

Til Death

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/14462247) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/14462247>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	F/M
Fandom:	Teen Wolf (TV)
Relationship:	Peter Hale/Stiles Stilinski
Characters:	Peter Hale , Stiles Stilinski , Sheriff Stilinski , Scott McCall (Teen Wolf)
Additional Tags:	Female Stiles Stilinski , Marriage of Convenience , Arranged Marriage , Fuck or Die , First Time , Loss of Virginity , Explicit Sexual Content , Mutual Pining , Eventual Happy Ending , Good Peter Hale , Cunnilingus , Speciesism
Language:	English
Collections:	Quietly Adorable , Волч
Stats:	Published: 2018-04-28 Completed: 2018-06-12 Words: 50,770 Chapters: 10/10

Til Death

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Summary

“How long do we have to find him someone?” Stiles asks.

“Two weeks,” says Derek, eyebrows pulling down even further. The fierceness of his expression tells Stiles just how concerned he is.

“He marries, or he goes to the camps. And you know what your father told us,” Scott reminds her.

The camps.....aren’t camps.

Peter either finds a wife, or he dies.

Notes

So, this has been rattling round my brain for a while now, so I'm biting the bullet and giving you Girl!Stiles in an arranged marriage fic.

I know that female Stiles isn't everyone's cup of tea, but what the hell, it's mine, and that has to count for something right?

Chapter 1

Stiles and Scott, Scott and Stiles.

It used to be that if you saw one, you'd see the other. They lived in each other's pockets, were forever over at each other's houses, and tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to get their parents to date. They were a package deal.

But recently, it seems to be just Stiles. Scott's busy now, hanging out with the pack and dating Kira, and more often than not, he ignores Stiles completely. But Stiles can't help but notice that when he's really in over his head, Scott doesn't hesitate to call her. Suddenly, she's his best friend again.

So she knows when he calls and begs her to come right over, he must be desperate. She steps into the loft to be met by the sight of Peter Hale sitting pale and silent, clutching a crumpled sheet of paper. Derek's next to him, brow furrowed.

Scott turns to Stiles, relief clear on his face at her arrival. "Stiles, thank god you're here," he says, pulling her into a hug. Scott's not normally physically affectionate with her, hasn't been since she developed decent breasts, (*unless he needs something*, a tiny, nasty, part of her brain notes) so she knows that whatever it is, it's big.

"Hey Scotty, what's up?" she asks.

"Peter," he says by way of explanation. "He's been marked as a Person of Interest."

Well, shit.

When Weres were first dragged kicking and screaming into the public eye by hunters, when the new president was elected, part of the *Make Humanity Great Again* initiative was a series of protocols to keep Werewolves under the control of humans.

Weres are dangerous, people said. Different. Can't be trusted. We need a way to tether them, make them accountable. The cynics suggested that due to the strength of pack bonds, it would much easier to control a werewolf if they had a family you could threaten. Preferably, a human family.

And so the Werewolf Partnership Decree, commonly called the Fuck or Die Law, was passed. It's a stupid, cruel law.

All Weres over eighteen have six months to marry a non-Were, or be ~~put down~~ taken to *Confinement Camps*. But now, they've added a new wrinkle. If someone's a Person of Interest, they don't get a grace period. Suddenly, there's a time limit.

"How long do we have to find him someone?" Stiles asks.

“Two weeks,” says Derek, eyebrows pulling down even further. The fierceness of his expression tells Stiles just how concerned he is.

“He marries, or he goes to the camps. And you know what your father told us,” Scott reminds her.

The camps.....aren't camps.

Once a Were is taken, they're never heard from again. Noah had called Scott, horrified, when he first heard what was happening through friends in high places. About the experiments. About the “mercy killings” of the Weres, once the research carried out on their bodies has left them little more than a mindless, drooling wreck. “Get your pack paired off, Scott. It doesn't matter who ends up with who. Just don't let them go to the camps,” Noah had told him, his tone urgent.

If Peter doesn't find someone willing to marry him, he's going to be taken by a Werewolf Control Unit to a Containment Camp, and injected in the neck with a paralytic. Then he'll be used for medical research in the ever-futile hunt for whatever it is that gives wolves their advanced healing.

Stiles shudders at the thought. “So, who is there?” she asks.

Derek shakes his head. “No one.”

Scott nods in agreement. “It's his reputation. Nobody will touch him.”

It's a testament to how shaken Peter is that he doesn't even argue with the harsh assessment, just sits staring blankly.

“There can't be nobody. I mean, Peter's an attractive guy,” Stiles observes. “And he can be decent company, if he tries. Surely someone's willing to step up?”

“Are you volunteering?” Scott asks quickly.

Stiles feels all the eyes in the room turn to her, and suddenly it all clicks into place, why Scott asked her to come over in the first place.

Scott has Kira. Derek and Lydia are engaged, which surprised everybody. There's only her left. “You want me to do it, don't you?” she says, a hint of resentment creeping into her voice as she realizes she's boxed herself neatly into a corner. Or rather, she's been backed into it by her former best friend.

Scott turns his big brown eyes to her and says “Well you're the only one who likes him. And it's for the pack. Say yes.” Stiles can't help but note that he looks a little smug, as if this has played out exactly like he'd intended.

Peter's older than her, and god knows he can be a sarcastic asshole, but she thinks they're almost friends. They've spent some time together, and she knows he doesn't suffer fools, that he's devilishly clever. And handsome, of course. She doesn't want him to *die*. But she doesn't know him that well either, and it's marriage, for god's sake. She's not going to agree on the

spot. "It's a big ask, Scott," she hedges, annoyed at him for assuming she'd immediately fall into line.

"But you will do it, right? I mean, it's not like you have a boyfriend or anything," Scott reminds her. *Nobody else wants you anyway* is the unspoken implication.

"Do I get any say in this at all?" Peter interrupts. He looks quietly terrified, but he's doing a good job of keeping a lid on it. Stiles can see the tightness around his eyes though, knows what it means. Maybe she knows him better than she thought.

"No. It's marry Stiles or die," Scott tells him bluntly.

Stiles feels irritation at Scott well up. "Really, Scott? You're deciding for both of us now?" She heads for the door, irritated beyond belief. If she doesn't leave now, she'll say something she'll regret.

Scott steps in front of her and holds her in place. "Stiles, listen. I know Peter's an asshole, but we need him. He's useful, and he knows stuff. If you marry him, we can keep him alive. You're my last resort," he tells her, and well, if that doesn't just make her see red.

"Charming," Peter drawls, and Stiles isn't sure whether he's referring to Scott calling him an asshole, or basically telling Stiles she's the bottom of the barrel.

She takes a moment to breathe, hands clenching into fists by her sides. The last time she was this angry at Scott, she'd just lost her mom. Scott had told her that at least her mother wasn't in pain, and Stiles should really be glad. She'd hit him in the jaw with half a brick, and it's been crooked ever since.

"I'm your last resort," she repeats woodenly.

Scott nods. "I'm desperate. There's nobody else."

"*You're* desperate? Really? Because I don't see *you* with a letter telling you you're marked to die, Scott. When did this become about you?" Suddenly all her annoyance at being manipulated comes rushing to the surface. "You know what? Fuck you, Scott McCall," she hisses, and storms out, slamming the door behind her.

Peter watches Stiles leave, and he's not sure how to feel. He likes Stiles, always has, and truth be told the thought of marrying her doesn't exactly bother him. She's smart, pretty, and doesn't seem to care what anyone thinks of her. It's a quality he admires, because he's never really cared what anyone thinks of him, either. He needs a wife, and he could do a hell of a lot worse.

But part of him admires her for walking out. The way Scott's handled this makes him want to pin him to the ground and rip his throat out. He didn't *ask* Scott to call Stiles, had barely

gotten his head around the contents of the letter himself, and then Scott was telling Peter that she'd be sure to say yes if Scott asked her, and before Peter knew it, she was on her way over. Scott didn't ask Peter's opinion, and he didn't ask Stiles's. He took away any illusion of choice, tried to force both of their hands for his own purposes. And if Peter knows anything about Stiles, it's that she doesn't like being *made* to do anything, and will dig her heels in at the mere suggestion of it.

So as Scott stares at the door in stunned silence, Peter gets to his feet, saying "Well done, Scott. A true diplomat, as always. Everyone loves to hear that they're your last pick."

He heads for the door and Derek asks, "Where are you going?"

"I'm going to talk to Stiles, see if I can repair the damage this idiot did," he says, nodding at Scott.

"But you'll get her to say, yes, right?" Scott presses.

"That's up to Stiles. I really don't have any say in the matter," Peter replies as he walks out the door.

He hopes to hell he can convince her.

Peter expects to have to follow Stiles home, but she's still sitting in her jeep, knuckles white where she's gripping the steering wheel and staring straight ahead. Peter can hear her heartbeat racing, and he guesses that she's trying to calm herself down enough to drive home.

She startles when he knocks on the window, but eventually winds it down and just looks at him, waiting to hear what he has to say. Peter takes a deep breath, and says "I'm sorry Scott called you, and I'm sorry he made you feel like you have no choice. You don't have to do this."

That's obviously not what Stiles expected to hear. Peter suspects she was waiting for him to beg her to change her mind. She closes her eyes for a moment, before saying "What other choice is there?"

"I'll run," Peter says simply. "Everyone knows I'm a slippery bastard. Nobody will be surprised if I just disappear."

Stiles snorts in response. "How far do you think you'd get? They have you earmarked, Peter. They want to study you, see how you managed to come back from the dead."

"That's as may be, but it's my problem, not yours. You don't owe me this. You don't owe me anything."

Stiles studies his face for any sign of a ruse, and Peter waits patiently under her assessing gaze. “I’ll do it,” she says suddenly, surprising him. “I’ll marry you.”

He can’t help the feeling of relief that rolls over him, and he exhales loudly. But he has to make sure she means it. “Really? I don’t want you to feel pressured. Marriage is permanent.”

Stiles rolls her eyes. “So is death, normally. We both know that I’m not going to let you risk your life. And you’re not the worst potential husband out there. At least we’re sort of friends. I think it could be tolerable.”

It’s Peter’s turn to snort, then. “Tolerable? You do know how to make a man feel special, sweetheart.”

Stiles takes a deep breath, and the tight set of her shoulders relaxes slightly. “Since when am I your sweetheart?” she asks, falling back into their familiar pattern of banter.

“Well, we are practically engaged,” Peter teases back, able to joke now that the sword of Damocles isn’t swinging quite so closely over his head

“Shit. I guess so. Come over to dinner tomorrow night, seven o’clock. Bring dessert, we’ll talk about it. I have conditions,” Stiles states firmly.

Well, thinks Peter, that’s only to be expected. And it’s not like he’s going to say no to any of them, not when his life literally depends on it. What he wants doesn’t matter.

This isn’t a romance, it’s a lifesaving procedure. And nobody ever asks the drowning victim if the CPR was good for them.

Telling Noah goes better than expected. Stiles tries to ease into it, but as soon as she sits down and says “So, you know how there’s a that stupid law for wolves now...” her father groans and runs his hands down his face.

“You’re marrying Scott.”

“What? No! Ew, Dad!”

Noah breathes a sigh of relief. “Oh, thank god. Don’t get me wrong kiddo, I know he’s your friend, but that boy’s dumb as a box of hammers, and honestly? I think he takes advantage of you. You need someone who appreciates you, and you need somebody smart, who can keep up.”

“Funnily enough...there is someone else. And he’s definitely smart.”

Noah shakes his head. “Of course, there’s someone else. Of course.”

“Dad, I’ll be saving their life – ‘

“You know what? I don’t care. What about your life?” Noah opens his arms and pulls his daughter into a hug, holding her tight. With her long limbs she barely fits on his lap, but neither of them care. Stiles will never be too old for a hug from her dad. “Honestly? I hate this. I hate that you think you have to give up everything to save some stranger.”

“It’s not a stranger. And I’m getting married, not being sold into slavery.”

“But still, it’s a hell of an ask.”

Stiles twists around and looks at her dad. “You always told me that I should do the right thing, even if it’s not the easy thing.”

“Aw hell, kid. The *one* time you listen to me. What was I thinking, telling you that?” Noah sighs, burying his face in Stiles’ shoulder.

Stiles squeezes him back tightly, telling him “You raised me to be a decent human being, Pops. Which means I gotta do the right thing.” She takes a deep breath. “I’m marrying Peter Hale.”

Her father’s grip tightens painfully for a second before he grits out “The hell you are. The man’s too old for you.”

She pulls back and looks her father in the eye. “There’s nobody else. Unless you’re volunteering?” she says with a raised brow.

Noah manages to hold out under her stare for a good ten seconds before he looks away, saying “Dammit Stiles, You’re as stubborn as your mother.”

“At least Peter’s clever. And he hasn’t exactly been hit by the ugly stick, so there’s that,” she says.

Noah holds up his hand, saying “You can stop right there. I don’t want to think about it.”

She gives her father one last squeeze. “He’s coming to dinner tomorrow night, we’re going to talk about it. You have my full permission to ask as many awkward questions as you like – I want to make sure he doesn’t have a temper like Derek’s.”

He smiles a little at that. “Can I clean my guns at the dining table?”

“Maybe just one,” Stiles decides.

“You’re going to go ahead though, aren’t you?” Noah sighs.

She gives him a small, tight smile, and says “Yeah. I can’t just walk away. It’ll be fine, Pops.”

“You’re one tough cookie, you know that, kid?” Noah tells her.

“Of course I am. Look who brought me up” she shoots back.

Stiles doesn't know what motivated her to say yes, except that she looked into those bright blue eyes, and saw the truth in them – if she said no, Peter would accept it, and go on the run. And she just couldn't let it happen.

She lays awake in her bed for a long time that night, thoughts chasing each other round in an endless loop as she thinks about what she knows about her future husband. Peter's hot, and god knows he's got a brain on him. She gets on with him, and she could do a whole lot worse. She just hopes the sex is decent, because that part's not negotiable.

It's a fact of Werewolf biology that unprotected sex activates the urge to protect their partner. So to make sure those instincts kick in, there has to be evidence of intimacy for the marriage to be recognized. If Stiles and Peter marry, within 24 hours Stiles will have to be examined to ensure the consummation has taken place. She doesn't love the thought of some stranger poking around down there, but it's part of the deal.

She's more nervous about the exam than the sex, to be honest. Stiles might be a virgin, a side effect of having the Sheriff as her father, but it's not through choice. And she's keen to see what she's been missing, especially since Peter's exactly her type.

It occurs to her belatedly that she never even thought to ask Peter if he was attracted to *her*. She decides that's something she needs to find out.

Stiles dresses up for dinner with Peter. Partly because she wants to impress him, but partly because she wants to see how he reacts to seeing her out of her usual jeans, t shirt and plaid combo. She'd like there to be at least some physical attraction on both sides, so she makes the effort. She examines herself in the mirror before she goes downstairs, and nods, satisfied.

She's wearing her good bra, the one that makes her breasts sit up high and firm, and a floral sleeveless summer dress that hugs her curves and stops just above the knee, showcasing her long legs. She slips on a pair of low heeled sandals that barely add to her height – at 5'10", she's already nearly as tall as Peter. She hasn't done much in the way of makeup, just light foundation, some lip gloss and mascara, to make her big brown eyes stand out more. She's

styled her short hair, and it sits in a carefully crafted mess, every haphazard spike deliberately placed to suggest that this hair would look perfect with a man's fingers running through it.

When she looks in the mirror she thinks she looks sexy, even if she says so herself. She has a kind of a mischievous pixie vibe going, she decides. Her assets are attractively displayed, and there's a slight pinkish hue to her cheeks that betrays her nervousness, but it contributes to the overall effect. She bites her lips a little to make them appear a little plusher. So sue her.

Peter turns up promptly at seven, bringing dessert as instructed, and he's also brought her flowers, an obscenely big bouquet of roses. It's a cliché, but she appreciates it anyway. He's dressed nicely, and Stiles eyes him hungrily. He really is stupidly hot. This might not be a real romance, but that doesn't mean she can't enjoy the sight of Peter in a deep blue button down that brings out his eyes, and perfectly fitted black dress pants. She wonders briefly if he's playing the same game as she is, trying to win her over. Part of her hopes so.

She sees Peter's eyes run over her form appreciatively when he sees her. "No plaid, Stiles? I'm shocked."

"For your information, plaid is for outside the house, when I need pockets," she tells him loftily, but she can tell that he's pleased by what he sees, notes that his gaze lingers on the swell of her breasts.

She leads Peter through to the dining room, and there, in full uniform, carefully polishing his rifle, is her dad. Noah nods curtly at Peter, before saying "Have a seat Hale, and tell me why my daughter should throw away her happiness to save your sorry ass?"

Stiles leaves Peter to her father's mercy as she goes to check on the lasagna she has cooking. She listens in as she works, and is surprised by Peter's reply. "Because I'm smart enough that she won't be wasted on me."

"That's a hell of a claim to make. Got anything to back it up?" Noah asks, arching a brow.

Peter smiles pleasantly, and ticks off on his fingers. "I have two college degrees, in law and history. I speak six languages fluently, three more competently. I'm independently wealthy, so she won't lack for anything material. I travel extensively, and assuming they don't change the laws I plan to keep doing so, which means I'll be taking Stiles with me. She's going to get to see the world with me, and I'll be able to educate her on the history of the countries we travel to. I thought we'd start with a six-month honeymoon in Asia."

"Because of course, I have nothing better to do with my time than swan around overseas while you *educate* me," Stiles chimes in as she comes back into the room. She stands with her arms folded over her chest, enjoying the look of confusion on Peter's face when she doesn't throw her hands in the air with glee at the thought of travelling with him.

Her father catches her eye and gives a subtle nod, encouraging her. "I won't leave my dad alone for that long – he's the only family I've got, and I've put off college after that scare with his heart last year. But we're sure as hell not living with him, because that would be weird. And I don't want to move into your house either – I want a fresh start, and I expect it to be somewhere nice," she states firmly.

“Agreed. Anything else?” Peter says easily.

“We stay living in Beacon Hills.”

“Of course.”

“*Never, ever*, try to speak to me before I have my coffee,” Stiles adds.

“I promise. Is that it?” Peter suddenly has a small, satisfied grin on his face, and Stiles isn’t sure she likes it.

”What has you looking so damned smug?” she asks.

“I’m just entertained by fact that you’re not really asking for anything. Considering you’re saving my life, you could be milking this for all it’s worth. You’re too nice, Stiles.”

“Not really. I just believe in keeping things simple. Nice doesn’t come into it.”

Peter observes her carefully before saying “No, I don’t suppose it does. Just for the record, niceness isn’t something I’ve ever been accused of either. But like you, I believe in taking care of the practicalities. So, yes to everything. And anything else you think of, yes to that, too. I’m not going to say no to the woman who’s saving my life.”

Stiles looks a little taken aback at that. “Really? Anything? What if I decide I want you to buy me a yacht?”

“Yes.”

“A pony?”

“Yes.”

“A unicorn,” she challenges.

“It might take some time, but I’m sure Deaton will know someone,” Peter replies without batting an eyelid.

Stiles laughs, despite herself.

Noah just watches the back and forth, and Stiles thinks he looks way too amused for someone who’s supposed to be busy intimidating her potential fiancé. “What are you smiling at?” she demands, turning to her father.

“Nothing. Nothing at all,” he says.

“Your father thinks I’m taken with your sass, and am going to fall head over heels for you, sweetheart. And he thinks that you’re going to be charmed by me, and realize that I have a heart of gold,” Peter tells her.

“No, I was actually thinking that I wonder what the hell Scott will do without you two, seeing as you’re the brains of that pack,” says Noah. “I mean, I assume you are finally ditching that idiot, kiddo?” he asks.

Stiles rubs a hand across the back of her neck. “I have to, I think. He treated me like dirt, and then he implied that it’s only because Peter’s useful that he’s even bothering to save him. It made me realize a few things.”

“Like that McCall’s been using you?” Noah says gently.

Stiles sighs. “Yeah. He only calls me when he’s in it up to his neck and needs someone to save him. And you’re right. From now on it’s not going to be me.”

The timer on the oven goes off, and Noah serves up the meal. As they eat, he fires questions at Peter.

What if Stiles decides she wants to go to college in the future, will Peter cover the cost?

“I’ll cover the cost of anything Stiles wants to do for the rest of her life. I can never repay what she’s doing for me.”

Will Peter ever force her to take the bite?

“Absolutely not.”

Can they trust Peter to stay out of trouble? Noah cites cases he’s heard of where a werewolf’s family member has received a less than pleasant visit from shadowy government figures in order to ensure compliance, and he’s damned if he’ll let Stiles be hurt just because Peter feels rebellious.

Peter fixes him with an unimpressed stare as he states “I have no plans to do anything that would endanger either of us, Sheriff. I’m entirely aware of the position I’m in. I tried death once – it’s not something I’d recommend.” He adds “Rest assured Sheriff, when the law gets repealed, we’ll be divorced within the week and Stiles can go on with her life.”

Stiles blinks – she hadn’t even thought of that. The new laws are already under fire, and there’s speculation that they’ll be scrapped within twelve months. So there’s that.

Stiles can see that the questions are needling Peter, but he remains calm and in control. It’s good to know that he doesn’t suffer the same anger issues as his nephew.

