to grow. He wanted these flowers to bloom forever, for her grave to be a place of peace.

Behind him, he heard his dad gasp. Seeing magic up close, first hand was different than just hearing about it.

"She would love it."

Stiles smiled through his tears. "I think so too."

They stayed at Claudia's grave for a little while longer but before they left his dad asked, "Do you want to stop at hers?"

Stiles knew who he was talking about. He only nodded.

They walked in silence once again, but this time, Stiles' hands shook, his breathing was shallow, and he felt nauseous.

His dad led him for a few minutes until he stopped.

Allison.

Stiles started to cry.

This was the first time he really grieved for her that didn't involve his nightmares. He could see her lifeless body in Scott's arms. He would carry that for the rest of his life.

He sat in front of her grave and cried.

"She wouldn't want you to blame yourself." Stiles heard from behind him.

He looked up and saw Chris Argent. The image of Chris holding a gun at him in the loft. The flashes of the Nogitsune taking over again to fight his friends using his body.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean--" Stiles started. He didn't know if he was even welcome here.

"I don't blame you and neither would she," Chris interrupted. Stiles saw the image of Allison's lifeless body.

"But I--"

"Was not responsible. She died fighting for her friends. She loved all of you." Chris said as his eyes got misty. Stiles could hear Lydia's scream of Allison's name. He saw the images of the battle. The pack fighting against the Nogitsune.

“Could I do something for her?” Stiles suddenly asked he wanted to offer her grave protection. It was the least he could do. Argent had spared no expense she had fairly open area the whole way around her grave.

“Sure.”

Stiles moved back, Chris and his dad followed stepping behind him.

Once again Stiles kneeled and put his palms on the ground. He let his tears fall freely. Stiles’ Spark surged out locating the best spot. His Spark found a ley line behind her headstone. Stiles pushed his Spark into it coaxing the lines’ power to bend to him. He thought of protection, and love, and pack. When his Spark returned to him happily humming he looked up. Behind her grave was a beautiful Rowan tree. It somehow seemed fitting to have the tree Mountain Ash is made from, protecting the former werewolf hunter, but pack member.

“Thank you.” Chris said as he pulled Stiles into a watery hug. They both were crying.

--

Stiles got home called Deaton and told him he wouldn’t be at his lesson then promptly fell asleep. He did a lot of magic, he let out a lot of emotions, and he was absolutely exhausted.

Stiles slept through the night.

--

Monday morning before Stiles left for school he texted out a group message to the pack, well the ones in high school.

Anyone up for having lunch together today?

He got replies from everyone. They decided to eat in the cafeteria together.

--

Walking into the cafeteria was one of the weirdest experiences Stiles has ever had. It was so normal. Yet not.

The pack all walking in together which was either the best or worst thing to do. Everyone looked at them when they entered. None of them had eaten there all semester. At least they had each other.

“We could eat outside.” Isaac suggested. It was mild outside but absolutely too cold for Stiles. He still hadn’t figured out a long term warming charm.

“Unless you have approximately three heated blankets I’m going to get hypothermia if we do that.” Stiles said blandly. He had been looking outside but when he turned to look at the pack they all had various expressions of worry.

“Come on let’s get some food and grab a table.” They all trailed after Stiles.

They found a large table off to the side with no one there. People eventually stopped staring but then the gossip started.

“Everyone is talking about us.” Isaac said after he sat down next to Stiles.

“Let them. So is that freshman lacrosse star in here?” Stiles asked the table. It was both a distraction and a real inquiry.

“Uh, yeah he’s over there with the tall hot girl.” Jackson said pointing his fork to the far left corner of the caf. Lydia flicked Jackson in the shoulder for his comment.

When Stiles turned to look they were already looking at him. How unsettling. Stiles had that gut feeling again. He knew he was right that they were bad news.

“Do you know their names?” Stiles asked as he looked back at his food. No one seemed to be eating. Sitting in the caf was enough stress for everyone. Or maybe no one was actually eating right to begin with. Maybe it wasn’t just Stiles.

“Why?” Lydia asked observant as ever.

“A freshman making varsity? Not talking to anyone but that girl? Does anyone ever know where they came from? Isn’t that suspicious?” Stiles fired off questions.

“You think they are some of the newcomers Peter is keeping tabs on.” Lydia didn’t even ask she stated. Lydia knew Stiles was right now that she thought about it.

“Come on really?” Jackson whined.

“I have a bad feeling about them.” Stiles stated. Everyone at the table went ridged.

“His name is Garrett.” Jackson said.

“She’s Violet.” Scott added.

“I want you guys to be careful around them, okay?” Stiles said to everyone but especially Scott and Jackson being they played lacrosse with them.

“We should tell Derek and Peter.” Isaac said.

“Or we could just kill them now.” Malia added lightly.

“No, no. Remember what we said questions first.” Kira said trying to placate Malia.

“We are so weird.” Danny said with a smile.

--

They continued to eat in the caf. People eventually gave up talking about them for the most part. The pack study sessions went on and soon everyone in the pack was making the best grades they ever had.

Stiles continued his lessons with Deaton. He was working on a warming charm but Deaton said his body would grow used to it, that his low body temperature probably has something to do with his Spark fighting of the remainder of the Nogitsune side effects. Deaton said to give it time.

--

They were at lunch the day before Thanksgiving break started.

“So when will we meet next?” Isaac asked. They were all used to seeing each other every day. They ate lunch together, sat by each other in class, had study sessions, met on Saturday’s to work on the Bestiary together.

“Um, it’s Thanksgiving.” Ethan pointed out.

“Is anyone doing anything?” Kira asked. She still was working on her relationship with her parents. It was rocky at best.

Everyone shook their heads no.

“That won’t do. Everyone’s invited to my house. We’re having a pack Thanksgiving.” Stiles stated. He’s tired of the divides in the pack where people still tiptoed around each other. Maybe what they needed was a good sit down for a holiday and food. Food makes everything better. Especially mashed potatoes.

“Really?” Isaac perked up looking at Stiles like an eager puppy.

“Yep. I’ll let dad know. Scott your mom is more than welcome.”

“She will love that.” Scott said with a smile.

“What about Peter and Derek?” Malia asked. She couldn’t even remember her last real Thanksgiving.

“I’ll take care of it.” Stiles answered her. Then asked, “Anyone have a problem with inviting Chris Argent?”

Everyone stared at him. Stiles sighed. “I ran into him a few days ago.”

“Where?” Lydia asked.

“The graveyard.”

“Invite him.” Lydia said. It’s not the same as having Allison, not by a long shot but she would be happy to see her dad being taken in by the pack.

“Okay.” Stiles nodded.

“Want us to bring anything?” Kira asked.

“How about everyone comes over to help? And if you have any favorite Thanksgiving food bring it. Does that work?” Stiles answered.

“You basically just invited us to stay at your house all break.” Ethan pointed out.

Yeah. Yeah, Stiles did. He smiled and shrugged. “You guys are welcome anytime.”

--

That day after school Stiles drove home to grab the folder he had been saving for the right time. He told Peter not yet. Now, it was time.

Before he left his room he called on his Spark picturing the Mountain Ash, that he laid on his window sill all those months ago, going into the jar on his desk.

--

Stiles pulled up in front of the cabin Malia told him Peter, Derek, and Isaac were living in.

He could feel panic crawling up his throat. He was getting really tired of getting anxious about everything. That didn't stop it from happening. He pushed through.

Stiles got out of his Jeep making sure he had the papers and walked up to the front porch. Isaac had gone with Scott after school to Deaton's.

As he reached the last step, with one foot on the landing he heard the door open.

Derek stood in the doorway broody as ever, clad in dark jeans and a dark red sweater.

“Stiles! Come in.” Peter yelled from somewhere behind Derek. Derek looked good Stiles thought. More than good. When Stiles met his eyes he could see hope.

“Hi.” Stiles said to Derek.

“Hi.” Derek replied.

They were so awkward. Derek moved back some as Stiles entered the cabin but not back far enough that Stiles could get past him without brushing Derek's shoulder.

“What can we do for you Stiles?” Peter asked as he walked up to Stiles.

“I'm here to invite both of you,” Stiles paused to look at Derek to make sure he knew he was invited, “to my house for Thanksgiving. Everyone is going.” Stiles said looking at both of them. Peter was smiling which still creeped Stiles out sometimes but he was getting better with remembering Peter was different now. Stiles added, “It wouldn't be right if our Alpha wasn't there.”

Derek's eyes flashed at that.

“Thank you for the invitation Stiles.” Peter said then asked, “When would you like us there?”

“Oh well everyone is crashing at my house for all of break apparently, so you guys are welcome anytime.” Stiles said as he looked at Derek. Derek was staring at him.

“Need us to bring anything?” Peter asked. Peter was amused by his nephew. Derek wouldn’t stop staring at Stiles and Stiles kept looking back at him like they were the only two in the room.

“I told everyone else they didn’t need to unless they had a favorite recipe for something. I did ask that everyone help out. Feeding Werewolves is like feeding six armies. Although, no one eats much anymore.” Stiles added the last part as an afterthought that he really didn’t mean to say out loud.

