

Advanced Vocabulary

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Advanced Vocabulary

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Summary

“Why do you like me?” Derek asks as he folds his shirt and drops it onto Stiles’ computer chair.

“For your body,” Stiles says.

Notes

Derek's feelings kind of took over this. Like weeds.

Warning for mention of past Derek/Kate and Derek's trauma as a result of their relationship.

- Translation into Русский available: [Advanced Vocabulary](#) by [pillsbury](#).

Derek never liked homework. And he gets that it's one of those things that no one really likes, but he truly dreaded it when he was in school. He dreaded it so much he actually clawed his backpack to pieces once on the way up the hill from the bus stop, and told his mom a mountain lion ate it. He was eight.

It didn't get better in high school, no matter how well he got along with his teachers. Sometimes that made it worse. It was like they felt bad for him for not *getting it*.

He's always been more comfortable with his hands and his body, doing things that make sense. Not math problems about trains or essays about books he can't taste.

This is why Derek is surprised by how much he enjoys watching Stiles do his homework. Stiles doesn't find homework as entertaining; he grumbles about it and fights an endless cycle of distractions on his computer. But Stiles is good at it. His mind is sharp and quick. Challenges make him happy, even when he's bitching about them.

Derek doesn't care if Stiles is enjoying his homework or not. What appeals to him is the quiet air of concentration in Stiles' room, the way Stiles warms all over when he's accomplishing things. With Stiles, it doesn't matter if he's finding a shortcut or developing a new way to use mountain ash or finishing up analogy practice sheets. Accomplishment seems to satisfy some gut-deep need in him that satisfies Derek in turn, in a way that troubles Derek when he considers it for too long.

Derek sprawls on Stiles' perpetually unmade bed, drifting into a light sleep to the sound of Stiles' fingers tapping on the keyboard. He startles awake when Stiles tosses a deck of laminated cards onto the coverlet.

"What are these?"

Stiles spins in his chair. "SAT vocab flashcards. Try me."

(SATs mean college and college means *away* and Derek tries not to think about that aspect of Stiles' competence and intelligence, the part where Stiles is too good for Beacon Hills, the part where he's a smart enough boy to leave when he should, to never come back.)

"Okay," Derek says, swallowing down the irrational dread that comes with actually participating in homework, and the secondary regret that hits him when he thinks about how he never took the SATs, because that was after things like grades and his future stopped mattering entirely.

"Dude, you just have to read words and tell me if I get the definitions right," Stiles says. He's stopped spinning and he's watching Derek with an overly-thoughtful expression.

"I was trying to sleep," Derek says. It seems like a good excuse for his hesitance.

"There's this cool place where people generally sleep. It's called their own rooms. This is my

room.”

“I’m aware of that,” Derek says, shuffling the cards. They have sharp edges and they smell like sweet plastic.

“My room, my homework rules, buddy.” Derek shuffles for a while before Stiles sighs and adds, “You have to start, you know. It’s not a mind-reading game.”

“Acclivity,” Derek says. He hates the word immediately for existing his entire life without his awareness of it. It’s sharp on his tongue, like a papercut.

Stiles moves his hands in a sloping motion, like he’s miming a giant wave. “An upward slope,” he says. “The incline part.”

Derek shrugs. Close enough. He flips the next card. “Chimerical.”

“Imaginary. Like a werewolf!”

“Correct. Half a point off for being a smart ass.”

“You’re not keeping score,” Stiles says. “And if there’s a point system, I demand rewards.”

“Wrong,” Derek says. “The rules of your room don’t extend to demands. Beatific.”

“Looking happy,” Stiles says.

Derek holds the card up. “It says ‘displaying calmness and joy, relating to a state of celestial happiness’ here.”

“What the hell is celestial happiness? Stars can’t be happy,” Stiles says. “That’s a bullshit definition.”

They go on for half an hour. Stiles gets every word right, or close to right, to the extent that Derek thinks Stiles is just practicing to show off. He finds that the thought doesn’t bother him. Stiles’ father works all the time lately, and he’s probably not around often enough to praise Stiles for his thorough SAT prep and homework skills.

And Derek just positioned himself as a father figure. Fuck.

“Hello?” Stiles is asking. “Is it right or wrong?”

“Yes, that’s correct. I think you’re batting well enough to give it a rest for the night,” Derek says, dropping the cards onto the shelf beside Stiles’ bed. “I need to go.”

He grabs his jacket off the foot of the bed and walks out the door to the sound of Stiles spinning in his chair again.

Derek is on Stiles' bed.

Stiles is doing his calculus homework, and his pencil scratches the paper gently, the sound just repetitive enough to push Derek past light snooze to deep, dreamless sleep.