She shoots her dad a look that clearly says *enough for now*, and asks “What about you, Peter? Anything you need to know before we go ahead with this frankly terrible plan?”

“I think it seems like a perfectly good plan, sweetheart.” And then, like something out of an old movie, he drops to one knee in front of her, takes her hand, and says, “I’d like to do this properly. Stiles, will you marry me?”

He kneels before her, gazing at her with what she’d swear was genuine affection while he waits for her answer. And damned if that doesn’t make her feel like a Disney princess, even

given the circumstances. “Yes,” she whispers.

Peter reaches into his pocket and draws out a ring box. When he opens it, Stiles sees that he hasn’t gone for anything ostentatious, but instead has chosen a band of white gold with a row of pink and white diamonds set in a straight line. It’s sleek and gorgeous, and Stiles stares at it for a long moment.

“It reminded me of you. Beautiful, wonderful, and practical, all at once,” Peter tells her.

Damn, he’s smooth. Stiles takes a second to remind herself that this isn’t real before just giving in and enjoying the moment. She puts out her hand almost without realizing it, and lets Peter slide the ring on. It’s a little big, but barely. The weight feels strange against her skin, and she turns her hand this way and that, taking in the sight. “You didn’t have to buy me a ring,” she says quietly.

“No, I didn’t. And you didn’t have to agree to this whole thing. But you did, and I want you to know how much I appreciate it.”

Stiles flexes her hand once more, looking at the way the light hits the stones. “Thank you.”

Noah’s looking at the ring critically, and he comments “Hell of a ring, Hale. Pink diamonds? Must have cost a pretty penny.”

“Anything for Stiles, Sheriff,” Peter says without hesitating.

“You may as well call me Noah,” the sheriff says gruffly, and Stiles smiles to herself. Peter doesn’t know it, but he’s won her dad’s approval.

Stiles keeps looking at the ring as she eats, transfixed. They’ve nearly finished their meal when Peter clears his throat and says “Stiles? Forgive me if this is somewhat personal but given the circumstances, I feel I can be a little forward.”

Noah grips his fork a little harder and grits out, “Not too damn forward, Hale.”

“Dad, it’s fine. It’s why I asked Peter over. So we can talk, figure things out,” Stiles reassures him.

She doesn’t expect Peter to ask what he does. “I was wondering, are you even interested in men? It’s just, I’ve never seen you date, and if it goes against who you are, I won’t ask you to do this. It would be living a lie.”

Stiles raises a brow at him.

“Living a *different* lie than a sham marriage,” he says with a sigh. “I also wanted to reassure you that I’ll respect your choices when it comes to our level of intimacy.”

Noah chokes on his lasagna.

Stiles flushes slightly under Peter’s gaze. “Dad, I need you to go and check on something in the kitchen for me,” she says, eyes fixed on Peter.

“What am I checking?” Noah asks, a little slow on the uptake.

“*Anything*,” she hisses urgently.

“Oh. *Oh*. OK, going. Going to check on the thing,” he says, as he scrambles hastily up out of his chair and into the kitchen, before he hears something he can’t unhear.

Once he’s out of earshot, Peter put his elbows on the table and leans forwards, his face alight with curiosity. “Don’t tell me I’ve hit the nail on the head, and you’re actually gay?” he asks.

‘No, but what I’m about to tell you I never, ever want my dad to hear, OK?’

The expression on Stiles’ face is so serious that Peter immediately loses all traces of a smile, instead telling her earnestly “It will never leave this room.”

Stiles takes a deep breath. “I’m not gay, or bi, or ace, or anything like that. The only reason I’m still single is because everyone’s too damned scared to date the sheriff’s kid. They catch sight of the cruiser, and they run for the hills.”

“Really? They let that scare them off?” Peter asks incredulously.

“Well, yeah. I went on a date once when I was fifteen, and Dad dropped me off at the movie theater in the cruiser. He stayed parked outside until I came out. He was wearing his Serious Sheriff Face the whole time, and he made poor Dylan ride in the back on the way home, and before he let him out he gave him a lecture on respecting women. Word’s got around, you know? But you can’t tell him. He’d be devastated to know he’s killed any chance of romance for me.”

Peter looks thoughtful. “So how come he’s willing to entertain the idea of you marrying me?”

“Because I didn’t ask him, I told him,” Stiles replies simply.

Noah’s voice floats from the kitchen. “Am I still checking this thing?”

“Yes!” Stiles yells back.

Peter looks at her expectantly, arms folded across his chest. “What else don’t you want your father to know, Stiles?”

She takes a deep breath. “I wanted to talk about sex.”

Stiles bites her lip, and Peter hastens to reassure her. “I meant what I said. I won’t expect anything of you once we’ve fulfilled the legal requirements.”

Stiles hesitates a moment before asking “And what if I want to?”

“What if you want to what?”

Stiles rolls her eyes. “Have sex, Peter. What if I want sex? What if I want to get my hands on all that?” She indicates vaguely in Peter’s direction. “I mean, look at you. You’ll make it good, right?” She’s distracted by the flex of Peter’s forearms, and the way the muscles in his thick neck bulge when he nods. She sees Peter watch the way her eyes are roving shamelessly over his body, and his satisfied smirk. Well, she can look if she wants. They’re engaged, now.

“Oh, I’ll make it good. I’m looking forwards to it,” he purrs, and the corners of his mouth curl up even further into a predatory grin.

“Oh, stop looking so pleased with yourself, Hale,” Stiles grumbles, but there’s no heat to her words.

“I’m frankly flattered that a gorgeous creature like you would even look my way, darling,” Peter says, and he actually sounds sincere.

Stiles blushes at the compliment, and at knowing that yes, Peter *does* look at her that way. “Whatever. You *do* have the goods to back all that up, right?” she asks.

Peter gets up out of his chair at that, and comes around to where Stiles is still sitting. He extends a hand and draws her to her feet, before murmuring quietly “Would you like me to show you?”

Stiles heart beats a little faster as she asks, “What did you have in mind?”

“I thought we could have our first kiss,” Peter whispers in her ear, and she can smell him. Not cologne, not on a wolf, but a deeper, earthier scent, something intoxicating and wild.

“Yes, please,” she breathes out, and then Peter’s lips are on hers, soft and chaste and gentle, barely there before he pulls away again.

Stiles leans forwards, chasing his mouth, and he rewards her with another kiss, deeper this time. Stiles closes her eyes and fully savors the sensation as Peter gently presses the tip of his tongue against her lips, coaxing them open and then tilting his head slightly so that their mouths lock together *just so*.

Stiles melts into the kiss, and her hands somehow end up fisted around the front of Peter’s shirt, holding him close as she lets her tongue slip between his teeth and explore his mouth. She makes an unhappy noise when Peter pulls away suddenly, but she opens her eyes to see Noah standing there with his arms folded across his chest, glaring at them.

“So I’m gonna go ahead and guess that you’ve finished discussing whatever it was that was so top secret, huh kiddo?” he says drily, never taking his eyes off Peter.

“Um, yeah. Yeah, we did.” Stiles resists the urge to wipe her mouth with the back of her hand, like a child caught with her hand in the cookie jar.

“We were checking if we have any chemistry. I just need to check once more,” she says, before boldly leaning in and kissing Peter again, ignoring her father’s pained groan.

If she goes ahead with this, *when* she goes ahead with it, her Dad will just have to learn to deal with her kissing Peter, she thinks. Because she plans to do it a *lot*.

And from the expression on Peter’s face when they finally part, he knows it.

the ring

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Stiles finds out that it's entirely possible to plan a wedding, buy a house, and become addicted to Peter's touch in just ten days.

Stiles wakes up to 9 missed calls and 16 texts from Scott, all variations on *What's happening with Peter?* She notes he's obviously not that concerned, because he hasn't come over.

She calls Peter, briefly reflecting how strange it feels to have his number. "Hello, Stiles" he says in greeting, and he sounds genuinely pleased to hear from her, which gives her a warm feeling that she doesn't examine too closely.

"Hey, Peter. Did Scott message you?" she asks.

"He certainly did. Are we replying?"

Stiles sighs. Her initial ire has died down, and she feels like she should at least be keeping the pack in the loop. "I guess we can tell him. But we're not inviting him to the wedding" she says mulishly.

"We're having guests now?" Peter asks, sounding amused.

"Well, we need witnesses at least."

Peter hums thoughtfully. "I'll be over to collect you in half an hour. We're going out to breakfast and we're going to make some plans," he says decisively.

Stiles showers and dresses quickly, and when Peter arrives she's ready and waiting to go. She notes the pleased expression on his face when she leans in for a kiss, and the way his hand rests on the small of her back as he guides her to the car. It's slightly possessive, but she finds that she really doesn't mind.

He takes her to a café that she hasn't been to before, always dismissing it as pretentious. It *is* pretentious, but it also has excellent, albeit overpriced coffee, and she hums her appreciation as she lets the rich taste roll over her tongue. "Trust you to be the sort of man who's a regular here," she grins into her cup.

"I don't know what you mean," Peter says, as he orders them both the house breakfast without even glancing at the menu.

“Have you looked at this place, Peter? They’re serving drinks in mason jars, for god’s sake. They have a beetroot latte on the menu. What even *is* that?”

“Actually, it’s revolting,” he confesses. “I tried it once – it’s beetroot and avocado.” He shudders at the memory, and Stiles snickers.

“So we don’t want them catering our magical day?” she teases.

Peter shakes his head. “I thought we’d have a small garden ceremony, and then have cocktails and canapes at the Beacon Hotel. Or did you want something bigger?”

“Honestly? I thought you’d just want to go to the courthouse.”

Peter looks thoughtful. “Is that what you want?” he asks after a moment. “Is that how you dreamed of your wedding day?”

“Well, no. But it’s fine, honestly.”

Peter shakes his head. “It’s not fine. Tell me what you’d like, and that’s what we’ll do. I know it’s not a conventional courtship, but there’s no reason your wedding shouldn’t be what you want.”

Stiles is honestly torn. For all that this is an arrangement rather than a love match, it *is* her wedding day. She wonders what it would be like to go full bridal, buy the silk gown and the heels, get the makeover, see if she could pull it off.

Peter must sense her indecision, because he smiles at her softly and says “It’s okay to have what you want, darling. In fact, if you want to go all out, I’m all for it. It means I can get dressed up as well, and impress my bride.”

Stiles is surprised by that. “Why would you bother?” she asks, honestly perplexed. Peter doesn’t have to impress her, she’s already said yes.

Peter hums. “Maybe I’m just vain, but I’d like to look my best on my wedding day. I’ve been told I’m irresistible in a suit. Humor me?”

Well. When he puts it like that, Stiles can hardly refuse. “Okay. Not the courthouse. But nothing over the top, either. What you said sounds good. And I’d like us to dress up,” she adds.

“Excellent. Derek and Lydia as best man and bridesmaid?”

Stiles nods, smiling. Their meal arrives, and as they eat they decide on the when and the where and the who of it all. It’s a surprisingly painless process – neither of them care enough to argue over the details. They choose a date in ten day’s time. It falls inside the time limit for Peter to marry – just. Peter tells Stiles that he’ll take care of organizing it all, she just has to choose a dress for her and Lydia.

As they’re leaving, he hands her his credit card. “For the dresses, and anything else you want or need for your big day.” Stiles tries to hand it back, but he flat out refuses. “I want you to

get what you want without worrying about the cost. All I ask is that if it's at all possible, you avoid one of those giant tulle monstrosities that make you look like a beach ball."

"I thought you said to get what I want?" Stiles says, a smile playing around her lips.

"I did. But you have a pretty little figure, and I won't deny, I'd quite like to see you show it off." He winks at her, and she blushes.

After he drops her off, she calls Lydia.

"Want to be my bridesmaid in ten days? And also, come help me pick a dress?"

"So, you're going ahead?"

"Yeah. Am I crazy? Is this a terrible idea?" Stiles asks. She knows she can trust Lydia to be honest.

Lydia's silent for a moment." It depends," she says finally. "Would you say you and Peter get on?"

Stiles thinks about it. "We always have, except when he's being a stubborn ass and won't admit I'm right."

"Would you class yourself as friends?"

"I think I would. Peter's a better friend than Scott is right now. I mean, he didn't try to push me into this the way Scott did."

Lydia hums. "They say a good relationship starts with a good friendship. I think you'll be fine."

"Thanks, Lyds," Stiles says, feeling a little better about her decision. "Now, help me pick something to wear?"

"Absolutely. What's your budget like?"

Trust Lydia to get to the heart of the matter.

"I don't actually have one, just Peter's credit card."

Lydia sounds gleeful as she says, "Oh well, in that case, this is going to be *fun*."

It's not fun.

They spend five hours the next day going around Beacon Hills' three bridal shops, and they still don't find a dress. Stiles is beyond done. She knows what she wants, but the shop assistants seem intent on stuffing her into ridiculously tight sheaths, which she secretly thinks make her look like a washed out Morticia Addams.

"You look so sophisticated," they coo. "Your body shape was *made* for this," ignoring her protests that she can't even walk in those dresses properly, and she doesn't *want* sophisticated, she wants fun, and pretty. Lydia, the traitor, doesn't even try to stop them. "You do look good," she shrugs.

Stiles entertains herself by insisting on trying on the biggest, flounciest cupcake dresses she can find, the more ridiculous the better, and then making Lydia take pictures as the saleswomen look on dubiously.

She sends them to Peter, asking

What about this?

Or this?

This one's my favorite.

He refuses to bite though, just replying **Whatever makes you happy.**

When she sends him a picture where she's wearing a bonnet and holding an honest to god Shepherd's crook, he finally sends back a gif of Buzz Lightyear that says **You're mocking me, aren't you?**

What gave it away?

Sweetheart, if you were buying it, you wouldn't send me a picture.

Dammit. Too smart for me.

I very much doubt it, Stiles.

She's just about admitted defeat when she spots a tiny retro wear shop. She drags Lydia inside, saying "I just need to look at something that's not a wedding dress for five minutes, OK? And I love this stuff."

The woman behind the counter overhears, and gives Stiles a warm smile. "Big day coming up?"

Stiles sighs heavily as she nods. "If I can ever find something to wear. I'll know it when I see it, but so far I haven't seen it."

The woman hums in sympathy. "It took me three months to find a dress I liked."

“Well, I’ve got ten days. I might have to settle,” Stiles admits, as she flicks through a rack of fifties inspired dresses. She’s kinda taken with the one with pugs on it, and decides to try it on. “What do you think Lydia, can I get married in this?” she asks, holding the dress up.

“Absolutely not,” Lydia tells her firmly.

“Are you sure? Peter said to get what I want, and it’s cute,” she argues.

Lydia fixes her with a stern look. “Yes Stiles, because your new husband the werewolf will be *thrilled* if you turn up wearing a dog dress. He won’t find that offensive *at all*.”

Dammit, she has a point.

Stiles pouts, but tries the dress anyway. She loves the way the petticoat makes the skirt move and flounce, the way it skims just above her knees, the teal coloring, everything. “I’m buying it,” she announces.

“That shape does sit well on you,” The saleswoman says with a nod.

“Yeah, if I could just find a wedding dress this easily.”

The woman looks Stiles up and down consideringly, and says “Wait here. I might have something that suits.”

Lydia and Stiles exchange a glance, and Stiles shrugs. Why not?

The woman disappears out the back, and they wait patiently. Well, Stiles waits patiently. Lydia looks pointedly at her watch. After about five minutes, the woman emerges clutching a dress bag. Stiles can see white peeking out of it.

The woman pulls the dress out, and holds it up for perusal. It’s strapless with an A line skirt and a sweetheart neckline, and it’s made from layer upon layer of delicate tulle, with a skirt that flows softly. The top half has the fabric draped in diagonal lines, drawing the eye downwards and saving it from being too plain. It looks like it would sit just past her knees, and Stiles can’t help but reach out and run a hand over the fabric. She looks at Lydia, eyebrows raised.

Lydia takes the dress and holds it against Stiles, before nodding. “Try it on.”

Stiles darts back into the changeroom, hoping against hope that it fits. She slips out of the pug dress and into the wedding dress. It goes on easily, and the built in boning means it hugs her waist nicely. She can’t reach the zip though, so she calls for Lydia to help her. When the dress is done up, she looks in the mirror, and stares at her reflection silently.

“It’s perfect,” Lydia declares, and Stiles has to agree. She looks like a bride.

She goes out to show the saleslady, who beams at the sight of her. “It’s perfect,” she echoes. They find a similarly styled dress for Lydia, only in deep amethyst, and Stiles does a tiny victory dance when Lydia gives it her stamp of approval.

She insists on paying for the pugs separately, only using Peter's card for the wedding dresses. When the lady rings up the cost, Stiles gives her a quizzical look. "That's a lot less than it says on the tag."

"It was a special order that never got collected, and it's been sitting out the back forever and a day. I'm happy to see it go to a good home, to be honest," she explains.

Stiles walks out with a huge grin on her face. "I have a dress," she tells Lydia happily.

"And now all we need are shoes and underwear," Lydia reminds her.

Stiles groans, but Lydia is relentless. She drags her to the shoe store, and once they're finished there she takes her to buy lingerie. "Is this really necessary?" Stiles hisses.

"Yes. Trust me, it'll do wonders for your confidence. Besides, Peter's paying, so let's give him something he'll enjoy for his money," she says with a wink. She bullies Stiles into buying numerous sets of satin and lace underwear before she declares them done. Stiles almost collapses with relief.

Peter gets a text from Stiles saying *I got everything. It was exhausting.*

He smiles to himself. If she's bought a dress, it means she hasn't changed her mind, and he finds that extremely reassuring. He's fairly certain that she's a woman of her word, but he knows there's nothing stopping her from reconsidering. All he can do is make sure that he stays in her good graces.

He tells himself that's why he bought the ring, but honestly, he doesn't quite know why he bought it. He was telling Stiles the truth when he said it made him think of her. He saw it, and he just...wanted her to have it. He didn't even flinch at the seven-thousand-dollar price tag. He knows that she has no idea what it cost, and he has no intention of telling her.

Out of idle curiosity, he pulls up his online banking to see how much she spent on the dress. He's expecting it to run into the thousands, so frowns when he sees the total of the three purchases on there. He picks up his phone and calls, and Stiles answers a moment later.

"Sweetheart, how much was the dress?" he asks, because surely there's been a mistake.

There's a moment's silence before she replies. "Um, six hundred? Sorry, is that too much?"

"No, sweetheart. It's far less than I expected, that's why I'm checking. To make sure that there wasn't a mistake. I really don't care how much it costs. Are you certain you got what you wanted, though?"

Her voice goes soft as she says “Yeah. Yeah, I did. It’s beautiful, Peter. I think you’ll like it.”

“And not a cupcake dress?”

“Definitely not a cupcake dress,” she replies, and he can hear the smile in her voice.

“So tell me sweetheart, what else did you buy?” he asks playfully.

“I got a dress for Lydia, and we both got shoes,” Stiles tells him. She hesitates before saying, “Lydia made me get lingerie. Said you might as well get something you enjoy for your money.”

“Oh? Well remind me to thank Lydia,” Peter purrs out.

“Seriously. I didn’t spend too much did I? I wasn’t sure if there was a limit.”

Peter can just picture Stiles chewing on her lip nervously, so he hastens to reassure her. “Sweetheart, you could have spent ten times that and I wouldn’t care. As long as you’re happy with your choice.”

“I’m happy,” she says, and he can hear in her voice that she means it.

They make plans to meet the next afternoon, and hang up. Peter immediately texts Lydia.

Please tell me Stiles didn’t settle for just any dress because she was worried about spending too much?

Really Peter? You think I’d let her settle? The dress is perfect. Stiles is happy.

He really should learn to trust Lydia, he reflects. As long as Stiles is happy, his future is secure. So he plans to keep her very, very happy. It’s for his own selfish reasons.

That’s what he tells himself.

Peter takes over the reins of the organizing, and Stiles gratefully lets him. She tells him that if anyone can make a wedding happen in a week, it’s him, just through sheer pigheadedness. He takes it as a compliment.

The rings are easy, as there’s a matching band to go with Stiles’s engagement ring, and Peter just gets a plain white gold band.

They cave and invite Scott to the wedding, after Stiles realizes that she can’t invite Melissa without inviting Scott, and her affection for Mama McCall outweighs her annoyance at his

son. As she explains to Peter, “Poor Scott’s Mom, she was my dad’s go to for anything girly. I was the daughter she never asked for, but she stepped up to the plate. Puberty, bra fittings, makeup, prom dress, sex talk, you name it, she was there. I can’t not invite her. And I guess if I ask her, I have to invite Scott.”

“It’s fine, sweetheart. We’ll invite him. Has he tried to contact you again?”

Stiles groans. “He keeps texting. His line now is *Why are you still annoyed if you’re marrying Peter anyway?* He just doesn’t get that it’s the way he went about it.”

“My texts say *You really should thank me, it was my idea,*” Peter tells her. “Shall we just ignore them?”

“Absolutely. We have enough to think about without worrying about Scott.”

Peter smiles to himself at the use of the word *we*. He finds it extremely reassuring that Stiles is starting to think of them as a unit. He suggests to Stiles that she start looking at houses. She seems surprised at that, but he tells her “If you start looking online and see what you like while I take care of wedding plans, then it’s going to save us a lot of time. You said you wanted a place of our own, and I’m a man of my word.”