“So you noticed.” Peter stated.

“Noticed what?”

“The state of the pack. What they need.”

“Uh, I guess.” Stiles saw Derek’s eyes flash again from the corner of his eyes but he might have been seeing things.

“Thank you.” Derek said to Stiles. Derek just said thank you to Stiles Stilinski.

Stiles just nodded. What the hell was he supposed to do. This was not how Derek usually responded to him.

“Oh! Do you guys mind if I invite Chris Argent?”

“He’s in town?” Peter asked.

“Yeah, I saw him a few days ago.”

“You weren’t alone were you?” Peter asked.

“No. I was with my dad. What does that have to do with anything?” Stiles had that bad feeling again. “What aren’t you telling me?”

“We think the Alpha’s and others are here for you.” Derek quietly said after Peter looked to him to fill Stiles in.

“Me?” Stiles wrinkled his nose in confusion.

“You are basically pure power Stiles.” Peter added helpfully then got a glare from Derek.

“Oh. Well great. So what you're putting the buddy system in place because that always works.” Stiles sarcastically said. Stiles was handling this better than even he thought he could. He knew the pack would support him now. That helped but also magic.

“No, we just want you to be careful.” Derek said looking at Stiles with a strange expression that Stiles has never seen on Derek before.

“Well, then I should probably tell you I think two of the new people are going to school with us.”

“What?” Derek and Peter both said rather loudly.

“Yeah I have a bad feeling about them.”

“A bad feeling?” Derek said rather unimpressed.

“The bad feeling.” Stiles tried to clarify. He couldn’t explain it he just got this feeling he should probably ask Deaton about it. That reminds him he needs to invite Deaton to Thanksgiving as well. When he comes back to the conversation Derek is growling low in his throat and Peter looks unimpressed with the whole situation.

“They haven’t talked to anyone yet. I told everyone to keep an eye on them and stay away.”

Derek let out a breath and his shoulders dropped.

“Please keep any eye out.” Derek said looking at Stiles with that expression again. It was like Derek was trying to tell him something.

“Tell everyone yourself at dinner.” Stiles said then realized he never got an answer about Chris, “So yes or no to Chris?”

“You can invite him, it’s fine.” Derek answered him.

“Okay.” Stiles said as he got ready to leave then he remembered the file he was holding.

“Here. This is for you. You don’t have to do anything with it. It’s just a thought.” Stiles said as he handed the file to Derek whose hand brushed Stiles as he took the file from him. When Stiles saw Derek it was like he forgot about his anxiety. He was calmer now than he had been in a long time even giving Derek the file.

“See you soon!” Stiles said as he left the cabin and went to his Jeep.

--

When he got to Deaton’s from the cabin he had a text from Peter.

That’s what you meant by not yet.

Stiles didn’t bother replying.

He walked in and saw Scott and Isaac sitting on the floor surrounded by puppies.

Stiles looked at Deaton who was standing behind them with a fond smile on his face. He helped put the puppies back in their carriers and went to the back room with Deaton. Isaac and Scott followed.

“So I’m having Thanksgiving dinner and your invited.” Stiles said to Deaton.

Deaton looked up at him and said, "Thank you for inviting me. I will think about it."

"Oh come on doc just come!" Scott said to his boss.

"Alright. I will be there."

That reminded Stiles that he needed to text Argent. He pulled out his phone and sent the text. He got an immediate response.

Sure.

"Chris Argent will be there too." Stiles said.

"Okay, so today we are working with different types of metals."

Deaton produced pipes all made of various metals. He lay them out on the exam table one by one.

"Let's see what you got."

Stiles ended up basically playing with metal all evening. He figured out how his Spark reacted with each metal. Some turned to a Play Doh like substance. Some melted. But he figured out how he could make each substance work in his favor. He took notes in his own person version of a Grimoire that he had started when he started lessons with Deaton.

"Mr. Stilinski. I think you can start studying on your own now." Deaton said as Stiles put away all of the supplies. Stiles was closing a cabinet door when Deaton said it. The door slammed shut.

"What?" Stiles asked Deaton wide eyed. There is no way Deaton said that. He wasn't ready to do this on his own.

"There isn't much more I can teach you now. You can still get all your supplies from me and come by if you need an extra pair of eyes or if you just want to, but you have learned everything I could teach you."

"Your joking." Stiles couldn't believe what he was hearing. There was no way he was that strong or in control. He felt like he was just getting the hang of this.

"Stiles you don't realize it but you are at the level of High Mage. You have well surpassed me."

"But--"

"You have your pack. You are learning to stand for yourself again stronger mentally and physically everyday. You will not fall back to where you were." Deaton smiled fondly at his student. "I have something for you. I ask that you remember you have magic. You seem to forget or maybe you still aren't used to using it, but it's there."

Deaton brought Stiles out from where Scott and Isaac were standing behind a large truck.

“There are plenty of supplies, books, and things I thought you might find of use.”

“Thank you Doc for everything.” Stiles said sincerely.

Stiles used his magic to lift the trunk and put it in the back of the Jeep.

Scott drove Isaac home.

Stiles went home. The pack said they would spend tonight at their houses and pack bags for the rest of break.

--

Stiles got home and went up to his room putting his grimoire on his desk. He turned around to dig some cloths out of his dresser when he heard a thump behind him. Stiles spun around and saw red eyes looking back at him.

“Derek!” Stiles screeched in surprise then he remembered he removed the Mountain Ash.

“You removed the Mountain Ash.”

Stiles nodded. “Who told you about it?” Stiles remembered the text he got but he didn't know Derek actually came by.

“No one. I found it when I came to check on you when you got out of the hospital.”

“Oh.” Stiles didn't know Derek came by. He wondered how many of the others did too.

“I've been back every night since. Hoping you removed the line.” Derek added looking down at his feet. He was standing in front of the window where he landed. Derek had wanted so badly to comfort Stiles through every nightmare. Stiles wanted to be alone, so Derek left him alone. Except, not really. Derek made sure he knew where Stiles was, that he was at least safe. Derek never left him alone, not really. Before all of this happened with Stiles he and Derek had been friends, but toeing on being more. Derek stayed close to Stiles as much as he could. He knew everything Stiles was going through, he never left Stiles alone, not really. Derek had even gone so far as to talk to the Sheriff about Stiles, though the Sheriff wasn't so sure at first. Derek just wanted to help Stiles and through talking to the Sheriff Derek learned a lot about Stiles.

“You could have used the front door.” Stiles said briskly. That means Derek heard everything. The panic attack, the nightmares, his screams. Stiles started to panic. Derek knew everything. He knows that if Derek would have approached him, Stiles would never have opened up. It wouldn't have helped. Stiles had needed to do it on his own, step by step.

“As long as that line was there I wasn't welcome and you know it.” Derek said harshly. He was right of course. It was like a giant ‘keep out you're not wanted here’ sign to the supernatural. To his pack.

Stiles only nodded.

“Did you mean to do it?” Derek asked. Stiles had no idea what the hell Derek was talking about. Derek was watching him again but he was being cautious, guarded.

“Mean what?” Stiles asked.

“To take on the roles you have in the pack? To help me in building a pack house? Stiles you got all the permits to re-build the house. Everything is there.” Derek was looking at Stiles like he was something shiny and new. Derek could see the lack of sleep, the toll of anxiety, the results of not eating enough clear as day on Stiles. Yet Stiles stood tall and strong even if he didn’t know it.

“We need a pack house. A proper one that won’t fall on our heads.” Stiles answered. Derek hadn’t let any tension leave his body. That wasn’t the real question he wanted answered.

“I agree, but Stiles you know what--”

“Yes, okay! I have read more and know more than probably a born werewolf knows about being a werewolf! I know that once I started training my magic with Deaton I was walking the path of an Emissary! Your Emissary.” Stiles voice started out loud but then just became determined. He wanted to protect his pack. “I want to protect my pack.”

Derek took a step towards him at that. “Your pack?”

Stiles stood his ground, “Yes, my pack, my pups, you’re my Alpha.” Stiles felt the need to protect them in every way he could think of.

“Stiles.” Derek whined out high and loud. That wasn’t what Stiles was expecting.

“What?” Stiles said confused by Derek who was giving him that *look* again. Stiles felt better than he had in a long time having Derek close again. It was like the final piece falling together. it felt right, everything wasn't fixed but he knew he could handle things now with his pack there to help him.

“There is a traditional place in the pack for someone like you,” Derek said then added, “Not just Emissary.”

“I know.” And Stiles did know. He decided he knew everything there is to know about werewolves because he had read every book he could find, the ones Deaton gave him, personal experience, and the Internet. Stiles felt like he was finally in a place he could talk about this with Derek. When Stiles knew he and Derek were getting closer, actual friends, but then everything changed when the Nogitsune attacked. With Derek here, with the pack finally pulling together, Stiles felt like he could handle this. Stiles, over the last few weeks, well and thoroughly placed himself in a lead role in the pack.