He wakes to the sensation of the mattress dipping and remains very still to fight his urge to dart into a defensive position.

“How do you explain being here all the time?” Stiles asks, dropping to the mattress beside Derek with a soft sigh that smells tired.

“I don’t have to explain anything, I’m—”

“The alpha, yeah. I get it. They must wonder though. And aren’t you like, neglecting... I don’t know. Them?”

“They need independence, not babysitting,” Derek says.

“Oh, but I need babysitting?” Stiles asks, the words bursting out of him like gunfire.

Derek sits up and looks down at Stiles. “What?”

“Erica’s getting a D in American History, and Isaac keeps forgetting to turn in basically anything. Jackson’s still coasting on his post-traumatic stress and Boyd got detention for making an exhaust pipe shoot fire in auto tech. Scott got *held back*. You’re not hovering over them every night making sure they’re studying.”

“You think this is about making sure you do your homework?”

Stiles frowns suspiciously. “If that’s not what it is, then... what is it?”

The hair stands up on Derek’s arms. He’s so angry it feels like a current running through him. “I don’t care if you get good grades,” he says, his words clawed.

The falseness of that statement echoes in his gut. He hears himself breathe raggedly in the long pause that follows.

“I know,” Stiles eventually says, the sound sticky. He blinks hard, his expression faltering and dragging Derek’s anger down with it. “Of course you don’t.”

“Stiles.”

“I’m just, you know, maintaining a 4.6 GPA while hey, not dying every other week, which feels like kind of an achievement, and you know what? I don’t need a freaking babysitter to do it. You’re actually pretty distracting.”

That had never occurred to Derek. Is he hurting more than helping? Is he helping at all? It felt

good to rest in Stiles' room, to listen to him talk through his assignments, to kiss the back of his neck and pull him into the bed, to suck him off and swallow his cries. But Derek never *thought* about it. He just did what he could feel, with his hands. What he could taste.

“Oh,” Derek says.

“Oh,” Stiles repeats, sitting up jerkily. “Oh.” It’s a mocking, unkind sound.

Knowing he’s being deliberately provoked doesn’t do much to dampen Derek’s response. He drags in a steady breath and watches Stiles like he’s keeping another predator in his sight line. Derek’s words are gone, so he waits for them to come back, knowing-dreading that Stiles will have enough for both of them in the meantime.

Stiles slides out of the bed like he’s falling, and paces away. “I don’t understand what you’re here for if you’re not keeping tabs on me. And I don’t understand why you’re keeping tabs on me if it’s not some kind of misplaced guilt over dragging me into shit that distracts me from school. I don’t understand why you don’t obsess over your actual pack. Or Scott! He needs help. His mom is flipping out about his grades, and—”

There. “I’m not here to tutor you,” Derek grits out. Of course he’s aware of Scott’s problems at school. There’s nothing he can do. He can’t do Scott’s work for him. He can’t talk to Scott’s mother. He can’t encourage Scott to go to class when going to class was the last thing Derek ever wanted to do.

“I don’t know what this is,” Stiles says, fiddling with a plastic skeleton from his desk. It’s a question and an accusation all at once, and Derek doesn’t know the answer—and he’s sure that whatever the answer is, it’s full of big, stupid words he’s never heard before. Words he doesn’t know how to define.

“Do you want me to stop coming over?” Derek asks.

“No.” Stiles puts the skeleton down and picks up a rubber toy that he squeezes over and over. “My bed smells like you now. It’s like werewolf Febreze. I think I have a crush on you.”

Derek’s belly gives an uncomfortable lurch.

“So if you’re like, just doing some... alpha thing. About my homework. I can text you that I did it or whatever, but I don’t want to. I can’t. Have this.” The toy wheezes in his fingers. “Crush. You know, if it’s that.”

If Derek was good at this, he’d have something soothing to say, some reasonable way to smooth the knobby, sharp feelings making Stiles fidget through the room like a hummingbird.

But he’s not good at this.

“Do you think I’d touch you if I was here to *supervise* you?” Derek asks. He curls his fingers into fists. “Do you think I touch them?”

“No. I don’t know! We don’t really talk about our sex lives in the cafeteria.”

Derek scrubs his hands across his face.

“Also when you say touch like that,” Stiles says, “you make it sound kind of gross.” He drops the toy and sits down right in the middle of his room, like someone pulled his legs out from under him.

Derek’s indignation wilts. “Do you want your bed?” he asks.

“What is with the questions, dude? Just. Don’t you say anything?” Stiles rubs his hair, his palms rasping softly against it. “Don’t you have thoughts in your head?”