He doesn’t mention that it’s also another step forward in the commitment process, another way to connect them. *Look at me, keeping my end of the bargain. Are you keeping yours?*

When Stiles comes to him with her shortlist, he clicks through the properties she’s selected and sighs. “Stiles, I thought you wanted somewhere nice?”

“These are nice.”

“Sweetheart, they’re all one-bedroom apartments. None of them have a backyard, or a pool. There’s nowhere for either of us to have a study.”

Before she even opens her mouth, Peter knows what she’s going to say. “I didn’t want to spend too much,” Stiles explains.

Peter shakes his head. Nobody could ever accuse Stiles of being a gold digger. “Sweetheart, money’s really not an issue for me. Real estate’s a good investment, so I don’t mind paying for somewhere decent.” He clicks back into the webpage they were looking at and changes out the search parameters. He sees Stiles’ eyes widen when he enters his price range. He slides the laptop towards her, saying “There. Now look again, but maybe raise the bar a little. And just so you know, I’m extremely open to the idea of a hot tub. Especially if you’ll agree to get in it with me.”

Stiles grins at that, and Peter leaves her to it. Within an hour they have it narrowed down to three properties. They all have a hot tub. They make a time to go and view them the next day, and Peter can tell immediately when Stiles has found her house – her whole face lights up. “Shall we make an offer, sweetheart?” he asks her quietly as the agent pretends to give them some privacy.

She hesitates. "It's a lot of money, Peter."

"And if I minded spending it, we wouldn't be here. We'd be looking at one-bedroom apartments. But I *don't* mind, because you, wonderful girl, deserve this. So. Shall we make an offer?" he repeats.

Stiles looks around the room again, and nods firmly. "Let's do it."

The agent is thrilled when Peter makes an offer there and then, dependent on them being able to move in in three weeks. The place is empty, so it turns out that it won't be a problem. They'll get married, go on a short honeymoon, and move in when they get back.

They drive back to Peter's afterwards, Stiles grinning wildly. Since he caught them kissing in the kitchen, Noah's been on high alert, and the two of them have to go to Peter's if they want to do anything more than hold hands. Suddenly Peter can understand what Stiles told him about her dad scaring off potential dates.

With a devilish glint in his eye, he leans in and whispers "Shall we celebrate a little?"

Stiles sighs and shakes her head. "I'd love to, but I have work soon." She works the front desk at the station, and she's surprisingly good at it. She has a gift for figuring out exactly what people want or need, and she takes no bullshit from aggressive patrons. Nobody ever dares to sass her twice. Even if her father wasn't the sheriff, it's a role that suits her down to the ground.

"Well if we don't have much time, we'd better make it good." Peter leans in, kissing her soft and slow, the way he knows she likes.

Peter had been quietly thrilled when Stiles told him she wanted sex to be part of their marriage, but he didn't anticipate quite how much she'd enjoy his touch, or how eagerly she'd respond. He's grateful the wedding's only a week away, because it's becoming harder and harder to control himself. He suspects Stiles would sleep with him in a heartbeat, but he wants to wait until they're married, until his survival is assured. So he kisses her and teases her, learns what makes her breath hitch and her heartbeat speed up, and shamelessly exploits the knowledge.

She kisses him back now, tangling her fingers in his hair and pulling him closer. Peter runs one hand down her side, skimming over her ribs where he knows she's sensitive, and he can feel the shiver that runs through her. She responds by kissing down the side of his neck, her mouth soft and open against his skin. He tugs her away and brings her face back up to where he can press his lips against hers. He wraps an arm around her back and pulls her closer, making sure she can feel where he's hardening against her, but he does nothing more than kiss her and hold her close, subtly pressing his crotch against her and only releasing her when she's breathlessly grinding against him, desperate for more.

"I'll take you home, let you get ready for work," he says, smirking as he lets her go.

Her face is flushed, and he can hear her heart racing. "Oh my god, Peter. You have to stop teasing me like that. I can't take it," she protests.

“I know it's difficult, darling. But it's only a week until we're married, and I promise, it will be worth the wait,” he purrs.

Stiles huffs, frustrated. “It had better be, because you're sending me home to hump a pillow right now, I hope you know that,” she snaps.

Peter just smirks, and files that mental image away for later. There's an old saying, *Hunger is the best sauce*, and Peter's not above applying it here. At this rate Stiles will be so focused on getting him to bed, she won't even think about changing her mind before the wedding.

And if that hunger goes both ways, well. Can you blame him, with such an eager, attractive, young bride?

They start texting each other, sending random questions to each other as they think of them. The subjects vary wildly.

Stiles: Musicals- yes or no?

Peter: Yes, if they're quality.

Stiles: Do you just watch, or do you sing along?

Peter: I refuse to answer that on the grounds that I may incriminate myself.

Stiles: So you sing along then.

Stiles: Excellent.

Peter: Morning person or night owl?

Stiles: Morning people should be shot, you know this.

Peter: Correct answer

Stiles: Marvel or DC?

Peter: Depends on how I feel. I swing both ways.

Stiles: Are we still talking about comics?

Peter: Wouldn't you like to know?

Stiles: I would, actually

Peter: Yes, we're still talking comics.

Peter: But also, I swing both ways

Peter: Birth control?

Stiles: On the pill

Peter: No condoms then ;) Excellent. Nothing better than bare skin

Stiles: I'll take your word for it

Peter: Oh, you can trust me on this

Stiles : Toilet roll over or under?

Peter: Does it matter?

Stiles: The wedding's off.

Peter: Sweetheart please, don't even joke about that. My poor heart can't take it.

Stiles: Shit. Sorry, I didn't think.

Stiles: You know I wouldn't, right? Change my mind, I mean.

Peter: I do now.

The next week flies by in a flurry of preparation and government paperwork. They go to register their impending marriage with the Werewolf Control office, and the man behind the counter gives Stiles a frankly disbelieving stare when she states she's marrying Peter of her own free will. Stiles just stares at him blandly, and reaches out to hold Peter's hand.

As the days pass and Stiles spends more time with Peter, she makes the effort to get to know him better. She's well aware that in ten days she's hardly going to plumb all his depths, but she'd like to feel that she at least knows what she's getting into.

She finds that he has an irritating habit of being right, *all the damn time*.

She also finds that when he doesn't have some supernatural creature or a government department threatening him, Peter's *fun*. They have frankly ridiculous conversations that end with them both hooting with laughter. He's not above dropping an ice cube down the back of her shirt. She's not above doing it back.

There are times when she swears he can read her mind. She knows that it's because he can hear her heartbeat, that her scent gives away how she's feeling, and that he's extremely observant, especially when it comes to her. When they're making out, he always seems to pull away just when she's ready to beg for more, and she thinks it's highly unfair. But when she complains, he's firm. "I'll bed you once we're married, Stiles, and not before."

Stiles finds herself daydreaming about what it will be like when he does, what he'll do to her, sighing happily whenever she thinks about it. She's fast becoming addicted to the press of his hips against hers, the feeling of his warm hands against the small of her back, and the way he scents her neck as he holds her. She suspects he's *trying* to make her desperate for him, and it's working.

But before she knows it, it's the night before her wedding, and she's not sighing happily about anything. Instead, she's freaking out, because she's getting married. She's nineteen, and she's marrying a man who's fifteen years her senior that she doesn't love, and who she knows doesn't love her. She does the only thing she can think of – she calls Lydia.

"Tell me I'm not condemning myself to a life of loveless misery," she babbles as soon as Lydia answers.

"Stiles, breathe."

Stiles does as she's told, because it's Lydia. She starts again. "I just – what the hell am I doing? This is going to be a disaster!"

Lydia says "Not necessarily. Tell me, does Peter drive you crazy? Do you have to leave the room after ten minutes because you want to slap him?"

"What? No!"

"Well, if you can be in the same room as him for more than ten minutes, you're already happier than my parents. You and Peter like each other, Stiles. You match. And you're both smart enough to make this work, OK?" Lydia's voice softens as she says, "You think you're the first bride to get cold feet, honey? It's natural to be nervous. But you and Peter will do just fine."

Stiles reflects that Lydia's probably right. She and Peter *do* get along, and they're more similar than she first thought. Maybe it will be okay.

She's calmed down a little by the time Peter calls, asks if he can take her out. Stiles accepts, because she knows that if she stays home she'll only twitch and fidget and drive her dad up the wall with her pacing, and then think herself into a meltdown. So, going out. That's something normal couples do. And that's what she and Peter will be now, a couple.

"You can still change your mind, Stiles," her father reminds her quietly, as watches her tap her fingers repeatedly against her thigh.

Her fingers continue to drum out a fast rhythm as she shakes her head. "I can, but I won't. I promised. And I like Peter. It'll be fine, we'll be fine," she says.

Noah's not sure which of them she's trying to convince. "Sweetheart, I know it goes without saying, but you're always welcome home, you know that, right? You'll still be married, Peter will still be safe. Just...if he doesn't treat you right, you come straight back, you hear?"

Stiles takes a deep breath to steady her nerves. "Thanks, dad. But you know we can't risk living apart. They'll take him the first chance they get. And really, I think I'll be okay. Peter's good to me."

"And so he should be. He's a lucky man."

There's a knock at the door then, and Stiles goes to let Peter in. He takes one look at her and pulls her close for a hug. "Come here, sweetheart," he murmurs as she buries her face against his shoulder, his breath tickling her ear. "Let me hold you. Poor little thing, you're a mess right now, aren't you?"

"I might be freaking out a little," Stiles confesses. "Just cold feet."

"Oh, sweet thing, it'll be fine, I promise. I'll take care of you."

Just hearing the words, feeling Peter wrap his arms around her, makes Stiles feel better, and she wonders, when did Peter become her source of comfort exactly? She decides to think about it later, and for now just burrows in close. She knew werewolves were tactile, but Peter takes it to a whole new level.

She basks in his presence for a minute, feeling her nerves begin to settle now that she's holding Peter, the man whose life she's saving. She just needs to remember why she's doing this. "I'll just be glad when we're married, and I don't have to panic about it anymore," she mumbles against his shoulder.

"This time tomorrow, sweetheart. Done and dusted," Peter says, running his hand down her back softly. She pulls back a little and looks at him.

"Why are you so calming?" she asks. "Is it some werewolf mojo thing?"

Peter smirks and says "I have a naturally soothing aura. It's a gift."

It sounds so stupidly pompous when he says it that she snorts with laughter. "You are so full of shit, Peter Hale."

“Quite possibly,” he agrees.

Stiles finally extracts herself from his grasp, and huffs out a sigh. “Right. Dinner?” she asks.

“Just a moment, Hale,” comes Noah voice. He’s standing there, arms folded, and he’s wearing his Serious Sheriff Face. He fixes Peter with a glare that’s terrified a confession out of more than one miscreant and says “It goes without saying that if you hurt my girl, I’ll drive you to the damned camps myself.”

Peter meets his gaze and holds it, replying “I wouldn’t expect anything less, Noah. But I promise, I’ll do everything I can to make sure Stiles is happy.”

The taut muscles in Noah’s jaw relax a little when he hears that. He turns to Stiles then, and tells her “Home by ten, kiddo. You have a big day tomorrow, and I know Lydia’s planning to come over at ass o’clock in the morning.”

“Yeah, we won’t be late. Peter needs his beauty sleep,” Stiles says.

“it’s true. It takes effort to look this devastatingly handsome,” Peter smirks, and Stiles elbows him in the side on their way out the door.

Dinner’s nothing special, just a chance to unwind, and for Stiles to remind herself that she *likes* Peter, enjoys his company, and that marrying him’s really not that bad. By the time he drops her home, she’s over her attack of nerves.

“No more second thoughts? Not going to leave standing me at the altar?” he asks. He’s only half joking, Stiles can tell, and the hint of uncertainty in his tone, more than anything, fuels her determination to see this thing through.

“Are you kidding? I can’t back out now. I’ve already had my legs waxed.” She doesn’t imagine the relief that flits across his face at that.

He walks her to the front door, and Stiles doesn’t even try to hold back. She kisses him hot and hungry, sneaking her hands up under the hem of his shirt and splaying her palms out, feeling the muscles moving beneath the skin, and the heat of his body as she draws him close. When she finally draws back, Peter quirks a questioning brow at her.

“Just reminding myself what I’ve got to look forwards to. I finally get my hands on that tomorrow,” she says with a smirk. Just for that, Peter pulls her in for another kiss, and they stand there making out for long enough that Noah ends up opening the door and telling Stiles to get her ass inside before the neighbors complain.

Stiles Stilinski marries Peter Hale on the fifth of May, in front of a small gathering of friends in the local gardens.

She looks beautiful, and when Peter sees her it honestly takes his breath away. The dress is perfect for her, simple but elegant, and it absolutely shows off all her curves and her long legs, just as he'd hoped. Her makeup is flawless, her hair sleek, and she walks in on the arm of her father with complete confidence.

"Holy shit, what happened to Stiles?" he hears Derek say, and he can't blame him.

Peter's wearing a simple charcoal grey suit with a deep amethyst tie to match Lydia's dress. He's clean shaven for the occasion, and as Stiles stands in place next to him she mouths *No beard? I like it.*

He smirks. He'll tell her why later.

The service is simple and straightforward, and you'd think it was a love match, if not for the official from the Department of Werewolf Control sitting two rows back watching the whole thing.

Peter pointedly ignores the man, instead focusing on his bride. Stiles wears a shy smile as they recite their vows and sign the registry and then, he's allowed to kiss her. He gives Stiles a chaste peck that's very different from the ones they've been sharing in private, and as Peter pulls away Stiles involuntarily chases his mouth, looking for more. "Later, sweetheart, I promise," he murmurs, and she blushes.

They pose for photos, and then go to the hotel for drinks and canapes. Scott's there, and Peter's entertained by the way Stiles pointedly ignores him. He sees Stiles talking to Melissa, and from the snippets that he can make out, because he's shamelessly eavesdropping, their dear alpha must have failed to mention to his mother exactly why he and Stiles have fallen out, that he'd tried to force this match onto her. She knows now, though. As he watches, Melissa's expression turns thunderous. She stands, walks over to her son, and whatever she whispers in his ear is enough to have him going pale. Peter suspects Scott and his mother and going to be having a long discussion about this later.

Melissa walks back over to Stiles and says something to her with a wink, and whatever it is, it causes Stiles to break into a wide smile and hug her tight.

Noah's standing in a corner, nursing a beer and looking downcast, so Peter goes over to him. "I closed the deal on the house yesterday," he says casually.

"Uh huh." Noah hesitates. "You and Stiles, you'll be all right together? I mean, if the law doesn't change?"

Peter knows what he's implying. Ten days isn't really long enough to know if they're a good fit together. And he could feed the man platitudes, but he likes Noah, feels he deserves better. "As far as I can tell, we should be fine. Truth be told, I've grown quite fond of your girl. But if she can't put up with me, well, there's a reason I made sure the house is a decent size. We'll just share space, if it all goes south."

“You’ve thought this through,” Noah comments.

“Absolutely. My life is literally in your daughter’s hands. I meant what I said about looking after her, Noah.”

Noah looks at him for a long moment before saying “You really do mean it.” He extends a hand, saying, “In that case, welcome to the family, son.”

Peter has to blink once or twice as he shakes Noah’s hand. It’s a long time since anyone called him son, or welcomed him anywhere.

Stiles sulks when she’s not allowed to drink, protesting “It’s my *wedding day*,” but Peter mollifies her with the promise of champagne in their hotel room later.

There’s a band, and Stiles insists on dancing, so Peter sweeps her out onto the floor as they play some long forgotten love song. He has one hand on her shoulder and the other in her hip, and they move in perfect time to the music. “You’re very good at this, Mrs Hale,” Peter compliments her. Stiles smiles widely at hearing the name. “Holy shit, I’m Mrs Hale now,” she marvels.

“And I couldn’t be more grateful to you for agreeing to marry me, sweetheart,” Peter tells her sincerely.

Stiles gets a twinkle in her eye as she replies “Grateful, huh? You know, if you were really grateful, you’d give me a kiss, like you promised me back at the service.” And, well. Peter knows an invitation when he hears one. He leans in and kisses her, soft and deep, and when they part she murmurs, “It’s different, with no beard. But why did you shave it?”

Peter draws her close so that nobody but her can hear, and murmurs “Well, I didn’t want to give beard burn to my beautiful wife.”

She looks confused, saying, “You never have before. My face is immune to your hairiness.”

Peter chuckles, low and filthy, before he breathes into her ear, “I wasn’t talking about your face, sweetheart. Tonight, I plan to bury my face between your thighs, slide my tongue over your pretty little clit, and lick you till you come so hard you scream.”



Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

The wedding night.

Chapter Notes

Hey all, I just wanted to say thank for giving this a chance - I know girl Stiles isn't everyone's bag, but this has met such a positive response, I'm not gonna lie, I'm kinda thrilled.

Saying that, this chapter fought me a little - who would have thought straight sex would be what gave me, a straight woman, trouble? I think I've beaten in into submission, though.

Note: This chapter starts before the wedding, I've travelled back in time so we can get Stiles's point of view on things. Because I can do that. I'm magic.

“Done. Tell me what you think.” Lydia puts down the makeup brush.

There aren't words to describe how Stiles feels when she sees herself in the mirror. Lydia's done an amazing job, and her makeup is flawless. Her hair has so much spray in it she suspects it wouldn't move in a hurricane, but every strand's placed perfectly. Combined with the dress and the shoes, the impact is stunning, even if she says so herself.

Her breath hitches in her throat a little as she takes in the full effect. “Oh, Lydia, wow. I look....”

“Amazing? Gorgeous? Better than he deserves, and he'd better not forget it?” Lydia says, sounding slightly smug.

“Yeah. Thank you. For all of it.” She drags her friend in for a hug, despite Lydia's protests that she'll wrinkle their dresses.

She'd hadn't been joking when she told Peter she'd waxed her legs – Lydia had taken her out yesterday morning, and she'd spent hours being tortured and pampered in turns, having a massage and a body scrub, a manicure and pedicure, getting her brows shaped and tinted, and then having hot wax poured on sensitive parts of her body in the name of beauty.

She'd stood firm on the spray tan though, despite her friend's cajoling. "I'm don't care if you think I'm too pale. You're not turning me into a goddam Oompa Loompa for my wedding, Lydia."

Now, looking at the result, she thinks it was possibly all worth it. They have half an hour before the wedding, and Stiles deliberately doesn't spend the time thinking about what she's about to do. She's committed to this now, for better or for worse.

Lydia nudges her, saying "And you're wearing the good underwear, right?" making Stiles blush. The *good underwear* consists of tiny scraps of satin, and Stiles has to admit it's extremely flattering.

"I don't see why it matters, but yes," she grumbles.

Lydia fixes her with a look. "Stiles, trust me on this. You'll feel 100 percent more confident when you take that dress off if you know there's something nice underneath. You'll be nervous enough. The last thing you need to worry about is if Peter's going to judge you for your ratty knickers."

Stiles sighs. "I guess."

Lydia adds casually, "Derek loves lingerie. Says his wolf loves the feel of it. If I want to drive him wild, I wear something silky."

Stiles sputters out a laugh. "I did not need to know that, Lyds!"

Lydia grins wickedly. So I shouldn't tell you about the thing he does with his teeth–

"No! Just, no!" Stiles throws a cushion at Lydia to shut her up.

Lydia laughs, and tells her not to be a prude.

And suddenly, it's time to go.

They arrive at the gardens, and Stiles sees Peter there waiting for her. He looks good. Actually, he looks mouthwatering. His suit's cut perfectly, and Stiles kinda wants to get her hands on his ass. She's so busy staring at his long legs that it takes her a moment to realize there's something different. She has to look twice before she realizes that his goatee's gone.

He looks younger without it, and the sharp line of his jaw stands out just a little more. She likes it, she decides.

Noah clasps her arm, saying “Ready, kid?”

She takes a deep breath, straightens her spine, and nods. “Let’s do this.”

Peter’s gaze is intent as they make their vows, as if he’s trying to memorise her features, and she can’t help but notice way he looks hungrily at her. She doesn’t even think he knows he’s doing it. When it’s time for them to kiss though, his lips barely brush hers before he pulls away. She leans in for more, and he smirks, and tells her “Later.”

She’ll hold him to that.

There are no speeches at the reception, no sit down meal, no cake. It’s a gathering of friends to mark the occasion, that’s all. Scott keeps trying to catch her eye, and Stiles keeps avoiding him. Melissa notices of course. “What did he do this time, Stiles? I know he’s in your bad books, I’ve seen that look before,” she says knowingly, sitting down.

Stiles debates for a moment whether to lie, but Melissa adds, “I love that boy, but sometimes I wonder if he ever thinks before he speaks.”

So Stiles tells her. About Scott’s ham-fisted matchmaking. About how he implied that he was only keeping Peter alive because he’s useful. About saying Stiles was a last resort. About the way he hadn’t asked either Stiles or Peter what they wanted. Melissa’s expression darkens as the full extent of her son’s poor treatment of Stiles and Peter is revealed, and she excuses herself with a curt, “I’ll be back.”