“You know.” Derek deadpanned. Derek had to make sure Stiles was okay with *all* of his roles in the pack before anything happened, good or bad. Stiles was what held the pack together. When Stiles hurt everyone hurt. He was the one that pulled the pieces of the pack back together and re-forged the pack bonds stronger than they were before.

“Stiles, I don’t think you get it.”

“Then explain it to me.” Stiles said in the tone of a child about to stop their foot.

“The reason the Nogitsune went after you is because none of us would have been able to kill you. You’re not the weakest. You’re the strongest. When you are hurt the pack is hurt. When the pack fell apart you pulled it back together piece by piece. You made the pack stronger than it ever was before. You are helping everyone get through. You are the reason Isaac is sleeping better and eating more. You are the reason everyone is starting to make their way back to themselves. Stiles you are what holds the pack together.” Derek needed to say it. He had been keeping an eye on Stiles over the last months worried sick about him. Derek didn’t know what to do or how to help. It turned out that Derek didn’t have to do anything Stiles figured his way through the darkness and brought the pack along with him. Stiles still isn’t back to himself. He may never be but he’s trying.

“You used real words in real sentences.” Stiles didn’t know what to say after Derek’s speech. He didn’t see himself as all that. He just wanted to protect the pack. Stiles wanted to protect Derek.

“That’s all you have to say.” Derek said with a fond smile. That was new too. Stiles didn’t think Derek did the whole fond thing. Or smile thing.

“I just want to protect the pack.” Stiles sighed sitting down on the edge of his bed. Guess he was having this conversation whether he wanted to or not.

Derek sat down next to him close enough to reach out and touch. “Stiles--”

“I know that I’m filling the role of Alpha Female. It took me some very meaningful looks from Peter to figure it out. Don’t tell him that.”

Derek snorted, “I won’t. You know the Alpha Female doesn’t mean you have to be a woman.”

“I’m aware. You think I’m worried about my masculinity because I’m pack mom? Do I strike you as the misogynistic type?” Stiles was having none of that he was proud to be pack mom.

Derek smiled at him, “I mean I figured. The ‘pack mom’ as you call it comes with a few things.” Derek pointed out. This was the rough part.

“I know.” Stiles read everything he could especially when he figured it out.

“They will answer and obey you just like they do me, maybe even more. Traditionally, the Alpha Female is the --”

“Mate to the Alpha. I know.” Stiles said staring at the wall across from him. He hadn’t had to stare at a wall to maintain some semblance of control in a while but this was a huge conversation for him and Derek.

“Do you want that with me?” Derek asked looking at Stiles profile.

Stiles froze then turned to look at Derek, “Do you want that with *me*?” Stiles asked incredulously. Stiles has had a crush on Derek for forever, but this was something real.

“My wolf has always recognized you as its True Mate.” Derek answered honestly. No going back now. Derek was full on using his words. Derek never expected to ever tell Stiles this, but he had pulled the pack back together.

“So what slamming my head into the steering wheel was your version of flirting because that’s-” Stiles started yelling at Derek with a sneer because seriously they could have been together ages ago when he felt soft lips cover his own effectively stopping his rant. Derek figured out how to get him to stop talking.

The kiss was perfect in that cliché way.

They broke away with smiles on their faces.

This was something else that felt right to Stiles. Them.

“You’re okay with this?” Derek asked. He was worried Stiles would push him away. He had kept an eye on Stiles, but didn’t know how to approach him. He was worried that he was moving too fast, that he should have waited.

“Yes, Derek. We are taking this slow. Even if we make it official and what not we are taking it slow with everything that happened and is happening now. Also, why didn’t you tell me before!?” Stiles said rather loudly for their close proximity.

“I didn’t know how.” Derek answered with a shrug as he looked down at his feet.

Stiles bumped his shoulder with Derek’s to get him to look back up. Stiles liked just being able to sit next to Derek.

“Ask me?” Stiles said as he watched dawning cross Derek’s features.

“Which one?”

Stiles only raised an eyebrow.

“Genim Stilinski will you accept your place as Alpha Female to I Derek Hale and to the Hale Pack.” Stiles had no idea how Derek knew his actual name, but then again he did have a tendency to for being a creeper.

“I, Genim Stilinski accept my place as Alpha Female to you Derek Hale and to the Hale Pack.” The effects were immediate. The pack bonds lit up shining brighter than ever before. The bond between Derek and Stiles was bright and warm and happy. They could feel the pack fall perfectly into place.

“Well, that was stupidly formal.” Stiles said breathlessly.

“Werewolf politics.”

“Werewolf politics.” Stiles repeated then said, “I guess we have to do that again?”

“Yeah for Emissary.”

“I was thinking we could start training as a pack? It would help everyone I think.” Stiles asked. Everyone has been coming to his training sessions but now Deaton said he didn’t need training. Stiles thinks he needs to learn how to use his magic to fight not just stand back and watch everyone else fight for him.

“We can do that.”

“Hey so does being your Mate explain why the pack always has to touch me in some way or is that a Werewolf thing?” Stiles asked. He had done a lot of research, but the pack seemed to really like to hug him when he was not doing well.

“Little of both.” Derek shrugged. He liked that Stiles smelled of pack. “How’s training with Deaton?”

“He gave me that,” Stiles said pointing at the trunk he has yet to open, “told me I was a High Mage and that I can’t learn anything more from him.”

“Stiles.” Derek breathed in. His mate was a High Mage.

“What?”

“Do you have any idea how powerful you are?”

“Apparently not seeing as everyone keeps asking me that.” Stiles replied blandly.

“Will training with the pack help you?”

“I want to learn how to fight. I want everyone in the pack to be able to protect themselves. We have these new shiny pack bonds might as well learn how to use them, right?” Stiles asked looking at Derek.

“I can teach you.” Derek replied.

“Okay.”

“So you didn’t look in the trunk?” Derek said looking at the trunk.

“Nope. Want to?”

Derek nodded. Stiles didn’t get up instead he used his Spark to lift the trunk over to him and flip open the lid. Inside were various jars, books, different pieces of materials he can use. The coolest thing though was the baseball bat which Stiles picked up and showed to Derek.

“What the hell is that?” Deaton asked.

“A baseball bat.” Stiles answered.

“No really, I never would have never thought. I mean, why can’t I even get near that thing?”

“Oh, probably the Mountain Ash and various other materials that are meant to hurt supernatural creatures.”

“Right. Of course.” Derek deadpanned.

--

Derek and Stiles went grocery shopping the next morning. Derek came before the rest of the pack.

“Are you sure we need three bags of potatoes?” Stiles asked Derek as he piled, even more, food into Stiles cart. They had already filled up Derek’s cart.

“You’re right we should grab another bag.” Derek said as he loaded another bag in. Stiles was honestly nauseous from the sheer amount of food they were buying.

Stiles was worried about how all of this was going to go. This was the first time the pack was all going to be together. He saw the flashes from the last time they were together. The fear. The pack falling apart. He broke the pack apart last time they were all together.

“Stiles hey look at me. Breathe.” Derek was directly in front of him holding his face with a panicked look on his face.

Stiles could feel his panic rising clawing at his throat, his hands were shaking, and his breathing was erratic. Shit he was having a panic attack. He gave himself a panic attack. Stiles stared at Derek as he tried to breathe. He focused on Derek’s voice, “You’re okay. Breathe. Today will be good.”

Eventually, Stiles was coming back to himself. He noticed that they were standing in a back hall that led to the bathrooms away from everyone else. He saw how Derek shielded him from anyone that walked by. He could feel his breath start to normalize. He felt his head clear and tiredness replace the panic. Stiles rested his head on Derek’s shoulder.

“Thank you.” Stiles whispered out.

“What happened?” Derek whispered.

“Starting thinking about if today went wrong.” Stiles whispered out, “I see these flashes of images of all the pain I—it caused.”

“What like triggers?” Derek asked concerned. Derek realized that every time Stiles was with one of them, that something was mentioned, that his brain jumped, he was reminded of the things the Nogitsune had done.

“They never leave.” Stiles whispered again.

“Have you talked to Deaton about them?” Derek asked concerned.

“Said they will go away in time.” Stiles responded in a tone that clearly said he didn’t believe a word of it.

“You can tell me about them, anytime. How about you try not to think this won’t work again. Today will work. It will be good.” Derek said confidently.

Stiles nodded at him. Stiles was grateful Derek didn’t push him any further on the images. He was the only one other than Deaton that Stiles told.

“Ready to get back to shopping?”

“Okay.” Stiles let Derek walk him back to their carts and watched as Derek got the rest of the items on their list.

Stiles was starting to feel better by the time they got back to his house.

--

They started cooking almost immediately trying to get everything done for dinner. They had so much to do which served as a great distraction for Stiles.

Lydia and Jackson showed up first.

“Stiles your house stinks worse than you.” Jackson said as a greeting with a smile on his face.

“Thanks, asshole.” Stiles replied as he bumped Jackson’s shoulder as Lydia gave Stiles a kiss on the cheek.