Stiles sounds sickened, *thoughts* spitting out of him like a dirty word. Derek slides down to the floor and starts to reach for him and pauses, wondering how the hell they went from fine to this while he was sleeping.

“I try not to have thoughts in my head,” Derek admits. “I don’t really like them.”

Stiles laughs out a harsh puff of sound, and wipes his nose against his arm. He won’t look at Derek. “I have a lot of them.”

Derek nods. “That’s why you’re doing okay. It’s why you’ll be all right.”

“Yeah, that’s what my guidance counselor says.”

The thought of Stiles talking to some stranger about what he’s thinking, about his future, about his life, pushes a prickling sensation of heat through Derek. It’s not exactly like the possessive tug he feels toward his betas, but it’s just as unsettling in its ferocity.

“I come here because I like... being here,” Derek says. “But it’s not a thought, it’s a feeling.”

Stiles looks up. He’s hugging himself now, limbs awkward and human. “There’s probably not a huge difference.” When he catches Derek’s suffering look, he grins. “But yeah, okay, Tarzan.”

Stiles is sleeping, mouth-breathing against Derek’s bare shoulder. Derek wonders if it’s quiet in Stiles’ head when he’s not awake.

“I need you to sign a permission slip for me,” Stiles says, climbing into the bed where Derek is sprawled on his stomach, trying to sleep off an algorithm-induced headache.

“Very funny.”

Stiles straddles Derek's hips like he's riding him. He's heavy, and Derek makes an exaggerated sound as he half-heartedly tries to buck him off.

"Sometimes I think about fucking you," Stiles blurts.

"Is this related to the permission slip?" Derek asks.

Stiles folds and shifts until he's lying on Derek's back. "Definitely not," he says, his mouth near Derek's ear. "The Honors Society bowling party is actually the least sexy thing I can think of right now."

Derek doesn't respond because he's breathless with the sensation of Stiles' weight along his body. He's never had someone on his back before, not outside of a fight. While he registers a vague instinct to throw Stiles off, what stuns him is the desire to rock back against Stiles. The desire to ease up onto his hands and knees and let Stiles mount him. The raw heat flares in his belly and makes him hard.

"What's wrong?" Stiles asks, starting to get up.

"Would you?" Derek asks. "If I wanted to."

"Um. What are we talking about?" Stiles sinks again, hesitant now.

"Would you fuck me?" Derek asks, so relieved to have the weight back it makes it easier to ask.

Stiles is hard. Just like that. The tone of his voice changes, thickens. "I think. I mean, I would. I'd have to... you'd have to show me how."

Derek wonders what Stiles thinks his life has been like, before now. "I've never had sex with a man."

"Cool, me neither!" Stiles says, his voice too loud. He gives a nervous laugh and rolls onto his side next to Derek. He's trembling. "I'll read up on it."

Derek kisses him.

The showerhead in Derek's efficiency has terrible water pressure. He stands in the limp stream, bracing himself against the cold tile with one hand, and fingers himself. It's something that's never occurred to him to try, despite how good it felt a lifetime ago when Kate sucked him off and put her fingers in him right before he came.

If he does it hard enough now, maybe he won't think of her thin, long fingers or her laugh.

It doesn't feel very good, and he sighs.

“The internet is full of conflicting reports,” Stiles says. They’re driving in Derek’s car on an errand that has nothing to do with sex, but Stiles has a tiny browser open on his phone and he’s squinting at pictures. “I should have printed this out.”

“I don’t need a diagram,” Derek says. He’s seen gay porn. When his attraction to other males began to eclipse his attraction to females, he bought a few DVDs at a seedy adult supermarket and beat off to them until his skin went raw, and then he threw them away. Pornography makes him feel cold and sick. Sex is... he needs to be able to smell it, to hear the pulse of it.

“I don’t think you really need to prep much. I mean, I’ll leave that to your discretion. Some of these websites say you need to do an enema but—”

“Stiles.”

“Yeah. Exactly. Your business, dude. I’ll just, you know. Do the rest of the stuff.”

Derek keeps driving.

It’s a welcome distraction to have a normal night. They meet up with the pack, chase an omega out of Beacon Hills, file a report with Allison and Chris Argent, and make it home before Stiles’ curfew. Derek drives Scott home as well, and concentrates on the road as the boys talk about lacrosse practice and sound like kids who should not know as much about death as they do.

Derek drives home and showers, thinking about the research on Stiles’ phone.

“I think I’m too old for you,” he says in the chilly hour before dawn, when Stiles meets him at the side garage door after Sheriff Stilinski has left for his early morning shift.