She goes over and whispers something in Scott’s ear, and then walks away leaving him looking horrified. When she comes back over to Stiles, she says, “Well, that shut him up. I told him next time he needed to pimp someone out for the sake of the pack, ask me instead of trying to force a teenager into marriage. Told him I’m older, have a little more experience, and I’d be happy to marry a werewolf, they’re incredible in bed. Now he’s over there wondering when I’ve slept with a wolf. We’ll be having a serious talk about taking advantage of your friends later, but for now, he can just stew.”

“Oh, that’s awful. I love it.” Stiles grins, and Melissa winks at her.

Melissa’s eyes sparkle with mischief as she leans in to Stiles and whispers, “Apparently it’s true, by the way. Werewolves are dynamite - their heightened senses mean they know exactly what you like.”

Stiles blushes at the thought. “I guess I’ll find out soon enough.”

“You can tell me all about it tomorrow – I pulled some strings, I’ll be the one doing your medical, if that’s OK?”

“Really? God, yes!” Stiles pulls her into a hug, beyond relieved. At least it won’t be a stranger.

She talks to her guests, eats a few of the canapes, and tries to wangle a glass of wine without success. She keeps thinking about the night ahead, halfway between excited and nervous. She hopes Melissa's right, that Peter makes it good. Looking at him, leaning on the bar and laughing with Derek, she suddenly feels the need to be near him, have him reassure her about the whole thing. She walks over to where he's leaning on the bar, and asks "Care for a dance?"

"You dance, Stiles?"

"I love to dance. Shall we?"

"Certainly, sweetheart." He takes her by the arm and begins to lead her around the dance floor. She can feel the warmth of his hand where it's settled on her hip, and it calms her. He calls her Mrs Hale, and it hits home that she's actually married now.

When Peter tells her that he doesn't want to give her beard burn, she's genuinely nonplussed for a moment – they've kissed plenty in this last week, and she's never shown any hint of irritation. But then he's laughing softly and saying, "I wasn't talking about your face, sweetheart. Tonight, I plan to bury my face between your thighs, slide my tongue over your pretty little clit, and lick you till you come so hard you scream."

Her face heats up as she blushes all the way up to her hairline. Peter's smirking at her, mirth shining from his expression. Any doubts she had about Peter making this good for her vanish. What he's suggesting sounds indecent - filthy even, but that doesn't stop her from wanting it.

Suddenly there are far too many people in the room for Stiles's liking, and she wants, no, *needs* to get Peter alone. The desire that's been slowly simmering for the past two weeks has finally reached boiling point, and she's hard pressed not to drag him upstairs right now by his collar. Instead, she leans in and asks quietly "We can leave soon, right?"

"Possibly not quite yet, sweetheart. Why the sudden rush?"

"You know why," she hisses, blushing even harder.

He laughs then, head thrown back. Stiles resists the urge to lick his throat, and instead grumbles, "You're a terrible person, teasing me like this."

"I'm an absolute monster," he agrees, still grinning wickedly. "I'd say give it another few minutes and we can say our goodbyes and steal away, all right sweetheart?"

Stiles nods her agreement rapidly.

The rounds of goodbyes seems to take an age, and Stiles is sure that Peter makes a point of talking to everyone for twice as long as he needs to. Finally though, he takes her hand and walks her to the elevator.

Peter kisses Stiles as the elevator makes its way up, sweet lazy presses of his mouth against hers that help calm her racing heartbeat. If there's one thing she likes about her husband, it's that he's a hell of a kisser. By the time they reach the top floor, she's relaxing into his touch, and it catches her by surprise when the doors open with a ping.

He leads her to their hotel room, sliding the card into the lock. He looks at her for a moment, and then with no warning at all, picks her up and carries her over the threshold. When he sets her down inside, Stiles looks around the suite, andoh.

There's a trail of rose petals scattered on the floor leading to the bed, and more on the bed itself. There are subtle scented candles, and is that a string of fairy lights? There's a tray of chocolate covered strawberries, the promised bottle of champagne, and two glasses. It's unexpectedly thoughtful, and her face lights up. "Did you do this?" she asks.

"Of course. I thought you might like it."

She does like it, but she still teases him. "This is such a cliché. You know that, right?"

"Sometimes you can't beat the classics," Peter replies smoothly as he pops the cork on the champagne and pours them both a glass. Stiles takes the drink and gulps it back, screwing up her nose at the sharp taste.

Peter looks vaguely amused at her reaction, telling her "That will taste better if you sip it, you know."

Stiles shrugs, but takes his advice, and he's right (why is he *always* right?), it does taste better. She starts to fidget where she stands, because even with the kissing and the flower petals and the champagne, she's still a little tense. Peter watches her as she taps the fingers of one hand in a rapid staccato against her thigh. Finally he stills her hand with his, and says "You're nervous, sweetheart. How about some music to help you relax?" He picks up a remote and presses play.

Stiles isn't sure what she expects to hear, but it sure as hell isn't the Bloodhound Gang's Bad Touch.

"Sweat, baby sweat..." drones the singer, and Stiles just stares at Peter open mouthed. The pulsing beat plays on, and at first she thinks it's a mistake, that Peter's played the wrong track, but by the time she's being exhorted to *do it like they do on the Discovery Channel*, she can see the corners of Peter's mouth twitching up into a smirk, and she knows that the asshole planned this.

She can't help the snort of laughter that comes out of her, because the terrible, tasteless song is at such odds with everything else about tonight. She giggles helplessly, and feels the tension leaving her body. "What the actual fuck, Peter? That's your idea of relaxing music?" she cackles.

"Well, it worked didn't it? Are you nervous anymore?"

And she realizes that no, no she isn't. (Why does Peter *always* have to be right? It's infuriating.) As her giggles subside, she takes a deep breath, and says "Thank you. I might have been a little more nervous than I thought."

Peter refills her champagne glass, but only half way. Stiles drinks it quickly and waggles her glass in the universal signal for more, but he says "I think that's enough for now, sweetheart. We'll finish the bottle later." She guesses he has a point. She's had enough that she can feel a gentle buzz, but she suspects anything more would be a mistake.

Peter slips his jacket off and loosens his tie, undoing the top few buttons of his shirt. He unbuttons his waistcoat as well, and there's something endearing about the way he looks when he's half dressed. He plays with the remote and the awful song cuts off, to be replaced by soft instrumental music, gentle and soothing. "Better?" he asks.

"Better," Stiles agrees. Peter extends his arms in invitation and she snuggles against his chest, nerves forgotten. He kisses her as he holds her, and they sway to the music while she enjoys the press of Peter's body against hers. She soon gets distracted though, her feet making their objections to the heels she's wearing known. "Ugh, these shoes are killing me," she grumbles, placing one hand on Peter's chest to steady herself as she leans down to try and work them off.

"Let me." Peter sits Stiles on the edge of the bed, kneels in front of her, carefully easing the shoe off her left foot. She lets out a happy sigh as her toes are released from their confinement, but the sigh becomes a groan of pleasure as Peter starts to rub her foot, running his thumb up the arch.

Stiles leans back on the bed, supporting herself on her arms and moaning out "Yeah, more." She looks down to see Peter raising his eyebrows at her and grinning like a Cheshire Cat, and she realises exactly what that must have sounded like. But he doesn't say anything, just slips the other shoe off and massages that foot as well. His hands are warm and sure against her skin, and Stiles lets her eyes drift closed as she just enjoys the feeling.

They snap open again when she feels Peter place a delicate kiss on her ankle. "You have such pretty skin, sweetheart," Peter murmurs, before kissing her again, slightly higher this time.

Stiles tenses for a moment, but Peter seems content just to keep peppering delicate kisses around her ankles and calves, and it does feel nice. Stiles can't think of a single reason she'd want him to stop.

Peter's hands release her feet, and slide up her calves till they're resting on her knees under her dress. His mouth follows the same path, kissing softly, higher and higher. Suddenly he flips Stiles's dress up so that she has a lap full of tulle. He looks up from between her legs, silently asking permission, and Stiles gives a shaky nod.

He begins to advance up the creamy skin of her thighs, nuzzling and kissing, and Stiles is suddenly extremely grateful that Lydia insisted on nice underwear. The flesh on her thighs is sensitive, and a shiver runs through her at Peter's ministrations. She can't see his head now, buried under the layers, but she can feel his hands gently pressing her knees farther apart. She relaxes and lets them fall open.

Stiles can feel Peter's breath tickling her flesh, and she expects him to peel the delicate panties off her, but instead she feels him mouthing against the material. She feels the warmth and wetness of his tongue as he soaks the satin by sucking gently on it, leaving a damp patch on her underwear. Then he circles his tongue over her clit through the fabric, and Stiles lets out a tiny squeak.

"Peter – what – you don't have to –" she protests half-heartedly.

He lifts his mouth away just long enough to say "I want to, sweetheart. Let me? Please?"

He presses soft, open mouthed kisses up and down her inner thigh as he waits for permission to carry on, and Stiles can't think with the sensations running through her, doesn't want to think, just wants *more*. "Yes," she breathes.

Peter goes back to work teasing her. This is different to anything she's ever felt, worlds away from the efficient motion of her own fingers that she usually gets herself off with. The contrast of the wet satin and Peter's hot mouth is incredible. She squirms a little, because it's not enough. Stiles starts to rock into his mouth. She can feel herself becoming wetter, adding to the mess in her panties, and Peter chuckles. "There's my good girl," he praises. "Ready for more?"

"Uh huh." She just wants him to stop talking, and put his mouth back where it should be.

She hears Peter give a pleased hum, and then his thumbs are hooking into the elastic of her underwear. Stiles lifts her hips without hesitation so that he can slip the scrap of fabric off her. "Oh, I was right, such a pretty little clit," he murmurs, and then he leans in and blows deliberately across her mound. Stiles can't help thrusting up, the warm air against her damp skin unexpected and delicious. Peter holds her thighs apart with strong hands as he swipes the tip of his tongue delicately across her flesh, barely there and gone again. It's heavenly.

Stiles makes a noise that she didn't even know she could make, halfway between a moan and a squeal, as Peter flicks his tongue back and forth. She presses up against his mouth, greedy for more, and he doesn't disappoint. He moves lower, lapping wetly at her folds as she squirms. A distant part of Stiles's brain wonders what she looks like, sitting in her wedding dress with her legs spread wide and her husband buried between them, but she ignores it, because she's distracted by the fact that Peter's sliding his tongue *inside her*.

She can't hold back the broken moan as he thrusts in deeper, fucking her with his tongue. It's overwhelming as he presses his face in close while his tongue works in and out, in and out. She's never had anything so deep inside, barely pressed a finger in before, and she never ever wants it to stop. Peter eventually slips his tongue out and Stiles whines at the loss, but then a thick finger enters her, and she gasps. Peter stills his hand immediately, only starting to move again when she reassures him "No, it's good, want more."

It *is* good. She never knew she was so sensitive inside, and there's that spot that makes her shiver whenever he rubs against it. Peter works her open skilfully, making her tremble and whine at his touch. She can feel her orgasm getting closer, breath coming in short pants. She starts begging for more, and when Peter finally sinks a second finger deep inside her as he thumbs her clit, she falls apart, shaking as she comes with a breathless whine.

She shudders her way through the aftershocks, Peter's fingers still inside her. When he goes to remove them she whimpers pathetically, so he just leaves them, solid and comforting, until she's stopped shaking.

Stiles collapses backwards onto the bed, unable to keep herself propped up any longer. She lies there with her eyes closed for a long moment, catching her breath. She feels Peter slide his fingers out of her and place a single soft kiss against her mound, barely a breath, but it still makes her shiver with how sensitive she feels.

"You were *supposed* to be taking my shoes off," she finally says. She can't stop the lazy smile spreading across her face.

"Well it was just too tempting, and you didn't seem to mind. I did *say* I was going to bury my face between your legs," Peter reminds her. She can hear the satisfaction in his voice. She feels a weight settling onto the bed next to her, and opens her eyes to see that he's sitting next to her, gazing down. He looks far too pleased with himself, and there are traces of wetness smeared across his chin. Stiles sits up and pulls him in for a kiss, and she can taste the tang of herself on his lips. She doesn't care, tangling her hands in his dark hair and kissing him deeper. They stay like that for a few minutes, until finally Peter pulls back, eyes dark with desire.

"Shall we get you out of that dress?" he asks, slightly breathless.

After that, it's easy. They undress each other, kissing and touching all the while. Peter lowers her to the bed, and Stiles just hums when he slides in next to her and spoons her from behind. She can feel his erection against her, but Peter doesn't seem to be in any hurry to do anything about it, so she lets herself enjoy the floaty, hazy feeling as she recovers from the best orgasm of her life.

She lies pliant and loose in his arms, and doesn't pull away when he starts kissing down the back of her neck. She also doesn't object when he rolls her onto her back and starts mouthing at her breasts and kissing her belly, murmuring soft praises and nonsense against her skin. She relaxes into the feel of his lips and hands as they brush over her. It seems Peter's determined to touch every inch of her, and that's a plan she can get behind.

Time moves syrupy – slow as he explores her body, and Stiles can feel herself getting aroused again. Peter teases her expertly until she's half mad with the need for more. Stiles arches her back and moans, pulling him nearer. When Peter slides a hand between her legs and finds her wet and ready, a low growl escapes him. He kisses her softly, then moves so that his body's bracketing hers. She can feel the very tip of his cock nudging at her opening. "Ready for me, darling?" he asks softly.

"Yeah," she smiles. She's too relaxed to tense even a little as he pushes forward into her with one smooth movement. There's no resistance at all, he just...slides right in. There isn't any pain, just a feeling of being stretched out and full. She likes it.

A soft "Yessss" escapes her, and she spreads her legs wider, hands firmly on Peter's hips, rocking against him and encouraging him as he sets up a gentle rhythm. She hears him panting against her neck as he fucks her easily, and before long the snap of his hips starts to speed up. The delicious slip and slide of his cock inside of her makes Stiles whine, as she feels herself getting close. She wraps her legs around Peter, and the change in position makes her feel fuller, rubs her just right. She grips onto him harder, pleading "*Peterpeterpeter, fuck me, please.*"

He starts to thrust into her with more purpose now, and Stiles clenches down deliberately around him, and it feels good, so she does it again. Peter lets out a low growl, and suddenly his hips stutter forwards, once, twice and then he slams in hard, grunting as he comes. Stiles is skirting the edges of her own orgasm, and the feeling of Peter forcing every last inch of himself tips her over the edge. She sobs as she comes, clenching around him helplessly.

Peter slumps against her breathlessly, pressing her into the mattress. She just lays there, boneless, enjoying the comforting weight of his body against hers. Finally, Peter manages to prop himself up on his elbows. He leans in and kisses the tip of her nose, a smile playing across his face. "Well, Mrs Hale?"

Stiles sighs happily. "Mmmm," is all she can manage, but judging from the way Peter's expression goes soft, she knows he understands.

Peter pulls out and rolls off to the side, and Stiles makes an unhappy noise. It takes all of her effort to follow him to his side of the bed and plaster herself across his back, but she manages it, barely, before drifting off into a hazy, sex-induced slumber.

Peter lies in bed, listening to his new wife's steady breathing as she sleeps. He'd been worried about potential cold feet, that Stiles might be too nervous to enjoy herself, might possibly refuse him, but his fears were unfounded.

He's consummated the marriage. He's safe.

Stiles snuggles up closer to him and whimpers in her sleep, and Peter feels a wave of unease wash over him, an unaccountable need to make sure she's all right. He eases himself onto his back, careful not to wake her, and arranges them so that her head's resting on his chest and his arm is round her, holding her close.

Better. He can see her now, be certain she's okay. He watches her sleeping, and something in him settles at the sight of her safe in his arms.

It occurs to him belatedly that perhaps he's underestimated just how strong those protective instincts everyone talks about might be.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Peter discovers the ray of sunshine that Stiles is in the morning.
It's really not what he was expecting.

Stiles wakes up slightly too warm, and discovers it's because she's trapped by a pair of strong arms. When she opens one eye she's greeted by the sight of Peter's chest hair, where she's pressed against him. She has a headache, probably from lack of sleep, and she won't lie, she feels like shit. She's still tired, and her hips ache, unaccustomed to the stretch where she'd spread herself wide for Peter last night. There's also a dull throb between her legs – not pain exactly, more like a feeling of being well used.

There's nothing Stiles would like better than to go back to sleep, preferably without Peter being wrapped around her. But one look at the clock tells her she needs to get up and get going, because she has the stupid medical this morning, and she booked it early so she could get it over with. She tries to extract herself from Peter's grip without waking him, but his eyes open as soon as she moves. "Good morning, wife," he murmurs, and something about the way he says it just rubs her up the wrong way.

Wife. Like it could be anyone in his bed.

Wife. That's all she is now. What the hell was she thinking, getting married? She pushes him away when he leans in to kiss her and gets out of bed, stomping into the bathroom and slamming the door.

Stiles goes to turn on the shower, but then remembers with a sinking feeling the instructions in the stupid leaflet the stupid man at stupid Werewolf Control had given her. The instructions say not to shower, but to *preserve evidence of consummation*. "Dammit," she mutters under her breath. She's a mess down there.

There's a knock at the door. "Stiles?" Peter calls out. "Are you all right?"

Stiles can hear concern in his voice, but the tired, unreasonable part of her brain whispers *he just wants you to get tested so he's safe*. "Can't a woman pee in peace?" she snaps.

There's no reply, and she feels bad, but not bad enough to apologise. She's always been a bitch in the mornings – Noah's hauled her over the coals about it more than once, after she made a deputy cry. She washes yesterday's makeup off, and cleans up between her thighs a little with a washcloth, *preserving the evidence* be damned. When she finally opens the door,

Peter's sitting on the bed, fully dressed. She sees his eyes flick up and down her still naked body, and can't help herself when she snarls "Take a picture, it'll last longer."

Peter gets up off the bed at that, and walks out the door without saying a word. Stiles stares at the door as it slams shut, because what the fuck? He's just going to leave her here without saying anything? She fumes at the slight. *Maybe*, she thinks, *this isn't going to work out after all*.

She dresses in the yoga pants and t shirt she'd brought in her overnight bag, feeling more miserable by the minute. She's nervous about the exam, she doesn't know where Peter's gone, and she smells vaguely of fish. Her head whips up at the sound of the door opening. Peter walks in, carrying a tray with two large coffees. He silently walks over and hands her one.

Oh.

He makes a *drink up* gesture at her, still completely silent. Stiles isn't going to look a gift caffeinater in the mouth, and she downs half the cup in one hit. As the coffee works its magic, her headache starts to dull, and she feels bad for acting so snappishly. She drains the cup, and mutters "Thanks."

Peter waits a moment before asking "Can I speak yet?"

Stiles cocks her head at him in a query.

"You said never speak to you before coffee. My apologies. I didn't realize you were serious. So, can I speak yet?" he asks again. He hands over the second coffee cup. At Stiles' surprised look, he explains, "I got you two."

Stiles hangs her head, feeling like an absolute heel. "Sorry, yeah. I'm a bitch in the morning," she mumbles.

Peter raises an eyebrow. "And of course, it has nothing to do with the fact that you're halfway to terrified about this medical, does it?" Stiles opens her mouth, about to try and deny it, but Peter says, "I can smell the anxiety coming off you, sweetheart. You're scared stupid."

Stiles deflates. She kind of forgot that Peter can tell how she's feeling. "I'm pretty nervous. And it sucks that I can't shower. And you called me *Wife*, like I'm your property, and it just... pissed me off, I guess."

Peter sighs. "I didn't mean it like that Stiles, I promise."

"I know. I'm just want this damn thing over with." She looks hopefully at Peter. "You'll come with me, right? To the appointment?"

"Of course." Stiles could swear that he looks pleased to be asked.

"Good." Stiles immediately feels better, knowing he'll be there. She figures even if the exam sucks, Peter can hold her afterwards. He gives the best hugs.

Stiles is too nervous to eat breakfast. Her appointment's at eight, because she just wanted to get it done with, but now she can't help but wish she'd put it off just a little longer. She knows it's Melissa doing the exam, but still. People prodding at her, it's just...no.

Peter seems to understand, or maybe she's just projecting her anxiety in a big fucking tidal wave of scent, because he doesn't say much, just puts an arm around her shoulders as they walk through the door. Stiles leans into him, and breathes deeply. Melissa's waiting for her, and so is the man from Werewolf Control. Stiles frowns at the sight of him and hopes like hell he's just here to collect the paperwork.

Melissa ushers Stiles into an exam room, and the man goes to follow them, but Melissa whirls on her heel and asks, "Where do you think you're going?"

"I'm required to be present at the examination," he states.

Stiles shakes her head, and Peter steps between the man and Stiles, letting out a low growl that startles her with its fierceness. Melissa puts a hand on Peter's shoulder in a calming gesture, before stepping forward, effectively blocking entry. "I don't think you need to be in the room, sir. I can't see what purpose it would serve."

The man starts to protest, but a steel thread is evident in Melissa's tone when she says "Why do we need you in there, exactly? What are you planning to do?"

"I have to observe. It's procedure," he tries.

Melissa's not having it."Tell me, who gains anything from your presence? As a medical professional, I don't. Stiles certainly doesn't - the poor girl's terrified. So the only one who could possibly get anything out of this is you."

The man hesitates, his mouth opening and closing as he tries to find an answer to that.

Melissa sees his moment of weakness and pounces." Unless you're the kind of man who gets his thrills watching a scared young girl getting a medical examination?"