“Derek’s here?” Jackson asked looking at Stiles with a strange expression.

“We went grocery shopping this morning.” Stiles said before promptly turning around and walking back to the kitchen.

“Oh here! It’s my grandmother recipe for cranberry sauce.” Lydia said as she followed Stiles into the kitchen holding the container containing the sauce.

“Thank you.” Stiles said to her.

“Peter and Isaac just got here.” Derek told Stiles from his place as he peeled potatoes.

Stiles got to the door just in time to open it. Isaac launched himself into Stiles’ arms and Peter smiled at him. Behind them, Stiles saw Malia and Kira pull up to the house. They got out of Kira’s car and waved to him.

“Come on in!” Stiles called from the doorway.

When the girls got to him they each hugged him. Kira brought some kinds of food that he never heard of with her. He could hear everyone in the kitchen asking Derek what they needed help with.

Eventually, everyone showed up including Deaton and Chris.

“Thank you for having us.” Melissa said as she gave Stiles a hug before walking over to his dad.

“Glad everyone could come.” Stiles replied with a smile.

There was some rushing around and most of the pack were kicked out of the kitchen because Stiles and Derek were getting annoyed. But everything ended up on the table with no disasters.

Everyone sat around the table and ate. For some of them, it was the first full meal they have willingly wanted to eat.

They were all talking and laughing.

It felt like family.

--

Stiles had been used to training every day with Deaton. Derek decided to continue that. Derek and Stiles would train every day. The pack would join them three times a week.

When Derek and Stiles trained alone they were working on hand to hand combat. Sometimes Stiles would throw in some magic but for the most part, Derek wanted Stiles to learn how to fight hand to hand. The magic would come later.

On pack training days everyone was sparing and Lydia usually helped Stiles figure out magic and come up with ideas. Stiles finally started to feel comfortable with his magic. His Spark was willing to do anything for him. It came with ease. The pack worked together exceptionally well after a few weeks of training.

“So we need to make this official.” Derek said to Stiles.

“Ask me.” Stiles said with a grin.

“Do you Genim Stilinski accept your role of Emissary to I, Derek Hale and the Hale Pack.”

“I, Genim Stilinski accept my role as Emissary to you Derek Hale and the Hale Pack.” The pack cheered when Stiles finished. They were stronger than ever.

--

Of course, that’s when everything went downhill.

Beacon Hills Lacrosse Team made it to the Championships. The whole pack decided to go to the game to support their pack mates.

Just as the final whistle blew signaling of the game and a win for beacon Hills, Lydia collapsed from where she was standing watching the game holding a sign for Jackson.

People in the stands around them were looking between Lydia and the end of the game. Malia had caught Lydia before she fully hit the ground. The pack surrounded her but before they could try to figure out what was wrong her head was thrown back, her eyes opened and she let out the cry of a Banshee. Everyone turned to look at the commotion and the celebration stopped because of the scream.

While everyone was focused on Lydia, who was staring blankly with unfocused eyes at the sky tilting her head to the side. Lydia started to mutter something under her breathe.

The players were standing on the field and Scott and Jackson tried to get through to the rest of the pack and Lydia, but couldn't.

That was when Jackson collapsed. His eyes flashed and he started to lose control. The pack could feel his pain through the bond, like fire rising through his veins. They could feel Scott's panic. Something was wrong.

"Take her to the school, I'll get the others." Stiles rushed as he looked at Derek who nodded.

Derek picked up Lydia and took her into the school with Isaac, Danny, and Ethan. Malia and Kira stayed with Stiles to get Scott and Jackson. When the three got to the field they could see Scott, who was holding up Jackson, duck around the building.

Stiles, Malia, and Kira chased after them. When they rounded the corner they saw Jackson slumped against the building and Scott fighting Garrett. Garrett was using his lacrosse stick except it had a blade at the end.

"Kira. Malia. Help Scott! I'll get Jackson!" Stiles commanded.

The girls went to fight Garrett when Scott yelled, "The blade is poisoned!"

Stiles started towards Jackson when he was tackled to the ground from behind face down into the ground. He tried to get up but the weight on him wouldn't move. He pushed up and to the side smashing the person on his back into the wall of the building. He looked over and saw the girl, Violet. She was laying on her side with blood running from a wound on her head. He got up and tried to make his way to Jackson, whose pack bond was growing weaker.

He didn't make it very far. Violet came at him again looping a wire around his head from behind. He felt her pull at it, tightening it. He couldn't breathe as he felt it heat up. From far away he heard Scott howl. Stiles felt his eyes flash as he moved the heat from the wire and pushed it through into her hands.

Violet started to scream as the heat from her wire burned the skin from her hands where she was holding her weapon. She dropped it and started to scream. Stiles whipped around and smashed her into the wall making sure she was actually knocked out this time.

He ran to Jackson who was pale.

"Get me the blade!" Stiles yelled. Stiles looked over and saw Malia jump on Garrett from behind as Kira grabbed the stick from his hand and Scott held him down. Kira started running

to Stiles as soon as she got the stick.

When Stiles grabbed it he willed the metal to heat with the wolfsbane still on it. The metal started to drip. Stiles pushed the melting metal onto Jackson's side where the wound was. When he did he will the wolfsbane to be burnt and cleared from Jackson's system. Jackson's eyes flew open glowing blue as he howled.

Scott comes to Stiles side. Stiles looks over and sees Malia dragging Garrett to where he left Violet.

Jackson fell unconscious again.

Stiles pulled out his phone and called his dad.

"Are you okay?"

"We're all fine. Can you come to the back of the school I have two unconscious assassins back here."

"You're kidding me."

"I wish."

"They killed a few people before the found you guys."

"Shit."

"Language. I'm on my way get out of there you don't have to be involved. I'll call it in."

"Thanks, dad."

"Be careful."

"You too."

Stiles hung up with his dad and looked up at Kira, Scott, and Malia. "We need to get to the rest of the pack. Scott, Kira take Jackson and go. Malia, I need your help."

Stiles got up and started walking the opposite direction of the others with Malia following. He went to the two unconscious freshman assassins. "I'm going to move his body to make it look like they fought each other."

"Aren't you not supposed to do that?" Malia asked.

"Pretty much."

"Can't they tell others were here?" Malia said looking around.

"Not if I have anything to say about it." Stiles lifted Garrett's body with his magic and moved it a little. He then willed all of the evidence from the pack away. Magic could really work in their favor.

Scott and Kira did not get very far carrying an unconscious Jackson between them so Stiles and Malia caught up to them.

“Stiles your neck.” Kira said when she saw them catch up.

“It’s fine.” Stiles could feel his magic starting to heal it already, but he could only image how it looked. Stiles was running on pure adrenaline from seeing and feeling his pack attacked.

Together, they got into the school and found the rest of the pack standing by the doors and a dead deputy at their feet.

“Stiles.” Everyone looked up at him when Lydia whispered his name. It was the first thing she said since she screamed.

“Stiles!” Derek said as he ran over to him raising his hand to the side of his neck close enough to feel the heat of his skin but not to touch.

“It’s healing.” Stiles replied looking at Derek letting him know it was the truth, then looked over at the Deputy, “What happened there?”

“He followed us, tried to get Lydia and me. It didn’t go well for him.” Derek replied still looking at Stiles.

Stiles walked over to the Deputy, “He was at the station when I went to visit dad. He stopped me because he didn’t know who I was.” Stiles wondered why exactly the guy took a job in Beacon Hills.

“Why the hell are there assassins in Beacon Hills?” Danny asked aloud.

“Because of the dead pool.” Lydia answered from her seat against the wall.

“We need to get out of here and talk. I’m going to call my dad again. Everyone meet at my house?” Stiles asked.

“Scott take Jackson, Danny and Ethan to Stiles’. Kira takes Malia and Lydia. Isaac, you’re with me and Stiles.” Everyone started to their cars. Ethan and Danny carrying Jackson and Lydia being helped by the girls.

“Dad?”

“Yeah.”

“We got another body.”

“Dammit.”

“You know that officer that stopped me on my way to see you?”

“Officer Haigh?”

“Sure. Well, he’s unconscious in the school.”

“What happened?”

“He tried to kill Lydia and Derek.”

“Any cameras I need to wipe?”

“No.” Stiles said looking around the school.

“Okay. I’ll take care of it. Get out of here.”

“Thanks, dad.”

“Love you, kid.”

Stiles smiled, “Love you too dad.”

As soon as he hung up Stiles, Derek, and Isaac started to walk to the parking lot.

--

“It needs a key.” Danny said from his seat next to Ethan on the floor of the Stilinski House. Everyone was cleaned up and conscious now. Jackson healed, but weak. Lydia had grabbed the officers phone and found the e-mails to The Benefactor and a link to a page that required a key.

“It’s Allison.” Lydia whispered.

“What?” Isaac asked.

“The key is Allison.”

“How do you know what?” Scott asked.

“I’m a Banshee.” Lydia replied as if that explained everything. She knew people were going to die, she screamed and the voices came rushing in.