Stiles frowns. He’s wearing nothing but pajama bottoms that hang loosely at his hips and he smells like a thorough shower, the film of soap so strong it nearly masks the odor of his skin. “Whatever, Mr. Never Slept With a Guy. We’re even.”

“That’s not what I mean,” Derek says, steeling himself for the talk they need to have, the one about Stiles spending more time with people his own age. With humans. With people who don’t have to sneak in and out. People who don’t keep him up late on school nights. People who don’t lie awake wondering exactly how awful it is sleep with a boy who isn’t even old enough to buy porn.

It’s like Stiles can read his mind. He shuffles back into the dark garage and shakes his head. “No. Dude, no,” Stiles says, shadowed. “I think I’ve seen enough shit to qualify me as mature enough to have sex. Lots of people have sex. Lots of people are having a lot of sex right now, and most of them aren’t half as mature as I am.”

Derek follows him into the garage as if Stiles is magnetized. He shuts the door behind him,

and then they're in the dark and it's musty and Derek can't remember why his argument felt so compelling.

"That's not what I mean either," Derek says weakly, but he's already reaching for Stiles, touching his shower-damp skin, squeezing his ass under his loose pajama pants. Stiles is overtired, clumsy with it, and clumsy with need. He kisses messily, bumping teeth with Derek as they edge toward the stairs that lead up into the house.

Derek tugs Stiles' pajamas down in the kitchen and follows them to the floor. Stiles leans against the fridge door and tugs Derek's hair softly and noises as Derek licks him. Derek licks until Stiles' cock is wet and then he sucks him off, quick and slippery, using his hand too. This didn't come to Derek instinctively, but Stiles' responses are a roadmap, straightforward and simple to follow. It's all they ever do—kissing and this. This is safe.

Stiles comes, and Derek swallows it down.

Afterwards, it's awkward walking up to Stiles' room, side by side, brushing shoulders, but not touching. Derek wipes his hand off on his thigh and Stiles tugs his pajamas where they slide down.

"Why do you like me?" Stiles asks in a strange voice, the kind that Derek thinks must be reserved for conversations at 4am. He falls into his bed and rolls onto his back and looks at Derek.

"I don't know," Derek says, closing Stiles' door and locking it.

"But you do."

Derek blinks.

"Like me," Stiles prompts, pushing up onto his elbows.

"If you're trying to convince me that you're mature, this isn't helping," Derek says.

"At least I didn't write it on a note, okay?" Stiles looks like he's going to say more, but he goes still when Derek begins undressing.

"Why do you like me?" Derek asks as he folds his shirt and drops it onto Stiles' computer chair.

"For your body," Stiles says.

It's typical. It's the way Stiles is, it's the obvious answer he'd give, but it still hurts, as shocking and humiliating as a slap. Derek knows it's stupid to feel like there's some hidden barb or that Stiles should have known that Kate taunted-licked-hurt him and told him that he'd filled out, that he looked so good.

Derek pauses, body tensing all over like he's under threat, but the threat is inside, curdling

and there's nothing to run from, and Stiles is staring at him, and Derek is furious and ashamed and disappointed and a dozen other things written on laminated flashcards.

"I..." Stiles' throat works in a swallow so dry Derek can hear it sticking. "Derek. I didn't. I like your body. Obviously, I mean, god. But. Are you okay?"

It's a miracle that Derek manages to toe his way out of his shoes and peel his jeans off without collapsing under the weight of how awful it feels to have Stiles looking at him like that. He climbs into the bed, feeling his own nudity in a way he's not accustomed to, and eases into Stiles' open arms face first, like he can hide there, at Stiles' bared throat.

"We so seriously don't have to have sex," Stiles says, petting Derek's hair and the back of his neck.

"Not tonight," Derek says.

Stiles pulls his gray blanket up over both of them and kisses Derek's head. Stiles' heart skitters, like something's trying to fly away inside of him, but his hands are steady.

Derek avoids Stiles for an entire week. He hunts. He's hard on his pack. It feels good to push them and hurt them. When they're hurt, they heal and grow stronger.

"I want to show you something," Derek says.

Stiles is driving. When they get a block away from Derek's shitty apartment, he says, "Oh, your place?"

Derek eyes him. "Excuse me?"

"I know where you live. You park on the street. You've gotten a parking ticket there. Plus you drive one of only seven obnoxious Camaros in all of Beacon Hills. And I know your license plate number."

"Did you use police resources to stalk me?"

"I use police resources for a lot of stuff," Stiles says, pulling into the convenience store parking lot around the corner from the efficiencies.

"Why are you parking here?"

"Because I want snacks and not a parking ticket?"