"Absolutely not!" he huffs.

"Good. You won't mind waiting outside," she says firmly, steering Stiles inside and closing the door on both men.

She turns to Stiles then, grinning widely. Stiles narrows her eyes, not sure exactly what's going on. She heads towards the bed and goes to climb up, but Melissa stops her. "Wait a minute, Stiles."

Stiles turns back round. Melissa has her clipboard in hand, and she's writing something. She casts her eyes over Stiles, and says "Yep. Looks like you did it to me," before signing the form with a flourish.

Stiles stares at her, confused. "Don't you have to – "

"Nope." When Stiles continues to look at her, she clarifies. "I'm not going to examine you, Stiles. It's humiliating, and unnecessary, and you deserve better."

Stiles takes a moment to process what Melissa's saying, but when the realization finally hits her that there will be no medical after all, she feels a wave of relief rush through her, and she can't stop the smile that spreads over her face. Melissa smiles back and says, "Just tell me he didn't hurt you, and you don't actually need medical attention?"

Stiles can feel her cheeks heat at the question, but Melissa's looking at her expectantly, waiting for an answer. She shakes her head minutely. "No, he didn't hurt me." She hesitates before adding "It was good."

Melissa smiles softly at the admission. "Good. I'm glad for you. Now, here's what we'll do. We're going to sit here for a little while and talk, and when we leave you're going to do your best to look like someone's had a hand all up in your lady parts." She takes a seat at the desk and indicates Stiles should sit in the other chair. Then she leans in forwards and asks conspiratorially, "So, are the rumors about werewolves in bed true?"

Stiles fights the urge to curl up under the desk with embarrassment at the question. It's not like she can answer it anyway – she has no basis for comparison. She settles for replying "A lady doesn't kiss and tell."

Melissa, to her credit, doesn't ask further. "Relax, honey. I'm just teasing."

Stiles relaxes a little, and gives Melissa a shaky grin. "Yeah, I know. But can we please talk about something else?"

"Only if you promise that if you'll tell me if Peter doesn't treat you right."

"I promise. But I think we might actually be OK."

Melissa nods. "I think you might be too. You seem to get on well enough. But the offer's there."

Stiles nods her thanks. It's good to know that there are people who have her back, just in case it all goes pear shaped. They chat for a while, killing time, until finally Melissa looks at her watch and says, "Let's get you out of here, before Peter has a meltdown and comes looking for you."

Stiles snorts. "He's not going to have a meltdown. Why would he?"

Melissa rolls her eyes. "Stiles, Peter's wolf will be driving him wild right now, because he'll want to take care of you. Having you out of his sight, undergoing a medical procedure? I'll bet he's paced a hole in the carpet by now."

“Yeah, I don’t think so. I think that whole bonding thing’s an old wives’ tale, to be honest.”

Melissa shakes her head. “It’s real, Stiles. Peter growling before? Protective instinct right there. He’ll want to look after you – he won’t be able to help himself.”

Stiles had been surprised by the intensity of Peter’s reaction before, but if it’s his wolf side, she guesses it makes sense. She nods slowly. “I’d better go and let him know I’m okay then, I guess.”

Melissa draws her in for a quick hug. “Your mother would be proud, Stiles. You’re doing a good thing.”

At the mention of her mom, Stiles lets out a shaky breath. “You think so?” she asks quietly.

Melissa puts a hand under her chin and looks her in the eye. “She would have done the same, honey. You’re more like her than you know.” Stiles has to swallow a lump in her throat at that – her father’s told her the same thing, a thousand different times in a thousand different ways, but it’s never felt more like praise than it does right now.

She gives Melissa one last squeeze. “Thank you,” she whispers.

“My pleasure. I don’t know what your plans are now, but if you’re smart, you’ll take that gorgeous man back to your hotel and ask him to take you to bed for another round. Second time with a new lover’s always better.” Stiles blushes bright red at the comment, and Melissa grins wickedly. She lets go and pushes Stiles gently towards the door. “Go, reassure your man. And don’t forget, try and look a little traumatized.”

Stiles snickers at that, but she does try and arrange her face into some semblance of distress before she leaves the room. She must succeed, because she’s barely a foot out the door before Peter’s striding over to her from where he has, indeed, been pacing, and his arms wrap around her possessively. He’s growling again, and shooting dark looks at Melissa. Stiles lets him pull her close, resting her head on his shoulder and breathing quietly in his ear so nobody else can hear, “Calm down, husband mine. Nobody touched me. We fudged the exam.” Peter’s grip loosens the tiniest bit at that, but he keeps his arms around her as she continues, “Just stay like this, we have to make dickface think I’m upset.” She nods imperceptibly at the government official.

“There, there, sweetheart, it’s over now,” Peter soothes obediently. Stiles peeks over his shoulder at where Melissa’s handing a swathe of paperwork to the man, and she’s gratified to see that he takes it without a second glance and walks down the hall, leaving them in peace. Stiles relaxes, finally, and allows herself a moment to just enjoy the way Peter’s body fits against hers seamlessly, before her stomach gives a loud growl and she belatedly remembers that she really hasn’t eaten since yesterday, apart from a handful of finger foods at the wedding. Peter chuckles where he’s pressed against her, saying “Breakfast?”

“Breakfast,” Stiles agrees.

With the departure of her nerves, Stiles' appetite has returned with a vengeance, and she demolishes a full cooked breakfast easily. She explains to Peter how Melissa had just ticked all the boxes, and how relieved she'd been.

He nods approvingly, and she doesn't imagine the way his shoulders drop a little, and his whole body relaxes at the assurance that she's fine, really. *Protective*, she thinks, and the thought makes her smile. Peter sees it and smiles back, open and honest. It makes him look younger, and incredibly attractive.

Stiles thinks about Melissa's suggestion. She looks at Peter from under her lashes as she considers what she wants to do. Last night, she'd enjoyed herself, to be sure. But it had also been an obligation. She wonders if it would be different if she was sleeping with Peter just because she wanted to. She suspects it would.

"Whatever you're thinking about, sweetheart, please do share, because you smell delicious right now," Peter says suddenly, jolting her out of her reverie. He's observing her keenly, and she sees his nostrils flare.

"We have late checkout, right?"

"We do. We can go straight to the airport from the hotel at two," Peter confirms. "Why?"

"I was thinking about taking you back to bed," she blurts out.

Peter raises a brow. "Would you like that?" he asks.

Stiles suddenly finds the bottom of her coffee cup extremely interesting. She won't meet his eyes as she whispers, "Would that be all right?"

Peter's eye light up. He leans forwards and starts kissing her gently. "That. Would be. Absolutely. Lovely," he murmurs between pecks. "Shall we go?"

They pay the bill and leave, and Stiles is aware of Peter's eyes on her as he follows her out of the diner. He keeps glancing across at her as they drive back to the hotel, mouth twitching up into a smile. They park the car, and before he gets out he turns to her and leans in for a soft kiss. When he pulls away his expression is hungry, and something like a purr comes from deep in his chest.

Suddenly Stiles can't wait to get him upstairs and see what other noises she can get him to make.

Peter's not sure what's come over his young bride, but he's certainly not going to turn down the offer of another tumble in the sheets. He lets her take the lead, and goes willingly when she strips him naked and pushes him back onto the bed. "I never got to see you properly last night," Stiles says quietly. Peter puts his hands above his head, so she can look her fill. She runs her hands down his chest and stomach, humming. "My husband's hot," she declares happily.

Peter grins at her, and teases "Keep going, sweetheart. It gets better the further south you go."

"I'll get there," she says, smiling softly. She does, too, but she takes her own sweet time about it. She spends a long time just exploring Peter's body, finding out what he likes, watching with interest as his erection fills and grows under her hand. When he's hard and leaking, she rolls onto her back and parts her legs in silent invitation. "What would you like, sweetheart?" he asks.

"Can you – with your mouth?" she asks, and Peter can hear her heart beating rabbit quick, can sense her shyness at asking.

Peter grins at her, feral and hungry. "Oh, sweetheart. The answer to that is *always* going to be yes."

It's slower, the second time. Different. Peter can tell from her scent that Stiles is much more aroused now her nerves have gone, and he doesn't hold back, sucking and nibbling at her clit skillfully. He's glad she enjoys this, because it's one of his favorite things, and he suspects it might become one of hers. Stiles comes with a gasp on Peter's tongue, and while she's still panting he moves up the bed and slips inside her. He fucks her gently, rolling his hips in a fluid motion until he can't hold back any longer, and his climax follows hers.

Afterwards, he asks "Not that I mind at all, but what bought that on?"

Stiles snuggles against his chest. "I'm not sure. Something Melissa said. Maybe I just wanted to see if it would be as good the second time."

"And?" Peter kisses the top of her head.

Stiles tilts her head back and gives him a cheesy grin. "It was better."

"Was there ever any doubt?" he asks, slightly smug.

Stiles just shoves him playfully in reply, and settles against him with a happy sigh. Peter reflects that perhaps married life won't be so bad.

They have a few more hours before they fly out for their honeymoon, so there's really no rush to get out of bed. Peter lets Stiles sleep, happy to lie in bed together as he lets their scents mingle. Eventually though, she stirs, stretching and yawning. "What time is it?" she asks.

"Little after twelve," Peter replies, reluctantly letting go of her. Stiles sits up in bed, and Peter feels a wave of fondness as he takes in her rumpled appearance.

"I need a shower," Stiles mumbles, and drags herself out of bed and into the bathroom. She's in there a long time, and Peter can hear her singing to herself. He has to fight the urge to join her, but he doesn't want to push. There'll be plenty of time for shared showers later, he hopes.

Peter's just finished his own shower and is pulling on a shirt when there's a knock at the door. He looks at Stiles, wondering if she's ordered room service, but she just shrugs. He walks over and opens the door to find an extremely sheepish Scott standing there. "Yes?" Peter keeps his tone cold deliberately.

"Um, is Stiles here? I wanted to talk to her." Scott says, trying to look over Peter's shoulder. Peter's wolf bares his teeth at the hide of this *other wolf*, trying to look at his wife.

"I'll see if she wants to talk to you," Peter says, before shutting the door in Scott's face. He walks back into the bedroom and tells Stiles, "Scott's here."

He probably shouldn't be as pleased as he is when Stiles rolls her eyes and groans. "Jesus, what does he want?" Stiles stomps to the door and yanks it open. "What?" she snaps.

Scott takes a deep breath and says "I came to apologise. For ignoring you, and for using you." Stiles stares at him in silent disbelief. Scott sees her stony expression and tries again. "I just...I didn't know I'd been neglecting you, OK? I got caught up with Kira and pack stuff, and you're always there, so I guess I took you for granted? And then with the whole Peter thing, I didn't think. I just panicked."

He looks so miserable standing there that Peter half expects Stiles to pull him into her arms and forgive him then and there, but she surprises him by asking, "You've been ignoring me for months. Why apologize now?"

Peter stands behind her, and Stiles leans back into his touch instinctively. Peter drapes his arm over her shoulders, a clear signal to Scott that Stiles is his now, and he watches, satisfied, as Scott's eyes track the gesture. *Hands off*, Peter thinks. *Mine*. He reinforces the message by wrapping his other hand round Stiles' waist, spreading his hand across her belly. She doesn't move away at all, just relaxes against him.

Peter watches as Scott licks his lips nervously, and wonders what's going to come out of the idiot's mouth next. Part of him almost hopes it's something asinine, just to see what will happen, but the greater part of him hopes, for Stiles' sake, that Scott's genuinely sorry.

Finally, Scott says, "I didn't want there to be any hard feelings. I know I was wrong. My mom kinda tore me a new one and pointed out I'd treated you both pretty badly." He hesitates

before adding “Derek kicked my ass as well.”

Peter’s surprised to hear that, but he masks it well, because this isn’t about him. Scott continues, “They’re right. I let the power go to my head. I didn’t think about your feelings. So, for what it’s worth, I’m sorry.”

Stiles doesn’t say anything for a minute, just looking at Scott intently. When she speaks, she surprises him by asking for his opinion. “What do you think, Peter? Is he genuinely sorry?”

Peter cocks his head and makes a show of listening, before nodding. “He’s not lying.”

“Thanks for coming over, Scotty. I appreciate it. I’ll call you after the honeymoon,” Stiles says finally.

Scott looks relieved at her response, and Peter thinks he can understand why. An angry Stiles is a terrifying thing to behold, and Peter hates to think how long she’d hold a grudge for. Scott makes a move as if to lean in and hug Stiles, and suddenly Peter finds himself dragging her backwards and out of reach. Nobody’s more surprised than him when his eyes flash and his fangs peek out. Scott takes a step back, palms facing outwards. “Sorry, didn’t mean to overstep,” he says hastily.

Peter feels something settle in his chest as the perceived threat moves out of range. Stiles turns in his hold and lays a palm against his face. “Relax, you idiot,” she says with a hint of amusement in her tone. “The big bad Scott’s not going to take the little wifey away. But I am going to hug him now, and you can just deal.”

Peter frowns at her words, but he’s not sure if it’s because she’s mocking him, or because she intends to touch Scott. Stiles leans in and kisses the scowl off his face, and her teasing smile makes it easier to let her go. She steps over to Scott and gives him a single gentle squeeze before taking a step backwards, deliberately putting space between them. Peter unclenches his hands from the fists that have formed without him noticing, and breathes a sigh of relief. He’s aware that what he’s feeling is driven by biology and nothing more, but it doesn’t make it any less tangible.

Scott smiles at Stiles and says “Thanks. Does this mean you’re not mad at me?”

“Oh, I’m still a little mad at you. But I guess I’ll get over it.”

Scott must realise that’s as good as he’s going to get for now, because he nods, and walks away. Peter can’t help but pull Stiles close as they watch the departing figure. He pulls her back into the hotel room and crowds her up against the wall, rubbing his body against hers. She tilts her head back to allow Peter to scent her, even as she mutters “Possessive, much?”

“I have a lovely wife, and I’d like her to smell like me, and not some foolish boy,” Peter says, and continues to kiss his way up Stiles’ throat. She makes tiny breathy sounds of pleasure, and if it wasn’t for the fact that they’re due at the airport soon, Peter would be tempted to take this further. But he’s aware that they have a flight to catch, so he pulls away with a sigh.

Stiles pouts at him, but he taps his watch. “Trust me, I’d love to continue with this, but if I do everything I want to do to you, we’ll definitely miss our flight, and I don’t really think you want to honeymoon in Beacon Hills, do you?”

“You’re right. I hate that you’re always right, by the way,” she grumbles. They quickly pack their bags before going to check out and collect their suitcases from Peter’s place. “Where did you say we’re going again?” Stiles asks innocently as Peter drives them to the airport.

He doesn’t take the bait. “I didn’t. I told you, it’s a surprise. But I promise you’ll love it.” All he’s told Stiles is that she’ll need her passport, and she’s been trying to get the destination out of him for the last week. They park the car, and it’s only when they’re approaching the terminal that he relents. “I’ll give you a hint. You can go over them in a barrel.”

Stiles stops walking to stare at him, wide eyed. “Really? Niagara Falls?”

“Really.” He’d asked Noah where Stiles had always wanted to go, and Niagara Falls was apparently top of her list.

Stiles fists pumps, exclaiming “Yesss” loudly. The people walking next to them give her a strange look, but she doesn’t care, too excited at the news. She dances and jitters excitedly all the way to the terminal.

They get their boarding passes, and Stiles frowns when she spots the red W that’s been embossed on Peter’s passport. “Werewolf,” he explains quietly. He doesn’t need to explain further.

She’s incredulous when they inform her that Peter can only travel because he’s under the supervision of a responsible adult. “Are they mad?” she stage whispers. “I mean, I’m wearing batman underwear, and they think I’m a responsible adult?” Peter laughs, and finds that his travel restrictions sting a little less when Stiles is there to laugh about it with him.

Stiles kisses him enthusiastically when she realizes their seats are first class, and Peter lets her, fully aware of the staff watching them, judging them, and not caring one bit.

“You’re kinda good at this doting husband thing,” Stiles tells him when she pulls away, grinning widely.

“Anything for you, Stiles. I told you that when you agreed to marry me,” he reminds her. Then he takes her hand and leads her to the boarding lounge.

Her hand feels perfect, nestled in his.

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

There's a lot to do in Niagara Falls, but mainly, Stiles just wants to do Peter. Peter really, really doesn't mind.

Chapter Notes

Hey! Thanks for your patience waiting for this. I had to set it to one side so I could finish writing my Steter Reversebang fic. But now we're back to our semi -regularly scheduled schedule, where i write like a mad thing and throw it at you.
In other news, guess who's done something to one of the discs in her neck, and has pins and needles and loss of feeling in her right arm? ME!
Guess who has three weeks off work? ME!
Guess who's basically ONLY allowed to sit in a recliner on her laptop for three weeks? ME!
...Which is just a way of saying , expect the next update to be a little quicker.

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

The whole idea of going on a honeymoon was something of a joke, to be honest. They'd been having one of their pre-wedding conversations, and Stiles had been debating whether to take a week off from work. "It seems a shame to use a whole week of vacation when we're not even going anywhere. Maybe I'll just take a couple of days."

"What, you mean you don't want me to whisk you away to an exotic location for a honeymoon?" Peter had sounded almost hurt, but Stiles had seen the way he grinned, making the corners of his eyes crinkle attractively.

"Depends, will it be somewhere good? I mean, I'm not wasting my hard earned days off if you're only going to take me to a seedy motel two towns over."

Peter had laughed, and said "We could go on an actual honeymoon, you know."

"Is it a honeymoon if we're not actually love's young dream?"

"It's a honeymoon if we say it is," Peter had said gently. "We could look at it as friends on holiday if you'd prefer, but I'd still like to take you somewhere nice." He'd looked almost

hopeful at the prospect, and Stiles had to admit, the thought of a week away was tempting, if only to get away from the looks and whispers she was getting at the station for her unconventional choice of groom.

“It might be nice to spend time together, have some fun,” she finally said. “We could milk the whole newlyweds thing, get free stuff.”

Peter had nodded, a pleased look on his face, and said “Leave it with me.” He then promptly refused to tell Stiles where they were going, simply saying “No spoilers,” whenever she asked.

Peter spends the first half hour in the air teasing and wheedling at Stiles until she gives in to his pleading, and after throwing a blanket over her lap, unbuttons her jeans and slides them down far enough for him to see that yes, she really is wearing Batman underwear. “Oh, that’s quite lovely,” he observes, when he catches a peek of the black panties with tiny yellow bat symbols all over them. “Tell me, do they give you superpowers?”

“Absolutely. I have the ability to completely ignore annoying husbands,” she declares.

“Lucky you don’t have one of those, then,” Peter tells her cheerfully and leans in for a kiss. She rolls her eyes and grants him one, before settling back into her comfy seat and finding herself a movie to watch.

The five hour flight goes by quickly, and Stiles decides that she’s never, ever travelling economy again. She says as much to Peter, who nods his approval. “I find cattle class a little depressing, honestly. This is the only acceptable way to travel.”

Stiles snorts derisively. “Oh my god, you’re *such* a princess.” Peter doesn’t deny it, too busy fussing with Stiles’s seatbelt, despite her assuring him that she can do it herself. They’re coming in for landing, so they obediently return their seats to the upright position and stow their hand luggage under the seats. Now that they’re here, Stiles can’t wait to get out of the airport and start sightseeing. She’s always wanted to go here, go on the boat ride, see the falls, do the whole tourist thing, and now she has somebody to do it with.

She notes the way Peter’s hand splays protectively across her body as the plane lands and smiles to herself. She doesn’t even think he realises he’s doing it. She places a hand on top of his and says “Peter, you’re holding me in my seat.” He glances down and seems taken aback that he’s touching her, removing his hand without comment.

Stiles is a little sad when he does – it’s nice, having someone be concerned for her welfare. Lord knows, she loves her Dad, and she knows he loves her, but he worries about her the way a parent does. With Peter, it feels like more, even though she knows it’s instinct, pure and

simple. She reaches out and draws his hand back to where it was. “I didn’t say I minded,” she says with a soft smile, as she links their fingers together.

They disembark, claim their baggage and head through customs, Stiles grinning wildly the whole time. “I’m overseas, Peter! In a whole other country!” she exclaims excitedly, grabbing at his arm.

“Anything for my darling bride,” he says, and leans in for a kiss. Stiles would roll her eyes at him, but she’s too excited. They grab a cab to their hotel – Peter tells her that he’s booked them into the Marriott, because it has a spa, and he thinks a day spent there will be a good way to relax. Stiles rolls her eyes hard at that. “Why would you think I’m interested in spending time at a spa? Isn’t that a little sexist?” she asks.

Peter raises an eyebrow. “Interesting that you think you’re the only one who might like a massage and a facial. Are you gender stereotyping, Stiles?”

“Smartass,” she mutters. She flicks through the brochure anyway, and has to admit it sounds amazing. They go up to their suite, and Stiles would really like to start exploring the city right now, but she catches herself in a huge, jaw-breaking yawn. As she stretches her arms over her head, she has to concede that it’s nearly ten pm, and she needs to sleep. She looks at Peter and notes that he looks the worse for wear as well, the strain of the last few weeks obviously having taken its toll. “Room service, and an early night?” she suggests.