“Type it in Danny.” Stiles said. He read about Banshees and he trusted Lydia impeccably. She was right about this.

Danny typed in ALLISON. The dead pool came up.

“Okay back up what the hell is going on?” Scott ever the confused one asked.

“Someone put bounties on our heads. Now there are assassins who have been watching us for the last few months coming after us to get the money.” Derek simplified with a growl punctuating the end.

“Stiles?” Danny asked.

“Yeah.”

“Your worth the most.”

“Oh good.” Stiles was not prepared for this. The front door opened before he could get to far into his head.

“Does someone want to explain why some scientist just tried to poison me?” Peter asked as he walked into the living room. “What happened?”

“There’s a dead pool we’re all on it. Assassins.” Danny simplified.

“Right.” Peter said raising an eye brow at Derek then looked to Stiles who throat still had not healed fully.

“What happened?” Peter asked as he looked at Stiles, at his still healing throat.

“Violet tried to Thermal- cut my head off.” Stiles replied breezily staring at the wall across from him. He was not going to have a panic attack right now. He was trying to keep his breathing even.

“So we all have a bounty?” Jackson’s voice chimed in from the couch he was on.

“Everyone.”

“We have school tomorrow.” Kira stated.

“At least we will be together.” Stiles answered.

“Everyone should go home. Try to stay together. Kira, Malia can you stay with Lydia?” Stiles asked and they nodded.

“Jackson can stay with us.” Danny said.

“Isaac stay with Scott.” Derek said.

Everyone left Stiles house except Derek and Peter. “We’re staying here.”

--

Stiles went to get cleaned up. One look at his still healing neck and that was the last straw. He almost died. She almost took his head off. There are bounties on the pack. There are assassins after them.

Stiles heard the door burst open behind him and he felt strong arms wrap around him.

“We’re okay. You’re okay. We’re alive.” Derek started to repeat. “Your safe.” Stiles kept breathing hard and crying. They were sitting on the floor of the bathroom rocking back and forth a little. Eventually, Derek picked Stiles up and brought him to his room and put him on

his bed. Derek got Stiles out of his jeans and put on pajama bottoms on Stiles. Derek changed as well before he laid down and pulled Stiles into his arms.

“Why is it always us?” Stiles rasped out into Derek’s chest.

“I don’t know.”

--

Stiles woke up curled into Derek’s chest and his fist clenched around the fabric of Derek’s shirt. He started move but Derek only held tighter.

“Derek, school.” Stiles whined. He heard Derek’s sigh before he released Stiles.

“So when did this happen?” The Sheriff said from the doorway surprising Derek and Stiles.

“Dad!”

The Sheriff raised an eyebrow.

“Nothing happened.” Stiles said.

“Oh I know.” The Sheriff said then added, “and nothing is going to.”

“Dad I’m turning 18 next week!” Stiles whined.

“Then you can wait a week.” The Sheriff said.

“Yes, sir.” Derek said as he got up.

“I’m happy for you two, just not yet.”

--

They made it through a whole day without anything going wrong. After school everyone came back to the Stilinski house and tried to figure out who was The Benefactor. They had called Deaton and Chris Argent to let them know what was going on as well.

“So Stiles has the biggest bounty?” Scott asked.

“Yeah. Then Derek and Lydia.”

“Why did they attack me?” Jackson asked.

“You survived being a Kanima.” Stiles replied as gently as he could. No one talked about that particular thing.

“Right.”

--

Two nights later, Stiles and Derek were practicing hand to hand again because it came in handy with Violet. They had been training for around an hour when Derek stopped mid punch and pushed Stiles to the ground. Stiles started to sit up and looked at Derek.

Derek had a tomahawk lodged into his chest and through his back.

Stiles turned to see where it came from only to see a guy walking towards them with no mouth. He was walking through the tree line and into the clearing.

Stiles eyes turned white as he stood up to his full height. He could feel his Spark vibrating under his skin ready. The Mute, Stiles decided quickly, started to pull another tomahawk out but before he could throw it a vine wrapped around The Mute's arm and hand. Vines started to encase The Mute.

Stiles turned to Derek who was having trouble standing and rushed to his side. He pulled out his phone.

"Dad you need to come to the Hale House."

"The burnt one?"

"Get here now." Stiles said before he hung up. Peter was with his dad so he would probably be coming too.

"Stiles." Derek tried to say but he had blood starting to run from his mouth.

"No talking." Stiles said as he got Derek to lean against a tree. Stiles grasped the wood handle of the tomahawk and put a hand on Derek's shoulder. He pulled. The tomahawk came free and Derek roared. Stiles dropped the tomahawk and started to pour his Spark into Derek to help him heal. The tomahawk has sliced through most of Derek's right side and nicked his spine. Werewolf healing would take too long.

Stiles heard cars pull up behind him.

"Stiles!" The Sheriff called.

"The vines." Stiles replied through grit teeth.

He could hear other voices but not what they were saying. He released the vines holding The Mute. He heard his dad say, "You have the right to remain silent." He snorted. It was the last thing he really remembers. He could feel the pack around him but not much else.

--

Stiles doesn't know where he is. Last thing he remembers was Derek. Stiles tried to sit up but he was pushed back down.

"Not yet." He heard Deaton say.

"Derek."

“He’s fine.”

Stiles looked around and figured out that he was in his room. The pack was also in his room along with Deaton and his dad. Derek was unconscious beside him.

“You saved him. His injuries would have taken too long to heal.” Deaton said as Stiles looked over Derek for the third time. “Used a lot of magic to do it too.”

“You don’t say.” Stiles sarcastically answered.

“Don’t you do that again!” Lydia screeched at him from her perch on the edge of his side of the bed.

“I will do anything to save you.” Stiles answered seriously. Next thing he knew there was a pile of people on him and Derek.

“You know this is considered a puppy pile, right?” Stiles asked with a smile on his face. Everyone was safe.

“Shut up.” Stiles heard Jackson grumble from somewhere in the pile.

“What happened to The Mute?” Stiles asked his dad who was watching the scene before him with amusement.

“Jail.”

“Good.”

“Should I expect more of this?”

“More assassins or more puppy piles?” Stiles asked, he was getting tired again and he felt safe with the pack.

“Both.”

“Probably more assassins. Definitely more puppy piles.” Stiles answered honestly.

The Sheriff snorted, “Get some sleep kid.”

--

The next time Stiles woke up he was alone. Well, he thought he was when he looked over he saw Derek still beside him but this time Derek was awake.

“Hi.” Derek said with a smile.

“Hey.” Stiles said with a light laugh. “How are you feeling?”

“Healed. Your magic feels warm.” Derek answered then asked, “You?”

“Good.”

“Stiles, if you--” Derek started,

“Don’t tell me not to save you. I knew I could so I did. I always will.” Stiles said as he lifted his chin defiantly as well as he could from his position.

“Just try to not pass out next time.” Derek sighed at him.

“Deal.” Stiles smiled at Derek.

“Thank you. For saving me.”

“Couldn’t have you dying before I’m legal now could I?” Stiles asked with a smirk on his face.

“No, of course not.” Derek said before he leaned in the rest of the way lightly kissing Stiles.

“Hey super nose, do you smell food down there?” Stiles asked.

“Why?”

“Because I’m hungry, but I’m not getting up unless there’s food Sourwolf.” Stiles laughed when Derek scowled at the use of his nickname.

Derek and Stiles got up and went down stairs and were greeted by the pack with hugs and shoulder bumps. The pack ate together.

“Who do you think The Benefactor is?” Scott asked as they were eating.

“I don’t know.” Derek answered as he scowled at his food. Derek could think of any number of people who wanted revenge but there were also so many new possibilities. Derek wanted his pack safe.

“Danny, did you get anything from that guy’s phone?” Stiles asked. They gave the officers phone to Danny to see if he could back trace anything.

“No. I keep running into walls and every time I get through one another appears.” Danny said as he picked at his food.

“That’s okay.” Stiles said.

“Should we continue what we usually do?” Kira asked.

“We still have two more days of school this week and we were going to meet at the library Friday.” Isaac said.

Stiles looked to Derek who nodded before he answered, “We aren’t missing school and we can still meet up at the library, but stick together like we have been. No one goes anywhere alone.” Stiles answered.

“Yes, mom.” Isaac said from where he was sitting beside Stiles. Isaac stared at his food when he realized what he said.

Stiles on the other hand started to laugh. Then looked to Derek, “I was right!”

The rest of the pack were looking at the two.

“You bet on who would call you mom first?” Isaac asked shyly.

“No, Derek disagreed with me.” Stiles said through his laughter. “Don’t be a grumpy wolf of course I know my pups!” Stiles said happily.

“Idiot.” Derek said fondly as he went back to his food with the *look* once again on his face.

--

Derek and Peter were staying at the Stilinski’s so Derek drove Stiles to school the next day. The pack stuck together as much as possible. They didn’t think anyone else was after them in the school but better to be safe than sorry.