Stiles carries a bag of potato chips and Mountain Dew up the stairs to Derek's door. He takes two steps inside before he says, "Honestly? I think the underground lair has this beat."

It's just one room, with a bathroom to the side and a kitchen counter and sink with no stove or refrigerator. The walls are yellowed with nicotine stains. Derek sleeps on a twin mattress on the floor and hangs his clothes from an aluminum rack. It was dirty before he moved in, but he keeps it neat.

"Egg crate coffee table. Classic. You know they have an Ikea in Sacramento and the coffee tables are like six bucks, right?"

"I don't stay here often," Derek says, taking the bag out of Stiles' hand for something to do.

He doesn't know why he brought Stiles here.

They shower together, crowded in the stall, fighting over the spray. Stiles shivers, more affected by the cold than Derek. His skin prickles up all over in goosebumps that stand down under the trail of Derek's mouth where he licks and soothes him.

Stiles takes the Irish Spring off the soap tray and slips behind Derek and asks, "Can I?"

Derek nods, moving so that the water stays on Stiles' shoulders to keep him warm.

It doesn't feel anything like his own fingers. Stiles is careful, just soaping him for a long time, until the water runs tepid like summer rain. He kisses Derek's shoulder and reaches around to touch his cock, to fondle it to half-hardness.

"Oh my god," Stiles says. He fucks into Derek with one finger, in and out. It slides easily. It feels big, burns, and then feels good. "Derek. It's soft—you're soft inside."

Derek laughs and widens his stance. "You can't hurt me."

"Is that a request?"

Derek doesn't answer, but his cock grows rigid under Stiles' fumbling strokes, and when Stiles soaps his hand up again and returns with two fingers, Derek moans and tosses his head. Stiles grows bolder, finger-fucking him instead of just feeling his way, and Derek *loves* it.

"Can we go to the bed?" Stiles says, breathless. "My legs are shaking."

They're mostly wet when they fall onto the mattress together. Derek has lube in a basket on the floor, but no condoms. "I don't carry any diseases," he says, sitting with his knees drawn up.

"Mmm, keep talking dirty to me," Stiles says. He grabs the lube and flips the lid. When he squeezes convulsively, the liquid arcs away in a wide, shiny squirt that completely misses his hand and cock. "Damn it."

Derek takes it from him and wets Stiles' cock thoroughly, stroking more than he needs to to watch Stiles shiver where he kneels on the springy mattress. He'd never admit it, but playing

with Stiles' cock is a pastime Derek enjoys more than he can express.

"Dude, stop," Stiles says. "I'm already gonna come in a second in a half. I'll be lucky if I get it all the way in before I blow."

"Who's talking dirty now?" Derek asks, sprawling onto his back. There's a moment of unease as he shows Stiles his belly, but it passes when he looks at Stiles' face and sees him laughing, sees the rash of joy and excitement on his face.

Stiles' hands shake when he takes the lube back and settles between Derek's thighs. "Just gonna... get you um, prepped. Wow," he says, looking. "So this is more intense when it's not on my computer."

"Chickening out?"

"Hell no," Stiles says. He slicks his fingers, frowns thoughtfully, and squirts a overly generous amount of lube onto Derek's balls and ass.

"Stiles. That's definitely enough," Derek says. Their eyes meet just as Stiles reaches with both hands to stroke Derek's cock and push into him again, wiggling his slippery fingers, curling them. "Stiles. It's enough. Come here."

It takes them both squirming and fumbling to line Stiles' cock up. Stiles' breath hitches, and when he sinks hard enough to push past Derek's clenched muscles, his eyes widen and he starts to back off, an apology on his lips. Derek takes his hips and pulls him down, hard and grinding until Stiles bottoms out, and Stiles cries out and ducks his head and crashes his forehead against Derek's and they both laugh, and Stiles follows it with a sound that's closer to a sob.

"Catch your breath," Derek says, petting Stiles' back. He feels very full. He likes the feeling. He wants more of it, and harder, with friction. He wants this so much it makes his breath feel tight in his chest. "Then go. You're doing perfect. You're perfect."

Stiles hums, says, "Told you so," and shifts his weight. They move slowly, both trembling with the effort. Derek knows it doesn't have to last, that once they figure this out they can do it all they want, but it feels unreasonably important to take their time, this time.

"Look at me," Derek says.

There it is. The definition from a sharp-edged flashcard, written across Stiles' wet mouth.

"What?" Stiles asks on a breath, his eyes crinkling with a curious smile.

"Stars can be happy."

"Oh my god, I'm literally fucking your brains out," Stiles says.

Derek slaps Stiles' ass, and Stiles exhales a wet giggle, and Derek gives up on taking it slow.

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