Peter looks over from where he’s unpacking, because *of course* he’s the type of man who unpacks at a hotel. “If that’s what you’d like,” he says, always agreeable. He nods at her suitcase and asks, “Are you going to deal with that?”

“Nah, I’ll just take stuff out as I need it.”

Peter looks slightly horrified. “Won’t your clean clothes get mixed up with your laundry?”

Stiles shrugs. “I’ll just dump my laundry on the floor, and put it all back in the case when we leave.”

She doesn’t see a problem with that, but Peter’s wearing an extremely judgemental expression. “You really are nineteen, aren’t you?” he says as he opens her case and starts to unpack. “I’ll do it. It won’t take me any time, and I’m not sure I can live your wardrobe all over the floor.”

You’re in for a shock when we get home, then, Stiles wants to say, but she gets distracted watching Peter’s hands, watching the way they move, strong and sure as he efficiently folds and sorts her clothing. She has a definite soft spot for those hands, and what they can do. She knows she could be petty and insist that he not touch her stuff, but it seems a little redundant, given that less than twelve hours ago he had his dick in her. Peter gives an approving hum, and Stiles sees that he’s unpacking her underwear. He’s holding some of the items Lydia helped her pick out, and she wonders what on earth possessed her to bring them. He puts them in the drawer without further comment, but Stiles can see that he’s suppressing a smile. “What? A girl can’t have nice things?” she asks, blushing a little.

“Oh, sweetheart, I’m all in favor of you having nice things,” he smirks. “I was just admiring your taste, that’s all.”

Stiles’ blush deepens as she remembers the feeling of Peter’s mouth on wet satin and okay, maybe she does know why she packed them. She deflects a little, saying “Yeah well, you can admire my taste another day. Tonight, I just want to sleep, so no trying to seduce me, OK?”

“I wouldn’t dream of it, Stiles, no matter how fetching you look in your Batman underwear,” Peter teases. She flips him off and goes to shower as Peter empties the last few items out of her case. When she comes out she’s wearing her favorite pyjamas, which consist of an oversized tee and boxers with kittens on them, and she reflects that it’s hardly normal honeymoon attire. Of course, this is hardly a normal honeymoon.

They get dinner delivered, and Stiles is quiet as she eats. Peter notices, and says “Everything all right, Stiles? You’re not regretting this already?”

Stiles takes a moment to try and think of how to express what she’s feeling. It’s not regret, not exactly. It’s more like unease. If Peter can’t cope with a simple thing like laundry on the floor, will they really be able to live together? In the end she says quietly, “Tell me we’ll be able to make this work?”

Peter, to his credit, doesn’t dismiss her concerns. “I’d like to think so, sweetheart, but I can’t guarantee it. The best I can do is promise to try and make you happy.” Which, when Stiles thinks about it, is more than a lot of people’s partners are willing to do.

“How about I try and make you happy too?” she suggests, and a look of surprise flickers over Peter’s face. “What, you don’t want this to be good for both of us?”

“To be honest, I hadn’t considered it. I’m alive, and anything after that is a bonus,” Peter says bluntly, and for some reason that makes Stiles inexplicably sad.

After dinner they curl up on the massive bed together, flicking through the TV channels till they settle on an old movie. It’s Sabrina, with Audrey Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart, and Stiles has always loved it. She fights her tiredness, determined to watch till the end. She’s pleased to discover that Peter loves it too, and they spend a good portion of the movie yelling at Bogart’s character to “*just admit you have feelings, you idiot!*” Well, Stiles shouts at the screen. Peter just watches her, amused that she’s so invested in the story.

“Not everybody wears their heart on their sleeve, Stiles,” he reminds her. But Stiles notices that he nods approvingly when Linus follows his heart and his girl at the end of the film. By the time the credits roll, Stiles is more than ready for sleep. Peter’s true to his word and doesn’t try anything more risqué than a kiss before turning and facing away from her. Stiles is caught between relief, because she really is too tired and tender for anything to happen tonight, and disappointment that he’s not even going to *try*. Maybe she’s overestimated Peter’s attraction to her.

Stiles looks at his back, broad and inviting, but resists the urge to plaster herself against it, just to see if she’d get a reaction. She knows that would be a dick move, and unfair to Peter.

She settles for running a hand down his spine, just once, as she says goodnight and settles into an uneasy sleep.

Peter lays awake, watching Stiles sleep. She's restless, twitching and snuffling, and at first he's concerned, his wolf wanting to draw her in close, but then he realizes that she's just a restless sleeper. He rolls over onto his back once he's sure she's really asleep, and runs a hand down her spine, soothing her. Even in her ridiculous pajamas, she's quite adorable, and truth be told, Peter would love to curl up behind her and ease a hand into her boxers and slide them down her thighs, rub her gently until she's moaning for more, and then sink himself into her slowly. He huffs out a sigh and wills his erection away, because that's not how tonight's going to go, on that Stiles has been very clear. Peter yearns for Stiles to allow him further access to that sweet, tight body of hers, and the way she said *tonight, I just want to sleep* gives him hope that on other nights, sleep won't be what she's thinking of.

And on those nights, well. He wants to take her apart, show her all the ways they can please each other. He wants this to be good for her on every level. It had tugged at his heartstrings more than a little when she'd asked if they'd be able to make it work. And he'd been sincere in his promise to try and make her happy – Stiles is far better than he deserves, terrible laundry habits aside, and he has an unexpectedly strong need to see her safe and content. He blames it on his newly activated instincts.

Stiles shuffles around in her sleep, and Peter stills the hand that's still running down her back idly. She wakes up enough to mumble "S' nice, you can keep doing that," and throw an arm over his chest, before sinking back into slumber. The comforting weight of her arm is enough of a point of contact for Peter to be able to settle as well, his wolf finally content that Stiles is close and safe. He sleeps, and for the first time in weeks he doesn't wake from terrifying visions of operating tables and restraints, but instead he sleeps peacefully, with dreams of soft skin and cherry red lips and satin underwear.

Neither of them moves for ten hours.

Stiles isn't sure what wakes her the next morning, but somehow she's ended up halfway sprawled across Peter's side of the bed. The sheets are still warm beneath her hands, and he

can hear a quiet voice. She sits up, stretching, and stumbles to the bathroom. She has a shower, brushes her teeth, and tries to tame her hair, feeling a little more awake.

Peter, it turns out, is a quick learner, and something of a minor god. When she comes out of the bathroom she sees two trays from room service and a pot of coffee set up, and he doesn't say a word until she's downed one cup and is on her second. Even then, it's only to ask "More?" as he holds the pot towards her.

"I'm good. Thanks for that," she says with a nod towards breakfast.

"My pleasure, sweetheart," is all he says, and Stiles is grateful that he seems to understand that she genuinely needs a little space when she wakes up, just to get her head in order. Once she's eaten, she's a lot brighter, and she grins at Peter, asking, "What shall we do today?"

Peter smiles at her. "Welcome to the land of the living. Did I get it right today?"

Stiles feels tiny bit bad about her behaviour the day before. "Yeah. Thank you. I just...I can't deal with talking first thing, OK? This though, this was perfect. You're a perfect husband."

Peter's smile widens. "Well, I'm glad you approve. I don't really mind what we do today, so you choose. Tour of the falls? Trip to the Butterfly house?"

Stiles shakes her head. "Ripleys."

Peter quirks a brow. "Really? That's your first choice?"

"Yep. Always wanted to go there," Stiles tells him happily. "And the falls take most of the day, and I was thinking today we could do Ripleys, wander around a little, buy some souvenirs. Take it easy."

Peter nods in agreement. "That does sound good. We'll do the Falls tomorrow."

While Peter's in the bathroom, Stiles dresses for the day. The forecast is for a pleasant seventy degrees, so she gets out the dress with the pugs on it. She's forced to admit that it's in much better shape than it would have been if she'd left it rolled up in her bag. She's just slipping on a pair of flats when Peter emerges, wrapped in a towel. He pulls out a pair of cargo shorts and a t shirt, and doesn't hesitate to drop his towel as he dresses, giving Stiles a prime view of his ass.

She doesn't even pretend to look away, partly because it's a really nice ass, and partly because they've agreed they're going to do their best to make this work, and she doesn't think clutching her pearls at the sight of Peter's bare skin will do either of them any favors. Peter sees her looking, and smirks at her. "Enjoying the view?" he asks.

"Niagara Falls is famous for its stunning vistas," she says with a straight face. She doesn't mention that she's itching to get her hands on his body, because the last thing Peter needs is an ego boost.

Peter smirks at her as if he knows what she's thinking anyway, but he doesn't say anything, just finishes dressing. He extends his arm and asks, "Shall we, Mrs Hale?"

“Lets, Mr Hale,” she replies, and takes his arm.

Stiles thinks that this has possibly been one of the best days of her life. As requested, they go to Ripley’s Believe it or Not, and it’s exactly as kitschy and oddball as she’d hoped for. She spends far too long examining all the displays, taking picture after picture and grimacing at the shrunken heads, much to Peter’s amusement. When she’s finally ready to leave the museum, Peter buys all the souvenirs she was eyeing off, and happily carries the bags for her.

They decide that since the day’s so nice, they’ll go to the Butterfly conservatory as well. He keeps a hand possessively on the small of her back as they wander through the display, and Stiles feels a small thrill run through her when Peter pulls her closer because someone’s trying to crowd past. She lets him, knowing his wolf needs to be assured of her safety. In fact, she notices, Peter barely stops touching her. He holds her hand, brushes his fingers across the back of her neck, brushes a stray eyelash off her cheek, and generally just makes sure she’s aware of his presence all day. All the tiny touches combined made her feel warm and relaxed, and she reflects that being married to someone that constantly wants to touch her is something she could get used to.

The colourful dress that Stiles is wearing means that the butterflies are attracted to her, and about an hour into their visit, she finds herself standing stock still as several of the delicate creatures land on her head and shoulders. Stiles is transfixed, watching as they flit around her, one lighting on her outstretched hand. She sees a movement from the corner of her eye, and turning her head painstakingly slowly, she sees Peter taking photos. He’s looking at her, wearing a fond expression, and the wariness that’s normally present in his expression is gone. He looks more relaxed than she’s ever seen him, and she likes it.

Stiles takes a moment to just look at her husband. Peter has such startling eyes, and his features are classically handsome, with a straight nose and strong jawline. When he smiles, like now, he’s nothing short of stunning. On impulse, she reaches out and runs a finger down his jaw, startling him. He turns to her, a question in his eyes. “Let’s go back to the hotel,” she tells him.

“Don’t you want to see the rest of the butterflies?”

She leans in, her mouth close to his ear, and tells him, “I’ve seen something I like better.” Peter’s smile widens, and he takes Stiles by the hand and leads her towards the exit eagerly.

It shouldn't be this easy, Peter thinks. He feels almost guilty at the way Stiles melts into his arms when he kisses her, at how eagerly she dives into bed with him, kissing and touching him as though she can't get enough. She tangles her hands in his hair as she kisses him, making soft little noises of pleasure. He rolls them over so she's sprawled beneath him, and starts kissing at her neck. "You. Are. So. Lovely," he murmurs as he works his way down her body, finally pulling one soft, pink nipple into his mouth and sucking gently. Stiles gives an undignified squeak, and Peter grins. "Want me to stop?"

"Don't you dare," she hisses. Peter laughs before lowering his head again, kissing and licking at the tender flesh while he cups her other breast and caresses it gently. He spends long minutes sucking on both nipples until they're both hard and Stiles is panting and whining for more. When Peter finally pulls away, he slips one hand between her legs, making Stiles shudder, and he's surprised by how wet she is for him. He makes a note to spend more time playing with her breasts, to see if he can make her come just from that.

His own erection is throbbing, a persistent, heavy ache, but he ignores it for now, instead concentrating on slipping one finger in and out of Stiles so he can gather the wetness there and spread it over her folds, leaving her ready and open for him. He props himself up on one elbow, and takes in her half closed eyes and flushed face. "How would you like to do this, sweetheart?" he asks, as his fingers glide over her nub, slick and smooth.

Stiles reaches up and pulls him towards her for a kiss. He's happy to oblige, and responds hungrily. When she finally lets him go, he hears her heart rate pick up a little, and knows that means she has something to ask. "Anything you'd like, darling," he encourages her, because he's curious to see where she wants to take this.

Stiles pushes at his body, rolling him over, and wordlessly straddles him and *oh*. Peter puts his hands on her hips, guiding her so she's settled on top of him, her slick folds rubbing along his length. She rests there for a moment before asking "Is this okay?"

"More than OK, sweetheart. Just tell me when you're ready and I'll help you," Peter reassures her, and fights back the urge to just thrust up into her. He knows that like this, Stiles will feel it more, feel *him* more, and while he's hardly massive, he's big enough that it will be a stretch. She leans down towards him, bracing herself with her hands on the headboard, and he leans up to meet her mouth as she kisses him.

She rotates her hips so that she's rubbing up against him, and Peter can't help the groan that escapes him at the feeling of her sliding against the head of his cock, spreading the precome that's starting leaking. "Mmmm, I like that," he says softly, smiling up at his girl, watching as she gets more confident and starts to build up a rhythm, rubbing their bodies together in a steady back and forth movement and moaning as she does so. Peter can smell her arousal, knows she's working herself towards orgasm by rubbing against him, so he starts to subtly rock his hips so that he's almost slipping inside her on every pass. Stiles bites her lip at the hint of penetration and starts to move a little faster. She lets go of the headboard and instead puts one hand flat against Peter's chest to support herself while she reaches behind with the other, wrapping her hand around his dick, positioning it so it's ready for her. Peter helps her lift herself up, his hands steadying her as she lines up and slowly, slowly, eases down.

Peter has to close his eyes and breathe deeply for a moment as he's overwhelmed by the feeling of soft, moist flesh engulfing him. When he opens them, Stiles is grinning widely, eyes bright. "This...this is good," she whispers, almost to herself. Then she starts to move.

It's a little uncoordinated at first, as she figures out the best way to do this, but Peter doesn't mind. He knows she'll get there, and what she's doing still feels good. It doesn't take Stiles long to settle into a rhythm, hands going back to the headboard as she fucks herself steadily on him. The way she's positioned above him makes it easy for Peter to lean up and mouth at her breast, and she let out a sharp gasp at that. He takes one nipple in his mouth and begins to suck firmly, and Stiles' movements become a little jerky when he does. "Yeah, more," Stiles demands, and begins to lift her hips with more urgency. Peter can feel her clenching around him, tight and hot, his own hips are thrusting up instinctively, and he loses himself in the sensations of a hot young body on his cock and soft flesh in his mouth, biting down a little on her breast as his orgasm approaches. Stiles makes a sound somewhere between a moan and a gasp when he bites, and picks up speed.

Peter grips her hips tighter, moving her over just a little, and *there*, right there, it's perfect, and he wants to make this last, but he's incapable of stopping as he slams up into her hard and fast. He throws his head back, Stiles' nipple falling from his mouth as he does so, and gasps out her name. He's close, so close, couldn't hold back now if his life depended on it. He thrusts up once more, grunting as he holds Stiles in place and his orgasm hits him like a tidal wave. Stiles makes a broken, keening noise, and he can feel her clenching around him, milking his cock as she shudders through her own release.

She rocks gently against him, unable to move much with his hands holding her in place, and lets out a shuddering sigh. Peter lets out one of his own, and when he looks up at Stiles there's something like triumph in her eyes. "We are so doing that again," she breathes out, before letting go of the headboard again and flopping down against him, nuzzling into the crook of his neck. Peter wraps his hands around her back and thinks to himself that whatever problems they might run into trying to make this thing work, sex isn't going to be one of them. Stiles is a comforting weight against him, and he's tempted to fall asleep, but he knows they'll regret it later, so after a few minutes he nudges at her shoulder, and helps her roll off him, feeling come smear across his thigh as she leaks against him. His wolf preens at the mixing of their scents.

As Stiles settles on the bed next to him and he rolls over to kiss her, he notes that one nipple is dark and puffy, and slightly bruised. He reaches out and runs a finger over it, and Stile hisses between her teeth. "Oh sweetheart, I'm so sorry," he says softly. "I got a little carried away. I don't normally lose control like that." He cups his hand around the bruising, and draws away the pain. There's not much, but still, he feels bad. It's unlike him to be so careless, and he's not quite sure what came over him.

Stiles though, shakes her head. "I liked it." Peter's face must show his confusion because she continues, "I liked it when you lost control. It made me feel..." She hesitates, and Peter waits patiently as she searches for the word, because he can sense that it's important. He doesn't expect what she says next. "It made me feel powerful."

"Powerful, sweetheart?" he asks.

“Yeah. I got to see you fall apart, and know that I made it happen.”

Peter smiles softly. “Sweetheart, you can make that happen any time you want.”

“And you can suck my tits till they’re bruised whenever you like, because holy hell, that does things to me, you have no idea.” Stiles rubs a thumb absently over her swollen nipple as she speaks, and Peter’s hard pressed not to take her up on her offer there and then. He exercises some restraint though, settling for scooping her up out of bed and carrying her to the shower. She giggles all the way.

The next day, they head for the falls. They’re booked on a group tour, and the other couples they’re with all coo and offer their congratulations when they find out they’re on their honeymoon. Stiles smiles sweetly and tells them it was a whirlwind romance, that Peter swept her off her feet. Peter smiles and accepts handshakes from the other men, agreeing that yes, he’s very happy.

They make their way to the border and go through customs again, and there’s a moment where one of the border guards looks like he’s going to stop them when he sees the marking on Peter’s passport, but Stiles isn’t having it. No jumped up little bureaucrat’s spoiling today for her. She wraps one arm firmly around Peter’s waist and asks in a steely tone, “Is there a problem with my husband’s passport, officer? Because if there’s not, we need to go. The rest of our group are waiting for us.” She glares at the officer with a stony expression, and he wilts under her gaze, stamping their passports and letting them through with no further delay.

As they walk to join their group, Peter says quietly, “Nicely done, sweetheart. But where on earth did you pick up that death stare? It’s terrifying.”

Stiles tells him “That’s my *Don’t you dare come into my station and start something at 2am, you asshole* face. Apparently, it’s very effective.” Peter obviously thinks so, because he makes her promise to never use that look on him, ever. Stiles laughingly agrees as they board the bus for the falls.

The boat ride is everything Stiles thought it would be. The scenery’s breathtaking, and she stares open mouthed as they pass the thundering water. Despite wearing the yellow poncho they’ve been given, her face and her legs are soaked, but she doesn’t care. She’s clutching the guardrail, craning over the side to get a better view, when she feels a hand on her shoulder. Peter’s voice sounds strained as he shouts to be heard over the sound of the falls. “Stiles, please. Move back a little. It’s not safe.” She looks down, confused. The rail’s up to her chest, and she can’t see any reason she’d be at risk. She turns to face him, ready to tell him it’s fine, but then she gets a good look at his face. Peter looks genuinely worried. There’s an unattractive furrow in his brow, and he’s biting his lip. “Stiles, please,” he says again, and

holds out a hand to her. She can't help but notice that it's shaking, just a little. She doesn't know exactly what's going on here, but whatever it is, it's affecting Peter deeply.

She takes his hand, and doesn't imagine the exhale of breath from him as her palm touches his. Peter pulls her so that her back's pressed against his chest, and wraps his arms around her. If she turns her head, she can hear the way his heart's racing. Slowly though, it slows to a normal rhythm, and she takes that as her cue to turn around in his arms. She looks up at him and asks, "You don't like boats?"

"I don't like you on boats. Actually, I don't like you near the side of boats," he corrects. And suddenly, it all clicks into place for Stiles. Melissa had told her, had said Peter would become protective of her, but it hadn't occurred to her that it would extend to things like this. Peter holds her a little tighter, and she leans in and kisses the tip of his nose. "I'm perfectly safe. You really are ridiculous, you know that, right?"

"I don't care. I need you close, and away from the edge. You can see just fine from here," Peter insists.

And really, Stiles *can* see just as well from where they're standing, and if it will keep Peter from freaking out, she's happy to stand here, so she nods, and says "This is fine." She turns in his arms again and leans back against his chest, and they both get lost in the view.

After the tour ends they cross the border again, this time without incident. Stiles is soaking wet, and as happy as a clam. "That was amazing," she says, ruffling her hand through Peter's wet and decidedly untidy hair. "But not as amazing as these curls." Peter hair has not fared well under the onslaught of moisture, and it's sitting round his head like some sort of puffed up, deranged halo. "I mean, I've seen your hair wet, but I've never seen it so fluffy. You look like a grumpy angel," she teases. Peter looks distinctly unimpressed, but Stiles doesn't care, continuing to play with his unruly locks, making tiny finger curls. Secretly, she thinks that the sight of him with wet hair curling gently against his neck is adorable, and she wants to take a hundred photos and save them on her phone to show everyone. Peter looks softer somehow, and she likes it. She finds she's enjoying the glimpses she's getting of the real Peter. She just hopes he won't be too disappointed when he gets to know the real Stiles.

The rest of the week passes quickly, a mix of sightseeing and relaxing. Stiles hasn't had a real vacation since she started working, and she didn't realise how much she needed to get away from Beacon Hills and the everyday dramas. When she wakes in the morning, she doesn't even think about who's going to be in the cells, but instead focuses on curling up with the warm body next to her, and gets into the habit of dozing off again with her head on Peter's chest.