They got through the school day without a problem and came back to Stiles’ to do homework. They ended up watching movies and hanging out. They were pack. They were a family. Stiles felt the best he had in a long time surrounded by people he knew would do anything for him. He still got too deep into his own head as did the others but there was always someone there to pull them back.

Stiles refused to lose them. To lose any more of his family.

--

Friday had gone much like the day before. It was calm.

The pack had already planned a study session in the library so they all met there after school with snacks and drinks even though that wasn’t allowed. They were the only ones in the library which wasn’t unusual.

“We need to leave.” Stiles suddenly said as he pulled out his phone texting Derek, Peter, his dad, and Chris.

“Stiles, what’s going on?” Ethan asked in confusion. Everything was fine a few moments ago.

“There is something powerful coming this way.” Stiles answered.

Before they could leave the earth began to quake. The walls and ceiling were crumbling, books were flying around the room, and the windows exploded. Stiles motioned the pack behind him. The wall where the windows had been, was gone and in its place stood a wall of people. Stiles could see the glowing red eyes of the Alphas who had been circling. He could feel the magic of the Witches tearing the room apart.

It was a standoff. There were close to ten Alphas each with two or more Betas. The Witches varied. He saw one coven of Elementals. Another coven was already taking a step back at the sight of him. The coven he was most worried about fit every stereotype said about evil Witches. They were hags, dressed in rags, moles and all. Unfortunately, they had the most power leaking off of them. Stiles was not impressed. He was scared shitless, but they could have been less cliché. Stiles was about to say something when a voice from behind the row of pawns said, "Bring me their heads and you get paid."

One group of Witches appeared right in front of Stiles and made to grab him. Before they got anywhere Scott lunged and tackled the front one. Isaac and Malia followed knocking out or killing the Witches, they weren't particularly concerned.

From then on they kept coming at the pack. Kira and Ethan fought an Alpha while Jackson fought the Betas. Stiles took out anyone he came across, even if he just threw them back. The problem was the Witches. They wanted his power not just his head. There were too many for them, they were outnumbered and spread too thin.

The doors of the library burst open and Derek howled before jumping into the fray. Peter went over to help Scott take down an Alpha and her Betas.

When they came in Stiles broke free from the fighting and ran over to Chris and his dad, pulling Danny with him.

Stiles threw a bottle of Mountain Ash into the air and believed it would keep his pack safe, and that it would not be broken, "No one can get you as long as you are in the circle. Shoot from here." Stiles said before he ran back into the battle.

The Sheriff and Chris already had Wolfsbane bullets, but Chris handed a gun to Danny. Danny asked on their first day of pack training if he could learn. The Sheriff and Chris had each taken to teaching him how to protect himself. The three of them stood in the protective circle Stiles made for them and started firing.

Stiles found Derek tearing his way through the Werewolves. The field was even with the arrival of the rest of the pack. Stiles watched as Derek took control of the pups, giving them orders. They all set off to follow his commands and they got the upper hand. Everyone was wounded in one way or another but the other side was much worse off. Any time some needed extra time to heal they would head closer to the circle he made for the humans. The humans could hold off any attackers long enough for the pack to heal. Lydia had been training with her Banshee scream and hand to hand like Stiles was. She had no problem taking care of herself. Stiles watched Derek fight another Alpha and win. Stiles focus was brought back to the Witches when an entire table was thrown at him. Time to get his magic on.

Stiles let his magic flow. He had never felt more free. A small coven of five Witches circled him each casting various elemental spells at him. He blocked them all with ease and started firing back their own spells at them only much more powerful. They were not the ones with a large amount of power and the land of Beacon Hills was not theirs to draw from he cut them off. He was the Emissary of the Hale Pack.

Stiles felt it when Isaac was impaled on a sword. He could feel Isaac's pain and panic. The Witches had done it to grab Stiles attention and it worked. Stiles watched as they pulled Isaac between them and started to take his life energy from him. Stiles raced forward and willed Isaac's energy back from the Witches grasp and into Isaac. One of the Witches appeared behind him the only reason he knew was because of the knife lodged between his ribs.

"Gotcha." The Witch breathed into his ear from behind.

"Let my pup go." Stiles said.

"We don't want him anyway. You have the power we want. We had to wait so long for you to mature into your power the least you could do is make it easy on us now."

"Not a chance, you want it? Then come and get it."

The Witch holding Isaac let him go leaving the sword in him. Jackson held him as Kira took the sword out. The Witches surrounded Stiles. The books, furniture, and glass shards were flying around them. Then the chanting started. They each cut open their hands. Mouths formed where they had cut their hands. One at a time they took their knives and cut him then started to feed off of Stiles. Distantly Stiles could hear someone screaming his name. The problem for the Witches was that Stiles had willed his blood to turn to Mountain Ash when it touched the Witches. The Witches ingested their own death. As each Witch started to fade, their power went with them. The objects flying around the room started to drift to a top before landing on the ground one again.

"Stiles!" He heard his name screamed from various pack members.

Before he could say anything to them he heard clapping. He looked to where the enemy had started its attack from. A figure stepped from the dark and into the settling dust.

Standing there very much not dying of black goo from Mountain Ash poisoning was none other than Gerard Argent.

He wasn't alone either he had a coven.

Gerard had two people on each of his flanks. On Gerard's left were two men. One had long hair and was dressed similar to the Elementals in flowy earthy clothing. The other had short blonde hair and was dressed in a cloak. How cliché. The two on his right flank were women. One again looked like an Elemental even the color of her glowing eyes was green. The other looked like she would fight right in with the coven that tried to eat him. Dark magic. Awesome. Gerard went and found himself some seriously strong magic workers.

"You went and got yourself some magic. You're the Benefactor." Stiles said over the growls from his wolves. For Gerard to have magic he must be wearing a something holding it, a dark object or something that is bound to him.

"Smart boy. I have magic, much like yourself." Gerard answered with a cold glare.

"Nope, this was always in me."

“Then why didn’t you use it to save my granddaughter?” Gerard countered. Stiles couldn’t answer that. He just couldn’t. He should have been able to save them all. He should have been strong enough to save Allison.

“Allison’s death was not Stiles fault.” Chris said as he stepped up along with the rest of the pack to surround Stiles. Lydia all but draped herself along his side. Derek stood next to him.

“Then whose fault was it if not his!” Gerard screamed at the pack. He was shaking with rage. His eyes kept flashing an orange hue.

“The Nogitsune killed Allison and everyone else. Not Stiles.” Derek answered through loud growls. The rest of his wolves were growling.

“Let’s ask Stiles who he thinks killed Allison. Stiles?” Gerard said with a monstrous grin on his face.

Stiles stepped forward. “I feel responsible for everyone that died due to the Nogitsune. I probably always will.” Stiles answered.

“You heard him!” Gerard yelled raising his arms up. The Witches surrounding Gerard all had weapons appear and stood in defensive positions. “Kill them all!”

Once again the attacks started to come from everywhere. The two Elementals tried to pull from the land, from the ley lines but were denied. The two of them looked to Gerard. He beckoned them forward using his magic. He took out two knives and stabbed each of the Elementals effectively taking their power. The other two Witches didn’t even blink at the loss of two coven members. Stiles wondered how many magic users Gerard killed.

It was three against the pack.

“Derek take the hag. Peter, Isaac, Scott go with him.” He said nodding at them. Then he looked at the other Witch watching him move forward, “Jackson, Lydia, Malia, Kira, take blondie.” Blondie spit at the use of the nickname. “Ethan stay with Danny, dad, and Chris.”

“But--” Danny started to say.

“I’ve got Gerard.”

Stiles chose right for which Witch Derek and his group to fight. They had the Witch surrounded and she was getting frustrated that they kept dodging everything she threw at them. He also made the right choice based on blondie’s tattoo. Stiles had guessed blondie liked to use fire and he was right. The dragon tattoo peeking out of his sleeve was a dead giveaway. Derek and Peter were better off not dealing with that. Blondie currently was using whips made of fire to keep the pack away from him. Kira kept getting slashes in on him when Lydia distracted him with a scream.

Stiles looked to Gerard, who was slowly making his way closer.

“You don’t have to do this Gerard.” Chris tried to reason. All of this destruction and loss because of ill placed blame.

“He killed your daughter! You should be on MY side not his!” Gerard yelled. As he raised his hands and hurricane force winds rushed at them. Stiles put up a wall blocking any magic from harming the pack. He separated them from himself leaving Gerard and him to have it out.

Stiles knew he needed to find the talisman giving Gerard power. For Gerard to have the magic respond so easily it was probably under his skin.

“Show me what you got.” Stiles taunted as he stepped up.

Gerard came at him with fury. Stiles nearly missed blocking some inky black spell that smelt of death. Spells were getting thrown at him faster than he could move. Dark magic was mixed with various elements which shouldn’t happen because Gerard didn’t have access to the land. Then it dawned on him what Gerard was using. It was a dark object passed down for generations since the Maiden of Gevaudan slayed the Beast. He must have the blade only it probably wasn’t a blade anymore it probably had been made into something else since.