They spend time shopping. They spend an afternoon at the spa (and Peter was right, it is relaxing, damn him for being right about everything.) Stiles takes hundreds of photos, and generally has the time of her life. She catches Peter looking at her a few times, an odd expression on his face. She suspects the fact he's married is hitting him. He continues to bring her coffee every morning and leave her in peace until she's halfway human, and she's profoundly grateful for it. Their fourth day there, she shows her gratitude by leading him back to bed after she's had her coffee and coaxing him into making love to her. Very little coaxing's actually needed, with Peter diving under the blankets and burying his head between her thighs as soon as she says "So, that thing with your mouth – "

Afterwards, she tells him, "I'll never be one of those people who wants sex as soon as I wake up. This is as close as you'll get."

"I think I can live with it," he tells her, and drags her in possessively so he can kiss her again.

The night before they leave, Peter takes her out to dinner, and afterwards they go dancing. She's surprised when he comes up to her holding a ridiculous cocktail with an umbrella in it, but he hands it to her with a gleam in his eye, saying "Go ahead, sweetheart. The drinking age is nineteen, here."

Stiles' face lights up at the reminder. She sips at the drink before saying "Are you plying me with alcohol, so you can seduce me later?"

"I don't think I need alcohol for that, sweetheart," he teases.

Stiles shakes her head. "Nope. I'm easy for you, Hale." He grins delightedly at that, and she can see him preening at the admission. She finishes her drink and sends him off to find her another, just so she doesn't have to look at his smug, perfect face.

They spend the evening dancing and drinking. Stiles decides she's had enough three drinks in, not wanting to spend her last night here drunk. She notices that Peter keeps a hand on her when anyone comes too close, and in her tipsy state she finds it adorable. There's an incident where Peter's at the bar and a man tries to flirt with Stiles. She shuts him down politely, flashing her wedding ring, and the man accepts it with good grace, but that doesn't stop Peter storming across the floor, face like thunder, and flashing his eyes at the man as he takes Stiles firmly by the arm and leads her away.

"He was hitting on you," he grumbles, and he looks so outraged Stiles can't even find it in her to tease him about it. After that, Peter keeps sending threatening looks to every male in the place, until Stiles placates him by whispering filthy suggestions in his ear while they dance, and his mood changes from jealous to aroused in the space of a minute. "Keep talking like that, and I'll have to drag you back to our hotel and ravage you," he growls lowly.

Stiles drags her arms down his back, squeezing his ass. "I was hoping you'd say that."

Never let it be said that Peter's not a man of his word.

Peter listens to Stiles sigh to herself as she packs. "I'm not ready to go home."

"Well, I did offer you a six month trip through Asia, but you said no," he reminds her.

"I'm kinda sad we have to go back to the real world. This has been nice. You're not a terrible person to be married to," she admits.

"Have you ever heard the expression *Damned with faint praise*, Stiles?" Peter asks, his lips quirking up in the beginnings of a smile.

"Oh, hush. You know what I mean. It's going better than I thought, that's all." She hesitates before adding, "Not that I have anything to compare it to, but I'm pretty sure we're physically compatible, at least?" There's a hint of a question in her tone, and Peter hates hearing it there. Stiles should never feel uncertain, ever. His wolf won't stand for it. He strides across the room to where she's standing and pulls her in for a bruising kiss. "Don't ever doubt that I'm attracted to you, Stiles."

He sees the flicker of doubt in her eyes. "Really? But, I mean. You never ask me. I'm always the one who's always made the first move, except for our wedding night."

Peter pulls back and looks at her, sighing. "I was trying to be considerate. I didn't want to push you."

Stiles is silent, thinking about what Peter's said. "So you've been letting me take the lead? You're really attracted to me?"

He nods. "Quite honestly sweetheart, I struggle to keep my hands off you." He backs up his statement by sliding a hand up inside her shirt and cupping one breast while he kisses her again. When they break apart, Peter can smell the scent of arousal coming off her, all traces of uncertainty gone, and Stiles is smiling. He figures there's no time like the present, so he whispers in her ear "I mean, if it was up to me, you'd be bent over that dining table, and I'd be fucking you right now, nice and slow, so you'd smell like me the whole flight home."

Stiles' breath catches at the words, and Peter gives a filthy chuckle. Stiles opens and closes her mouth twice, before she finally manages, "Checkout's in an hour. Is that enough time?"

It is, barely.

Chapter End Notes

If you haven't watch Sabrina, what are you waiting for? Go, young people, go! Get some culture - that film is the original Slow Burn with Pining, I swear.

Chapter 6

“Ugh, moving sucks,” Stiles groans, as she packs another box. Her father just gives her a disbelieving look.

“You knew you were moving, why didn’t you pack before you went on your honeymoon?” he asks.

“Because past me was lazy?”

“Uh huh. Well now present you has to deal with it. Keep packing,” Noah tells her, and hands her another box. “Where’s Peter, anyway?”

Stiles pulls a face. “He’s at the house, supervising the removalists. His stuff was all packed and ready to go, so it’s already over there. Whereas I’ll be here for eighty four years packing these damn boxes,” Stiles grumbles.

Noah sighs. “Sweetheart, it’s one room. I’ll tell you what, just pack your clothes and your laptop, and come back for everything else. I’ll box it up for you.”

Stiles brightens at that. “Really, pops? You’re the best.”

“I’m sick of your whining is what I am,” Noah tells her bluntly. “Now, pack what you need, and I’ll take care of the rest.”

Stiles packs with a little more vigor, and half an hour later the jeep’s loaded with boxes and she’s driving to her new home. She partly excited, and partly nervous. It’s a big deal, starting married life with Peter properly. She hopes she can make it work.

When she pulls in the driveway, Peter’s there waiting for her. “Good morning, sweetheart,” he says, pulling her in for a kiss. “I missed you last night.” Stiles had stayed at her dad’s place the night before, hypothetically so she could pack.

She kisses him back, and says “I kinda missed you too. But it was nice to spend time with my Dad.” Peter spends a moment holding and scenting her before he lets her go, and Stiles tilts her head back to let him. She knows he can’t help the urge, and she likes it. Somehow it makes her feel wanted.

Then she pulls away, saying “Boxes are in the jeep. The faster we unpack, the better I like it.” Peter hums in agreement and between them they unload the jeep and carry the boxes inside.

Peter looks at the small pile doubtfully. "Is that everything?"

"For now. My dad's boxing up the rest and I'll collect it later."

Peter shakes his head. "You hadn't packed a thing, had you?" Stiles almost laughs at the put out look on his face.

"Yeah well, I never had to move before, cut me some slack," she tells him.

Peter takes a moment to consider that. "I suppose you're right. I forget how young you are, sometimes."

"Old enough to marry you," she reminds him with a playful shove to the shoulder. "I'm not a child, Peter."

"And I didn't mean to imply that you were, sweetheart. I'm aware that you're a fully functioning adult. It's just I have to remind myself that there's a lot you haven't done, that's all. Like packing," he says with a frown, looking at the way she's shoved things into the boxes randomly.

She gives him a kiss to wipe the pout off his face, and says "I promise I'll collect it all by the weekend. Don't panic, I promise I'm really moving in. We won't give Werewolf Control a single excuse to question us."

There have been cases where the Werewolf Control office hasn't been convinced of the validity of a marriage, and that's never ended well for the wolf. Stiles is determined that won't happen to them. Peter rubs his hands together, gets a determined set to his shoulders, and says "So. Unpacking. Shall we?"

He has a plan, because of course he does, thinks Stiles as she obediently unpacks and puts away box after box of household items, dimly wondering who even needs all this stuff. They don't have to move any furniture, which is a blessing, but they do have to arrange the rest of the house. By lunchtime Stiles is starting to flag, begging Peter for a break. "Come oooon," she whines. "Can't we leave it, and go and get some lunch? I'm exhausted."

Peter arches a brow at her. "Stiles, take it from me. If we stop, we won't start again. We'll go out for lunch, and then we'll get distracted, and then we'll come back to half unpacked house. We're better to power through it. Another hour and we'll be done." She must look particularly unimpressed, because he adds "You know I'm right about this, so stop sulking and take that box to the bathroom."

"You know I'm right about this," she mutters under her breath. The worst thing is, she does know, and he is right. It doesn't stop her shooting him mutinous glares as she unpacks.

It takes a little over an hour before Peter finally declares they can stop. There are still some boxes of books and dvds and the like, but he tells Stiles he can take care of those during the week while she's at work. They shower and get out of their old clothes, and go out for lunch. Stiles flutters her eyelashes exaggeratedly and pleads for something deep fried, so they end

up at a chicken place nearby. When she's finished eating, Peter says "I have something for you."

Stiles' eyes light up. "Ooh, present! Gimme," she demands. Peter rolls his eyes at her as she makes grabby hands, and he hands over a tiny box. When she opens it, there's a unicorn keyring, and a set of keys. Stiles lifts it out and laughs. "You got me my unicorn!"

"I told you I'd try my best. The keys are for the house."

"Well, duh," she says, fiddling with the keyring. Peter looks like he wants to say something more, but then his mouth closes, and he just smiles pleasantly at her, and she doesn't think any more about it.

After lunch, they spend the afternoon exploring their new home a little more, figuring out exactly what fits where, and reconfiguring some of the furniture. Peter has a theory that everything has what he calls a natural home, and that it will end up there eventually, no matter where they might initially put it. Stiles soon sees that he's right. By that evening he's completely rearranged the living area and the bedroom, and when he's done it feels like everything's where it should be.

He walks into the spare bedroom, and asks "Are you happy with this?"

Stiles shrugs. "I don't really care, to be honest. I'm not sure why we've even set it up. It's not like we're expecting a lot of visitors."

"It's always a good idea to have the spare room set up. I might snore. You might snore. You might decide you don't want to share a room with me," he adds quietly.

Stiles gives him a pointed look. "Married a week and you're relegating me to the guest room? I'm hurt, really." And a part of her is. Does Peter really think they need a contingency plan?

He shakes his head. "Sweetheart, I hope you choose to spend every night in bed with me.

But realistically, I know that we might not actually be compatible. If that's the case, we can still make this work, if only as roommates. But I'd be much happier if it didn't come to that." He wraps his arms around her from behind and pulls her close. "We can have so much more fun with you in my bed. There are so many things I want to do to you." He kisses the back of her neck, and she arches her spine, shivering.

"Really? What sort of things?" Stiles grinds back against him a little, and feels his cock twitch.

"Wicked, wicked things," he murmurs, and slides a hand under the hem of her shirt and across the skin of her belly. "I could show you, if you'd like?"

Stiles relaxes into the touch. “Well, there is a bed right here. Shame to waste it.”

“Oh, I agree,” Peter says, as his hands travel higher and he slips the shirt off over her head.

Afterwards, lying naked with Peter wrapped around her, Stiles says, “I liked that.”

“What did you like, exactly?” Peter asks with a yawn.

She rolls to face him, propping herself on her elbow so she can see him properly. “I liked you talking me into bed. It’s very arousing, being seduced like that. You can do it more, if you want.”

Peter smiles widely. “It would be my pleasure.” Stiles leans in for a kiss, and Peter wraps his arms around her, rolling them so he’s on top of her. “So, if, for example, I was to suggest another round right now, you wouldn’t mind?” he says with a hopeful expression.

Stiles squirms beneath him, and can feel that he’s hard. “Already? How?” she asks, genuinely curious. It’s only been ten minutes, and Peter’s hardly a teenager.

He cocks a brow at her. “Werewolf, sweetheart. Now, what do you say?”

Stiles feels reckless, suddenly. She drapes her arms around his neck, so she can run her hands down the muscles of his back. “I say, show me what you’ve got.”

Peter’s expression becomes hungry. “Oh, baby. I’m going to *ruin* you.”

“Yes please,” she breathes.

Two hours later, Peter smugly surveys his handiwork.

Stiles looks the very definition of ruined. She has love bites all across her stomach and breasts. She’s sprawled across the bed, legs spread wide, and there’s come leaking out of her from where Peter fucked her three times in quick succession. “ ‘M done,” she sighs out, and Peter chuckles.

“You’re sure I can’t coax one more out of you?” He leans in and sucks on her nipple.

“Nope. Can’t move. Gonna lie here for a couple of years and recover.” She smiles lazily at her husband and pushes his head away. “Stop that. I couldn’t even if I wanted.”

“Shame,” he sighs. “You make such delicious noises when you come. I could listen to you all day.”

Stiles blushes, and Peter’s wolf preens. “Are you going to be like this all the time now?” she asks. “All innuendo and whisking me off to bed?”

Peter kisses her temple. “I can be, if you’d like? It’s no bother, honestly.”

Stiles shakes her head. “Not all the time. I don’t think I could take it. And I have to be fit for work, remember.”

Peter frowns at the reminder. Stiles goes back to work tomorrow, and she’d told him very firmly that he wasn’t allowed to leave marks where her dad, or anyone, could see them. Of course he’d gotten creative, finding plenty of other places to stake his claim, and Stiles had responded beautifully. Peter loves the way she arches up into it when he puts his mouth on her, whining as he teases and suckles at the skin, pulling the blood to the surface in dark bruises.

At the thought of it, he feels a surge of desire. “Are you sure you’re done, sweetheart?” He brackets her body with his and kisses her softly. He really should let the poor thing rest, he thinks, and he’ll stop if she asks, but she’s not pushing him away. In fact, she’s pulling him in closer and moaning, kissing back hungrily. His nostrils flare, and he can smell it on her, the want coming off her in waves.

When they part, she whispers, “Maybe one more - with your tongue.”

Peter’s eyes glow briefly, and he lets out a growl before sliding down the bed and putting his clever mouth to use. It takes some time, but he’s gentle on her tender flesh, coaxing her to her peak slowly with long slow drags of his tongue, and Stiles shakes and whimpers her way through a fourth orgasm before melting into the blankets.

“Definitely done,” she pants, and Peter knows that this time, she means it.

He pulls the blankets over them and curls protectively around her as she drifts off to sleep.

When Stiles wakes, it’s dark in the room and Peter’s gone. She gets out of bed, wincing a little at the tenderness between her legs, and heads for the bathroom, intending to have a shower. When she gets there though, Peter’s already in there. He’s just finished filling the bath, and he smiles at her. “Perfect timing, sweetheart, I was just going to wake you. Your bath’s ready. I’ve added Epsom salts - apparently they’re good for soothing your aches.”

“Oh my god, yes.” The bathtub at home could best be described as adequate, but this tub is big and deep, and she slips into the water with a moan. “I only have aches because of you,” she points out.

“I’m sorry, sweetheart. I may have gone a little overboard. But you did ask me to ruin you.” Peter actually looks apologetic.

Stiles flaps her hand in his direction, dismissing his concerns. “If I’d wanted you to stop, I would have asked you to. Stop mother henning, and get in here with me.” Peter looks surprised at the request, but hastens to obey, stripping off quickly and sliding in behind Stiles, so she can lean back and rest her head on his chest. “Hmmm. Better,” she sighs.

They don’t speak for a while, just relaxing in the warm water, and Stiles feels her soreness subsiding. She’s just about asleep when Peter says “You would tell me, wouldn’t you? If you wanted me to stop?”

Stiles takes a minute to figure out what he’s talking about. When she does, she just presses her body closer to his. “Yep,” is all she says.

“Because I’d hate to think –“

“Peter, didn’t we already have this conversation?” she interrupts. She feels his shoulders slump a little, and takes pity on him. He really is only trying to do the right thing. “Peter, I want you to listen to my heartbeat when I tell you this. We went a little hard today. Do I ache? Yes. Do I care? No, because I enjoyed it. Trust me on this. If it’s too much, *I will tell you*, OK?”

There’s silence from behind her for a long moment, and then Peter says “Thank you. My wolf side got a little overprotective at the thought you might be hurt.”

She shakes her head. “Nope. Just well fucked.” And then she settles in against his chest again and closes her eyes, confident that if she dozes, he won’t let her drown.

Peter’s waiting with coffee in hand when Stiles comes down the stairs the next morning, ready for her first shift since their wedding. She takes the cup and drains it quickly. He hands her a bowl of cereal, and she eats that silently. Then he refills her coffee cup, and once she’s had a sip, she points to him and says, “You can stay.”

He laughs a little, and leans in for a kiss. Stiles grants him a small peck on the lips, but pulls back. “No more,” she tells him. “I have to be at work soon.”

“I’ll miss you,” Peter says, and she looks up from her cup, surprised. “My wolf will miss you,” he clarifies quickly. “It wants to make sure you’re safe.”

And that makes sense, she thinks. It's not that Peter wants her company, it's just that his instincts are driving him. "Tell your wolf I promise to hurry home," she says, and Peter's lips curve up into a tiny smile.

"I might miss you a little, not just my wolf," Peter admits.

Stiles waves him off, knowing it's not true. "Lies. You'll spend the day alphabetising the book cases and the spice rack, and enjoying the peace and quiet. See you tonight." She drains the last of her coffee before heading into work.

Peter hovers a little when she leaves. He tries to be subtle, but he walks her to the door, and his hand lingers on her arm. He says, "Be careful, sweetheart," as he kisses her goodbye.

"You do realize I only work the desk, right?" she reminds him with a smile.

"I know, but still. Things happen. I'm allowed to be concerned for my new wife, aren't I?" Peter's tone is playful, but she doesn't buy it. There's a wariness around his eyes, and his grip on her arm has tightened just a little.

She rolls her eyes. "Peter, I probably have the safest job in Beacon Hills. I'm surrounded by armed men and women, and one of them is my father." She takes his hand off her arm gently, saying "My greatest danger right now its that I'm gonna be late if you don't let go." Peter lets her go, but he doesn't look happy about it. *Tough*, thinks Stiles. He'll have to learn to cope with what she does.

She hopes for a quiet shift, and she's in luck. She spends the day working through paperwork, taking calls, listening to Mr Stevenson tell her about the neighbor's cats peeing on his lawn, and making a dent in the filing that somehow got out of control in her absence. When she finishes her shift, she hops in her jeep and drives home, humming absently along with the radio. It's only when she pulls up out the front of her dad's place that she groans and rests her head on the steering wheel. Years of habit have led her to drive to the wrong house on autopilot. She snickers to herself, and goes to start the jeep again. Just then her phone beeps. It's Peter. *Running late?*

She fires back **Funny story. See you in five minutes** before driving home, shaking her head at herself the whole way. When she arrives, Peter's waiting for her as she walks in the front door. He leans in and hugs her, murmuring "I did miss you, after all." He sounds surprised, and for some reason it makes her smile.

"It's because my dad was right, and you're taken with my sass," she deadpans. "You're also married to an idiot," she adds. Peter quirks a brow at her, and she explains that she drove home to the wrong address. He just stares at her for a moment or two, before his face breaks into a delighted smile. He spends a good few minutes mocking her mercilessly and offering to sew tags in her underwear with her address on them. He soon shuts up when she tells him that if he keeps it up, he won't be getting near her underwear anytime soon.

She can't really blame him, though. It is kinda funny. She texts her dad and tells him what she did, and he sends back *I drove to the station once when I went out to buy milk after working nights.*

She shows the text to Peter, who laughs, saying “Like father, like daughter.” Then he packs her off upstairs for a shower, telling her dinner will be ready in half an hour. Stiles heads up and strips out of her uniform, leaving it in a heap on the floor of the bathroom. She has a long, hot shower, and when she gets out she wraps herself in her dressing gown and pads downstairs. Peter’s made them carbonara, and Stiles makes a pleased noise when she takes a mouthful. “Do you always cook like this?” she asks him.

“Not usually. I’m an average cook, but this recipe has never let me down,” he admits.

“Good. I’m only an average cook myself. Nice to know I don’t have to raise my standards,” she says with a grin.

Peter frowns. “You work, Stiles. I spend two or three hours at most dealing with my stocks online. There’s no need for you to cook.”

Stiles is a little surprised. It hadn’t even crossed her mind to ask what Peter does with his days. She just assumed his time was spent hanging around annoying Scott, to be honest. And she does like the thought of not having to cook, but she told Peter she wants him to be happy, too. “It doesn’t sound like cooking’s something you love, exactly,” she says.

Peter shrugs. “I can take it or leave it, but I’m happy to do it for you.”

Stiles takes a few more bites, thinking about it. “How about this? When I’m working, you can cook, but when I’m on days off, I will. And we go out a couple of times a week.”

Peter hums. “That sounds reasonable.”

Stiles looks at Peter for a moment. “Are we gonna have to do this with every single thing? Because I’m over it already.”

“Do what?”

“Negotiate everything. I mean, do we need a chore wheel?” Stiles asks, as she continues eating. Suddenly she misses the way it was with her dad. They had a system, and they made it work. There was an easy understanding between them that they’d pick up each other’s slack. She wonders if it will ever be like that with Peter, or if it will always be this awkward.

He must sense her mood, because the next thing she knows he’s behind her, and strong hands are massaging her neck, easing the tension out of it. As his thumbs work the knots skilfully, Peter says “Why don’t we just go with the flow? If I have time to do chores, I will. If I don’t get to it, maybe you can pick it up. We’re adults. We can work it out.” His hands continue to move, soothing her.

“That sounds like a system I can work with. Also, you missed a spot. Go down about half an inch.”

Peter obediently moves his hands, and Stiles drops her head a little lower, so he can work better. “You know, I could grab the massage oil,” Peter suggests.