“Your using the blade that killed the Beast of Gevaudan!” Stiles said to Gerard as he kept firing spells at Stiles.

“Stiles! It was Allison’s necklace the one Kate gave to her!” Chris yelled over the commotion of the battles around him.

Stiles knew where it was, now he had to get closer to Gerard. He needed to get close enough to cut the chunk of metal from his chest.

Stiles wished he had his bat that Deaton made him. Stiles bent down dodging a spell and use the opportunity to pull out the knife he had hidden around his ankle. Stiles rolled to dodge yet another spell. The woman Derek was fighting screamed as her head was separated from her body curtesy of the Hale’s. The scream was enough of a distraction that Stiles got into Gerard’s personal space and started finally dueling with his own spells.

Derek and the rest went over to finish off blondie as Stiles had called the Witch. When they got to the other side of Stiles and Gerard, Derek nodded to Lydia who let out her strongest scream yet. The Witch was slammed back into one of the crumbling pieces of the library. Chris was the one to finish him off with a single bullet.

The pack turned to the battle between Gerard and Stiles. There was a fury of spells being fired off but any strays hit the wall Stiles had set up to protect them. The problem was it also kept them from helping him. Stiles was on his own.

“I should have killed you in that basement when I had the chance!” Gerard screamed at Stiles. Stiles saw the flashes of images: getting beat, Erica, Boyd, he couldn’t explain it to his father. Stiles remembered the pain Gerard caused him.

Stiles could feel his energy starting to ween. He had been fighting for so long now but he had to do this. Stiles decided it was time to use some of his Emissary power. He pulled on the ley lines of his land, of the Hale land. He could feel the power come to him willingly ready to help him take out the threat to the pack. He pulled on the pack bonds for more energy. If he

was going to get near Gerard, he needed an impenetrable shield against the spells that never stopped.

Stiles felt the power of the Hale land and Pack surround him, protecting him. He walked up to Gerard who started to panic when none of his spells got anywhere near Stiles. The orb of power wouldn't let the spells anywhere near Stiles. Stiles walked up to Gerard and took one good right hook at him. The power surround Stiles followed the punch and Gerard was knocked flat on his back.

Stiles kneeled over Gerard and started to carve the talisman out from its place in the surface of the left side of Gerard's chest. The image of Gerard beating him in the basement flashed across his mind. The last thing he was expecting when he got it out was for Gerard to stab him in the stomach with a knife.

"Stiles!" Derek yelled when he saw what happened. The pack rushed to his side. Gerard was hand cuffed and left while Derek caught Stiles as he started to fall forward as he held his stomach.

"I did it." Stiles said as he started to lose focus.

"Stiles stay awake! We are going to get you to the hospital." Derek picked Stiles up and ran out of the rubble and headed for the Camaro. The Sheriff loaded Gerard into the back of the cruiser and called the rest in for his deputies to figure out. Everyone got in their cars the Sheriff in the front with the lights on.

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The first nurse they saw was Melissa. She immediately got some other nurses and got a bed. Stiles was taken where the rest couldn't follow. The wolves listened to his weak heartbeat. All they could do now was wait.

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Stiles was in surgery for four hours.

The wolves heard his heart stop twice.

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Melissa continued to come out and give them updates.

This time she came out in her usual scrubs instead of the minty green operation scrubs.

"He made it." Melissa said with a tired but joyful smile.

"Is he going--" The sheriff started to ask.

"He will make a full recovery." She said and watched everyone start to relax just slightly.

"He has already started to heal faster than average."

“When can we see him?” Derek asked. Everyone was anxious to be near Stiles, see for themselves that Stiles was going to be okay. He was one half of their Alpha pair. Derek’s wolf was essentially pacing erratically since they got to the hospital. Everyone was exhausted and needed to be around each other.

“Follow me.” Melissa said as she waved them all behind her. She was breaking all kinds of rules but she knew it would help Stiles more than anything.

“He’ll be out for a while. The doctors can’t explain his overwhelming fatigue. I can’t say when he will wake up.” Melissa said to the pack as they made themselves comfortable around Stiles. The Sheriff took the chair to Stiles’ right and Derek the one on his left. The others spread out around the various chairs and table in the large room Melissa somehow got them.

“Should we call Deaton?” The Sheriff asked as he looked at Stiles. Stiles was pale and the dark circles under his eyes were back after they had just started to lighten some.

“Good idea. Scott, can you call him.” Derek asked. Derek hated seeing Stiles this way. Deaton would probably be able to give them a more definitive answer when Stiles will make up based on the use of magic. Derek wanted his mate happy, safe, and healthy.

Everyone else had healed but no one had left the hospital to get cleaned up yet.

“Deaton said he will be by tomorrow morning.” Scott chimed in telling the pack.

“Okay.” Derek said looking around the pack. They needed to get cleaned up. Their clothes were torn, covered in blood, and dirt. “We need to get cleaned up, Peter take Isaac back to the cabin to clean up and grab me some clothes. Everyone else has to go get cleaned up at some point tonight.”

“I’m not leaving.”

“You can’t be serious.”

“We’re not leaving him.”

Everyone voiced their opinions at once.

“Derek’s right everyone looks like they walked out of horror movie. Go get cleaned up, take a nap, eat. It’s what Stiles would want.” The Sheriff chimed in looking tired. It’s the second time in just half a year that he stayed in the hospital with his son for unordinary causes.

“Scott can you stop at the house and grab some cloths for both of us. When Stiles wakes up he’s going to want to get the hell out of here.”

Derek felt himself relax slightly when the Sheriff said when not if. Stiles will wake up. Stiles will go home.

The pack started to leave group by group although unwillingly.

“Derek what’s on his arm?” The Sheriff asked looking intently at Stiles inner arm above his elbow just below the hospital gown.

Derek got up and gently lifted the sleeve. “It looks like a rune.” Derek said staring at Stiles arm. He wondered how many tattoos Stiles had.

“What are they for?” The Sheriff asked.

“You can ask Deaton or Stiles for a full answer, but mostly to help channel magic or to protect, to enhance something like speed.” Derek answered, Stiles told Derek some things about the magic while they trained.

The Sheriff nodded as he sat back in the chair.

“I’m not really a fan of you with my son.” The Sheriff said as he watched Derek put Stiles sleeve back down.

“Sir-”

“But I know one thing.” The Sheriff paused to make sure Derek was looking at him, “You will always try to protect him.”

Derek nodded. It was no secret the Sheriff wasn’t a fan, he arrested him a few times.

“Stiles will be eighteen on two days and I can’t stop him from being with you.” The Sheriff continued, “I trust him. He chose you. Don’t screw it up, son.” The Sheriff said smiling at Derek. He knew Derek had come a long way.

“I will try my best, sir.” Derek answered with a small smile. From the Sheriff that’s probably as close to a blessing as Derek was going to get.

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The pack came back at various time. Some just showered and came back to sleep in the uncomfortable hospital chairs. Kira went out in the morning and got food for everyone and Derek pretty much forced them to eat.

The Doctors had no idea why Stiles was so fatigued. Deaton did.

“He used an exceptional amount of magic and when he used his up he channeled the land and the pack for more.” Deaton said as he examined Stiles.

“He’ll get his magic back. Right?” Scott asked.

“In time. He will wake up in a few days, but he will be pretty weak for a couple of weeks until his magic grows back. Right now, any magic that grows is being channeled into healing him.”

The tension in the room relaxed. The pack was worried still, of course, but this was good news.

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Stiles hurt everywhere.

He tried to blink his eyes open but the white room was extremely bright.

“Stiles.” He heard his name and tried to turn his head. Eventually, his eyes adjusted and he saw his dad giving him a relieved smile.

Before he could say anything a pink cup with a white straw entered his field of vision. He looked up as he took a drink and saw Lydia. He started to laugh lightly because laughing hurt too much.

He looked around the room at his pack, “Hey guys.” Everyone looked relieved. They were all standing around the room looking at him but it’s didn’t feel like before, like he was burdening them. He knows they are there for him because they want to be.

“How do you feel?” His dad asked.

“Like I was hit by a truck.” Stiles answered. He felt a hand on his arm and looked over to Derek who was pulling his pain away.

“Thanks.” Stiles said as he looked over at Derek. Derek looked as relieved like the rest of them, but still worried like something was bothering him.

“Stiles you're awake!” Melissa said as she walked into the room.

“How long was I out?” Stiles ask curiously.

“Two days.” Melissa answered checking him over. “You’re all healed, we were waiting for you to wake up.” Melissa said as she continued her check-up.

“Guess exhaustion due to the overuse of magic isn’t something you learn in medical school.” Melissa gave him a pointed look.

“Not quite. I will get your discharge papers. I’m sure you don’t want to spend your birthday in the hospital.” She said smiling as she left.

“It’s my birthday?” Stiles asked dumbly.

“Yep.” The Sheriff said smiling at his son. When Stiles looked over the Sheriff continued, “If you ever do that again, I swear—I do not want to be sitting in a hospital wondering if you’re going to be okay kid.” The sheriff said getting emotional. The Sheriff didn’t know everything that went on in the operating room but based on the wolves’ reaction he can guess that Stiles almost didn’t make it a few times.

“I think I have a plan for that,” Stiles said looking over to Derek with a knowing smile, “But I can’t do anything until my magic is back, and the full moon and a bunch of other things.”

“Stiles.” The Sheriff sighed.

“What happened after I passed out?” Stiles asked.

“Everyone is in jail, Eichen, or a grave.” Derek answered. Derek wanted them all dead for hurting his pack, his mate.

“Good.” Stiles hoped none of them got away. He has had enough people after him. That made him think of everything he caused. This all happened because of him. The reason the library was destroyed, the reason, his pack got hurt, the reason they were in the hospital now. All him.

Stiles didn’t even realize, until Derek was gripping the back of Stiles neck to get him to look at Derek, that he was having a panic attack. His hands were shaking, his breathing was fast more air out than in, and he was crying. Everything was his fault, what Gerard said to him kept replaying in his head. He saw flashes of images of everything that happened. Jackson stabbed, Lydia in a trance, Derek hurt, Isaac stabbed, the battle, everything.

The whole pack crowded around him to touch him somehow. Isaac curled up to his side, Lydia and Malia on the other, Derek holding on to him, the others touching his arms or legs.

“Stiles, hey come back to us. We are safe because of you. You didn’t cause this.” Derek repeated. Derek hated seeing Stiles this way. He had no idea how to help. Every time he saw Stiles like this it was different.

Stiles could feel the pack. He focused on them. On Derek. After a while he finally started to get in more air than before. The heart monitor started to stop beeping so loud. He looked up at Derek and nodded.

“Can we leave now. I don’t want to be here.” Stiles whispered. He hated the hospital. Too many things had happened here.

“Sure.” The Sheriff said. He was glad Stiles had his pack to help him through all of this.

“Everyone meet at the Hale House in an hour.” Derek said to the group. They all looked like they wanted to ask why but no one did.

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Derek drove Stiles to the Hale House.

Stiles was exhausted even more now due to the panic attack, but he had an idea about why Derek wanted the pack to meet here.

He was right.

There were workers all around the area. The frame of the new Hale House was up. When Stiles opened the door he could smell fresh wood.

“Happy birthday.” Derek said when he came over to Stiles holding out a small box. Stiles leaned back against the hood of the Camaro and opened the gift. Inside was a ring. Stiles

could feel magic coursing through the ring. He looked at Derek with a raised eyebrow. Derek was looking back at him with that *look* again. Like Stiles hung the moon itself.

“I’m not proposing. It was my mother’s passed down through the generations of Hale’s. It is the ring of the Alpha’s mate. It’s yours.” Derek said. He was hoping Stiles wouldn’t freak out.

“It has magic.” Stiles said as he looked at the ring further. It was beautiful but simple. Packed full of old magic. The ring had two wolves carved out each with a small ruby as the eyes.

“You can feel that?” Derek asked amazed.

“Yeah. It’s warm, comforting.” Stiles answered as he looked at the ring on his finger. “Thank you.” Stiles said looking at Derek.

“It belongs to you.” Derek said.

“So mate of mine. When’s the house going to be done?” Stiles asked as he rested his head on Derek’s shoulder watching the house be built.

“About two months. I’m sure Lydia will want to decorate. I was hoping you would go with her. The house is for you after all.” Derek knew this was the pack house, it was for the pack, but Stiles will hopefully move in with him one day.

“It’s the pack house.” Stiles pointed out.

“It’s yours. Ours.” Derek said writing his arm around Stiles, who was ready to fall asleep despite the noise.

“You’ll let me move in?” Stiles asked sleepily.

“Whenever you’re ready.”

“You’re being very lovey you know that right?” Stiles asked. He was still getting used to his relationship with Derek. He knows it’s what he wants, but he still has a lot of his own shit to deal with too.

“I love you, Stiles.” Derek said honestly. It was the truth. Stiles figured out that that was what the *look* meant. Love. Stiles thought his face probably looked the same.

Stiles froze and lifted his head to look at Derek. It wasn’t a lie. Stiles smiled at him, “I love you too.”

“Mom and dad are cute.” Isaac said from behind them. The whole pack was there looking at them.

“Hey guys.” Stiles wasn’t even surprised by them. He didn’t really have the energy for it. He felt Derek kiss him on the temple and looked back at the house.

“So when did this start?” Lydia asked.

“Stiles drew up the papers and gave them to Derek before Thanksgiving.” Peter answered. Peter was happy for them. He also noticed the ring Stiles wore. It was a good place for the family heirloom.

“Stiles?” Scott asked. Everyone was shocked to see brand new wood instead of the old burnt out shell. The house was going to be bigger than the last. More like a manor to fit all of them.

“We needed a pack house.” Stiles answered from Derek’s side then added, “We needed a home.”

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Stiles birthday was three months ago. It was a quiet affair with the pack. He received gifts, had cake, and curly fries. After they left the construction site of Hale House, the pack piled into his house, made a fort out of all the blankets and pillows he owned, and watched movies. He counted it as one of his best birthdays.

Today, it was the new moon. Stiles’ magic had grown back slowly because of how much he used the night he fought Gerard.

Stiles told Derek about his plans long before any of that happened. Stiles read every magic book he could get his hands on. The Nemeton books were particularly informative. He read that a Nemeton on pack land could be used by the pack for protection. He added his own spells and runes to the ward as well. He wanted to give his pack, his territory, and Beacon Hills it’s best chance of survival.

“You sure you’re ready for this?” Derek asked from beside Stiles. They were at the Nemeton with the whole pack.

“I’m sure.” Stiles said looking at Derek, “You know how long I have planned this and how many times I went over it.”

“Whenever you’re ready.”

Stiles had the pack stand in a circle around the Nemeton. He pulled on the pack bonds then he pulled on the bond he and Derek shared as mates and Emissary and Alpha. Derek stood on the Nemeton across from Stiles, who also stood on the Nemeton, under the new moon. They stood in the circle of runes Stiles carved into the tree and on the center which was a triskele. He pulled out a knife slicing his hand to draw blood and did the same to Derek’s. The blood dripped onto the triskele. Stiles pulled on his Spark and willed the wards to protect his pack and territory. He pushed the wards out to the territory’s boarder. It might not keep everything out, but Stiles developed the strongest wards possible.

The pack felt their bonds strengthen even more. They had continued the study sessions, training, and Bestiary work. They were always together. The pack had only grown closer in the last months. The pieces left after the Nogitsune were being pulled together.

Stiles made sure to focus on protecting the pack house. The Hale Manor had been finished and the pack spent most of its time there. Stiles wanted to make sure nothing would happen

to it like what happened before. The Sheriff agreed to let Stiles move in with Derek after High School. Stiles decided to go to college, but he was going to do it online, he decided. Pack and magic came first. Until he graduated, he was working making a business for himself, helping other packs, and various creatures with their supernatural problems. The Hale Pack was slowly going to become one of the most well-known and respected packs with each creature they helped if Stiles had any say in the matter. He wanted the Hale Pack to live up to its legacy, but in their own way.

Most of the pack decided to move in at some point after they all finished High School. Isaac was the first because Derek was his legal guardian. And Peter was there too. Stiles made sure everyone would have a room, a place of their own in the Pack House. Stiles pulled wards around the manor making sure it would be protected, that the pack would be protected.

Stiles felt the land, the pack, and the magic take to each other. He made it so the Ley Lines on the land would feed his wards keeping the strong instead of him redoing them ever year or so. The land works with the Ley Lines, he connects the pack to the Ley Lines and the Pack is connected to the land, protecting it. Everything is interconnected and works to protect each other. Stiles put several spells he read about into one and added his own twists to them. Stiles no longer feared the magic within him.

He opened his eyes to see the wolves eyes glowing, along with Kira and Malia. Stiles knew his eyes were glowing as well. Derek threw back his head and howled. Everyone else followed. Stiles and Derek stepped down from the Nemeton.

“Anyone up for pizza?” Stiles asked the pack. Magic took a lot out of him. Everyone in the pack had come a long way. Stiles still had terrible images cross his mind, but they were slowly being replaced by good memories instead of bad. It wasn’t always perfect for him and the pack, but they were happy.

“We will order on the way home.” Derek said with a smile before he kissed Stiles. He still saw flashes of images, but now there are more good memories than bad. Stiles pulled the pack around him and together. They could heal together. Stiles would see the first time Derek kissed him, the time the whole pack went shopping for their rooms, laughing in the library together. Together, the pack was family.

Stiles was already home. Wherever the pack was, he was home.

End Notes

Stiles has a lot of panic attacks. Please don't read if you are easily triggered. There is also mentions of depression as in symptoms. There's also some graphic fight scenes.

This was only going to be 10k long... I always write more than intended.

Thank you for reading! Comments are much appreciated!

Find me on tumblr at [fireflystiles](https://fireflystiles.tumblr.com)

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!