Stiles just snorts. “As soon as you suggest oil, I know we’ll end up in bed. I think I’ll pass, tonight. Thanks for the neck rub, though.”

Peter takes his hands away and goes to finish his meal. Stiles eats as well, and they sit in companionable silence. Afterwards, they find some mindless game show as background noise, and Stiles messes about on her laptop while Peter reads. Stiles yawns and turns in at around ten, and Peter tells her he’ll be up as soon as he finishes his page. Stiles wonders for a minute whether she should put pajamas on, but she figures she hasn’t worn any since the first night of their honeymoon, so it’s pointless to start now. She’s still futzing around in the bathroom when he comes up, and Peter wordlessly puts her dirty clothes in the hamper with a pointed look that she ignores.

When she climbs into bed, Peter cups a hand around her breast, running a thumb over a particularly dark mark. “Admiring your handiwork?” she teases.

“Yes. I like seeing that you’re mine,” he replies. He spoons up behind her, and turns off the light. Stiles lays there for a while, thinking. Now that the honeymoon’s over, and they’re in their house, this is her life.

It’s disturbingly domestic.

Two weeks later, Peter watches Stiles back out the driveway and head to work, and stamps down on his innate need to follow her, make sure she’s OK. He’s been resisting the urge for weeks, and it’s not getting any easier. He knows Stiles doesn’t have a dangerous job, per se, but his wolf is screaming at him to *protect protect protect*.

It’s completely ridiculous, and he knows if he told her, she’d just laugh at him, so he keeps it to himself. He’s decided that it must be because at the back of his mind he knows that if anything happens to Stiles, it means he’s back in the firing line as far as the camps go. He’s just looking after himself by wanting to keep her safe.

And it’s not that he’s bored during the day without her, he has plenty to do. It’s just that he’s accustomed to her being around, now. He was spoilt while they were on their honeymoon, that’s all, he tells himself firmly. That’s why he misses her.

There have been a few speed bumps, certainly. He’d fast become frustrated with picking clothes up off the floor where they’ve been dropped *right next to* the hamper. And it’s common courtesy, surely, to put your plates in the dishwasher, not just leave them lying around? Yet Stiles had sulked for a solid hour when he’d pointed those tiny annoyances out to her.

To be fair, he's not perfect either - he's learned the hard way that when Stiles says "*Don't touch my ice cream*" she's not kidding, not even a little. It's not a mistake he'll take again. Minor annoyances aside though, he thinks they're doing swimmingly for two people who don't know each other that well. And if he can just stop his wolf from making him have all these completely unnecessary *feelings*, he'll be a happy man.

Case in point, he can't help the restlessness that builds in him every day when it's time for Stiles to arrive home. He normally ends up pacing, peering out the window, listening for the sound of the jeep turning into their street. By the time Stiles comes in the door he's managed to hide his eagerness to see her to some degree, but he can't resist pulling her close and scenting her as soon as she arrives.

Stiles seems to understand that it's instinctive, and she just leans into him and tilts her head back, allowing him access. Peter appreciates the gesture more than she knows. It's an acknowledgement of his werewolf nature, and those are in short supply nowadays.

It's the day before a full moon, and Peter's more highly strung than usual. The notification from Werewolf Control that he now has to prove he'll be under supervision during the full moon, like he's still a damned pup who can't control his shift, hasn't helped any. He's just grateful that tomorrow's Saturday, and Stiles has the weekend off. Registration aside, they have no plans, and Peter's looking forwards to it almost as much as Stiles is, if he's honest.

He just wants to be near her. He plans to bring her coffee, because she really is a nightmare until she wakes up properly. Then, once she's in the land of the living, he'll take her out to breakfast. They'll do the damned paperwork, and once that's taken care of he's hopeful that she'll come to bed with him and spend the rest of the day. His wolf is clamoring to mark Stiles again, claim her and make her his. He wants to take his time with her, tease that sweet young body for hours, make her beg and plead and gasp out his name.

Peter's addicted to the way Stiles reacts to his touch, doesn't think he'll ever get enough of it. She seems to feel the same way about him, grinding her hips back against him when they settle into bed at night, and teasingly asking how tired is he, really? His reply is invariably *never too tired for you, sweetheart*. Really, why would he ever turn down an offer like that?

Stiles texts Peter as she leaves work that afternoon.

Stopping at the store, need anything?

It's a subtle way of letting him know she'll be a little late, so he doesn't worry. Stiles isn't stupid. She knows Peter needs to know she's OK, and she mainly thinks it's cute. She'd like to be able to do her own thing sometimes, without having to check in, but she humors her husband, especially with the full moon tomorrow night. Stiles knows from time spent with

Scott that Peter's wolf is probably coming to the fore. It's not showing in the ways she expected, though.

With Scott, he'd always become surly and snappish, letting his temper get the better of him as the full moon approached. Peter though? He seems to be the opposite. Put simply, he spoils her. For the last few days, when she's gotten up in the morning he's made her breakfast, packed her a lunch, and ironed her work uniform. As soon as she gets home in the evening he's taken to sitting her in a chair, pulling off her boots, and rubbing her feet.

The first time he did it she'd blushed, remembering their wedding night, and Peter had smirked, obviously thinking about the same thing. "Tell me sweetheart, shall I rub just your feet, or would you like more?" he'd asked with a wolvisish grin. Stiles had turned him down just on principle, telling him nobody feels sexy in their work clothes.

Of course, later that night, she took him up on his offer, because she's no fool, and she's enjoying sex way more than she'd hoped, to be honest. She loves it when they fall into bed together, loves the way Peter plays her body like a violin, and the way he looks at her after, she'd almost think he cared, if she didn't know better.

Her phone pings with an answering text, drawing her out of her thoughts.

Nothing I need, see you soon xx

She doesn't spend too long getting what she needs, tired and ready to go home. She's looking forwards to her weekend off. She's secretly hoping they can spend it in bed, but she's finally had a text from Scott, and she knows he'll want to see her. They haven't spoken since after the wedding –He's been keeping his distance she guesses, waiting to see if he's forgiven. She suspects he's only called because he needs something, in typical Scott fashion. She wonders if she can put him off till next week.

As she browses the aisles, she sees that they have Peter's favorite dark chocolate. She grabs some, knowing he'll appreciate it. She's finding that Peter's not the only one with the urge to do nice things, and is starting to think that this whole thing could actually work out.

She heads home and finds Peter waiting for her. He looks a little stressed, and Stiles immediately wants to make it better, whatever it is. She knows that he likes nothing better than to scent her bare skin, so she dumps the groceries on the kitchen counter and strips off her work shirt right there, before pressing her back to his chest and asking, "Want to unhook me?"

Peter undoes her bra, sliding it down her arms. Stiles tilts her head back so her throat's exposed, and leans back into him, guiding his hands to cradle her breasts. Peter lets out a low growl and nuzzles into the curve of her neck, just holding her there. His hands are warm against her skin, and before long he's moving one of them downwards, popping the button on her pants and sliding a hand inside so it's pressed firmly against her belly. Stiles thinks for a moment that he's going to take things further, but he just continues to hold her and scent her, making contented noises, and Stiles can feel the way the tension leaves his body. Finally, he nods at the bags on the counter. "I hope there's nothing frozen in there."

Stiles shakes her head. “Nothing that can’t wait. You’re more important right now.”

Peter’s grip tightens on her a little when she says that, and he hums. Stiles just lets him kiss along her neck and run his hands over her body to his heart’s content, and when he finally lets her go, she turns and kisses him on the cheek. “Wolf’s happier now?” she asks with a soft smile.

“Husband’s happier,” he replies, and hoists her so she’s sitting on the counter. He slots himself in the V of her legs and crowds in close, arms wrapped around her back. “You smell good,” he murmurs, inhaling deeply.

“I smell like sweat and law enforcement,” she counters.

Peter doesn’t reply, just buries his face against her shoulder. “I was thinking we could sleep in tomorrow, before we go and register,” he says.

Stiles tilts her head in confusion. “Register for what?”

Peter looks at her for a long moment, before saying, “You haven’t heard? It’s a new *safeguard*.” Stiles can hear the air quotes. “All werewolves have to go to the Control office and register who’s supervising us during the full moon. We can’t be trusted to look after ourselves, apparently.”

“Wait, I thought that was still only a proposal?”

Peter shakes his head. “Nope. Got pushed through while we were honeymooning. Every month, I have to present myself with my partner, and we have to sign an affidavit saying I won’t be a danger to anyone.” The bitterness is evident in his tone. Stiles sees the trapped look in his eyes. She thinks about the last time laws like this were in place, and her heart breaks a little.

She pulls back, and looks Peter in the eye. “So tomorrow, we go and sign the stupid paperwork, and then, when we get home, I distract you enough to make sure you’re too busy to even think about the assholes at werewolf control.” He gives her a questioning look, and she continues, “I thought that maybe we’d get naked, and you could spend the weekend teaching me how to suck your cock.” That pulls a shocked laugh out of Peter, which was Stiles’ intention. She grins at his stunned expression and says “What? Girl’s gotta learn sometime, right?”

Peter laughs properly then, and lifts Stiles down off the counter so he can kiss her thoroughly. For the next hour she teases him by straddling his lap half naked, tugging at his hair till he gets the hint and starts sucking and biting at her nipples, and by the time he growls lowly and carries her to bed, he’s lost the pinched expression he was wearing, much to her relief.

So sue her, she likes to keep her husband happy.

They go out to breakfast the next morning, and head to the Werewolf Control office reasonably early. There are a few other people waiting there, and they all exchange looks that clearly say *this is bullshit*. The line moves quickly, and soon enough they're at the counter. The same clerk that had registered their marriage hands them a form and tells them in a bored tone "Fill that out and both sign."

They read through the questions, and scribble in their answers, before both signing the form and handing it back. "See you in a month," the man says absently, and it begins to hit home to Stiles how wearing this is going to be for Peter, filling in the same form every month without a reprieve in sight. She turns back to the man, and says "Excuse me, but do you have any more of those?" indicating the piece of paper he's holding. He gives her an odd look, but Stiles just smiles sweetly and holds her hand out. He hesitantly gives her another form, but she doesn't move. "I'll need more than that, thanks. I'll need at least twelve." The man opens his mouth to argue, but Stiles gets that certain set to her chin and repeats "*Twelve*."

The man hands over a stack, and Stiles pulls out her phone, brings up the calendar app, and begins quickly filling them all in. She writes in the date of every full moon for the next twelve months, ticks the boxes, and signs them. Then she slides the stack over to Peter for him to sign. He throws her an amused look as he signs off on a year's worth of paperwork, and watches to see what she'll do next. Stiles marches back up to the counter and slaps the pile of paperwork down in front of the man. He takes the papers and shuffles through them, frowning. "You have to fill these out every month. You can't know if you'll be together in a year," he protests.

Stiles picks up the top form and reads through it quickly, before pointing out the tiny writing under the signature box. "*Valid for twelve months from date of signature*, it says so right here. And also, how *dare* you imply that my husband and I won't be together in a year? That's just rude." She folds her arms and glares pointedly at the man until he sighs, picking up his rubber stamp and validating the paperwork.

"We'll see you in a year," Stiles says, and Peter can't suppress a smirk at the sour look the man shoots at her. He really has married a genius. As they leave, he notices that the couples behind them in the queue are all filling out a year's worth of forms.

On the drive home, he keeps looking at Stiles, smiling to himself. In the end he says, "That was inspired. I think you quite ruined that poor man's day."

Stiles grins back, saying, "Hazard of the job – I always read stuff before I sign it. And that guy's a dick, anyway. But now we're done, and you don't have to think about it for a year, and we can go home and concentrate on the fun stuff." She waggles her brows at him suggestively.

"What am I going to do with you?" he sighs fondly as he parks the car.

“You’re going to take me inside, and show me how you’d like me to blow you,” Stiles says with a smirk.

Stiles is quietly proud of her petty victory over the Werewolf Control office.

Almost as proud as she is of the fact that by the end of the weekend, after a few false starts and a lot of determination on her part, she’s learned to make Peter come using her mouth.

She figures he does it for her, why not return the favor?

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Peter and Stiles learn to live together, and Peter's instincts come to the fore.

Chapter Notes

Hey, y'all. I hope you like this, I've reread it too often to be objective now, so I'm posting it.

About six weeks into their marriage, Stiles wakes up one morning early. Peter's still asleep, which is unusual. Normally he beats her out of bed and is making her coffee by the time her alarm goes off. She smiles to herself and wonders if maybe, finally, she's managed to wear him out, instead of the other way around. They did play hard last night. Stiles remembers that she's not working today, and sighs with relief.

She takes the time to watch Peter as he sleeps. His face is open and unguarded in a way it rarely is when he's awake, and he looks vulnerable and a little lost without his customary smirk. She gently extracts herself from his hold and goes to the bathroom, before quietly making her way to the kitchen.

Today, she determines, she'll make Peter breakfast for a change, for no other reason than she feels like it, wants to do something nice for her husband. After she has her first coffee, she makes the pancakes. She's just plating them up when Peter comes shuffling into the kitchen, bare-chested and fluffy haired. He looks delicious like this, all soft and sleepy, and it fills her with affection. "I made you breakfast," she tells him, presenting him with his plate.

He kisses the top of her head. "Thank you, sweetheart. What's the occasion?"

Stiles shrugs. "No reason. Maybe I just like you."

"Oh, you like me now? When did that happen?" he asks, smirking. "Was it last night when I fingered you in the hot tub? Or was it later, when I bent you over the bed?"

Stiles pokes her tongue out and says, "You know what? I take it back. You're a terrible person."

Peter's grin widens, and he says, "I never claimed anything else, sweetheart. Yet still, you married me."

"Yep. Lucky for you I'm given to impulse decisions, huh?"

"Lucky for me," Peter repeats, and his grin turns into something else, something softer.

Life as a couple is going a lot better for them than Stiles expected. They're slowly ironing out their domestic wrinkles, learning to work around each other. If you asked her, she'd say they're almost happy.

Stiles is smart enough to know that Peter can teach her a lot, if she'll let him. She's a great believer in '*The more you know*,' so she picks his brain on a variety of subjects. She asks him about pack hierarchy, about werewolf behavior, and Peter shares a wealth of information with her, happy she's showing an interest. She understands his protective behavior a lot more, makes allowances for it.

She also asks him about how to maintain the hot tub, and what he actually does with his stock portfolio. Peter shows her, and she watches, fascinated as he buys and sells and juggles his stocks around and somehow winds up with more money than he started with. She's genuinely impressed, and tells him so. Peter laughs, and says "To be honest, it's just a giant numbers racket - if I wasn't working the stock market, I'd probably be fleecing casinos in Vegas." Stiles can picture Peter in a suit and tie, cool and collected, making bank at the blackjack table, and she tells him so, causing him to look quite smug.

Things with Scott are still awkward. There have been a few times when he's texted saying he wants to catch up, and Stiles has gone out for coffee with him, or joined him for a movie, but it's tense, conversation stilted. Scott doesn't want to hear about her life with Peter, and Stiles still hasn't quite forgiven him.

The last time Stiles went home from seeing Scott, Peter had screwed up his nose, before pinning her to the wall as he rubbed his body against hers, muttering about "erasing the scent of stupidity." She couldn't disagree.

Peter continues to delight her with the things he teaches her in the bedroom. He never pressures her to do anything she's not comfortable with, and there have been a couple of times where she's just flat out said no, but mostly, it's an enthusiastic yes. And she knows that she's lucky - werewolf strength means there are things they can do that an ordinary couple just couldn't.

Life, Stiles reflects, is good. Steady, safe. They're content. It's almost like they're a real couple.

It was only a matter of time before Peter's protective streak became an issue. And the worst part is, when it happens, Stiles isn't even technically working. She's literally just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Peter's taken her out to lunch, and they're dropping off some sushi for her dad at the station.

There's a drunk guy kicking up a stink at the front desk, demanding to see someone, threatening violence. And even though Stiles isn't on shift, Peter can see the second she falls into her work persona. Her back straightens, her shoulders square, and she steps forward without even thinking about it. She places a hand on the man's shoulder. "You need to calm down *right now*," she tells him, and Peter can hear the thread of steel in her tone.

Unfortunately, Stiles is out of uniform, and the man's drunk enough that he doesn't recognize her, misses the threat in her voice, assumes she's just some stranger trying to get involved. He raises his arm, trying to dislodge her hand, sneering, "Who the hell asked you, girly?" and shoving her backwards.

Peter hears the blood pounding loudly in his ears as a wave of sheer rage washes over him. Before he knows it, he's picked the man up and is holding him against a wall, growling. "*Don't. Touch. My. Wife.*" he snarls out around his fangs, as he lifts the man by his shirtfront so he's dangling an inch off the ground.

The man whimpers. Peter shoves him into the wall a little harder, growling out "*I should break your hand.*" And he means it. This man threatened what's his, and Peter's going to make him pay. He grabs the man by the wrist, fully intending to snap the bones, but a sharp cry of "*Peter!*" gets his attention.

He looks around, and sees that there's a deputy with a pistol trained on him, but more importantly, Stiles is standing there with her hands on her hips, and she looks *furios*. "*Peter*," she repeats, more loudly this time, and he dimly realizes that she's waiting for an acknowledgement.

"What?" he barks out, still intent on the man in front of him.

"Peter, put the man down. It's just Jimmy. He's harmless." Stiles says. "Now let him go, before you get shot."

"He hurt you," Peter insists, keeping his grip on the man, who's started crying.

Stiles steps up to him then, and pulls on the hand that's wrapped round the drunk's wrist. "He didn't hurt me. Let go," she demands, urgent, insistent, and Peter reluctantly lets her drag his hand away. "Now let him down, Peter," Stiles says, and the way she says it lets him know it's not a request. He lowers the man to the ground and lets go of him, stepping back. "Sam, you can put the gun away now," Stiles says, her eyes never leaving Peter. "Take care of Jimmy for me, and I'll drag this idiot home and kick his ass."

Peter's fangs have retracted, but he's still on high alert. He pulls Stiles close, needing to know she's OK, scenting her desperately. But Stiles doesn't smell hurt. She smells anxious, but more than that, she smells *angry*.

Peter takes in the rigid set of her shoulders, the way she's standing stiffly as he scents her, and the scowl on her face, and it hits him.

He's fucked up.

Stiles literally drags him out of the station by the scruff of his neck, and he doesn't even think of putting up a fight. "Get in the damn car and drive, and don't speak to me," she snaps. Peter obeys without a word.

As he starts the engine the radio begins to play, but Stiles stabs at the off button viciously, and they travel in silence. As the tension ratchets up in the car, Peter thinks to himself that he's glad it's only a short drive.

When they arrive home, Stiles storms out of the car and slams the door, and when they get inside she slams the front door too, before rounding on him.

"What the fuck was that? You can't just go around assaulting people, you idiot!" she yells.

Peter feels the need to try and explain, but he only gets as far as "He pushed you—" before Stiles cuts him off.

"And? You think I've never been shoved before, or abused, or propositioned by the drunks on a Friday night? It's part of the job, and I can look after myself. I didn't need you."

"What if he'd hurt you?" Peter demands. At the thought, his eyes flash and his fangs come out again as his wolf clamors to come to the surface, *protect protect protect*.

Stiles throws her hands up in the air. "What, you don't think I'm trained to deal with things like that?" To prove her point, she steps forwards, and before Peter can blink, Stiles has grabbed him by the arm and flipped him. Suddenly he's on his back on the floor, Stiles straddling him, an arm pressed across his throat. "My dad's a *cop*," she hisses out. "You really think he wouldn't teach me to defend myself?" Her eyes blaze with fury.

Peter could get out from under her easily, but he stays where he is, afraid of hurting her. Stiles takes her arm off his throat but keeps him pinned as she instructs "Now, close your eyes, deep breaths, get your damn wolf under control."

Peter does as she says, breathing in, out, in, out, until it feels a little less like he's about to jump out of his skin. He can feel his wolf retreat a little, and when he opens his eyes, they're

back to their normal blue. Stiles doesn't let him up yet, though. "I know you could throw me off, but I want you to lie there, while I explain to your damn caveman brain exactly *why* that was a stupid thing to do. You ready to listen?" she asks.

Although all Peter wants to do is question Stiles and find out exactly how often she's getting assaulted at work and not telling him, he knows now's not the time, so he huffs out a "Yes."

Stiles, true to her word, doesn't let him up. She stays sitting on top of him while she ticks off on her fingers. "One, you escalated that situation when there was no need for it. Two, you made me look like I can't do my job. I don't need anyone leaping to my defense, thanks. Three, *"I'll break your hand?"* Are you insane, threatening him like that? "

Peter knows that she's right. He sighs, saying as much. "You're right. I overreacted."

"Damn straight I am." Stiles folds her arms across her chest and looks down at him.

It takes Peter a moment to realize what she's waiting for. "I'm sorry." He can't help but add, "I was protecting you."

Stiles snaps at him, "Protecting *me*? Who the hell's going to protect *you*? You're still a Person of Interest, Peter! Werewolf Control would love any excuse to get their hands on you. Why the hell do you think I dragged your ass out of there so fast? Hopefully Jimmy's too drunk to remember your face, because you know what will happen if he decides to lay a complaint."

Peter pales, and goes quiet. He hadn't even thought of that at the time, too caught up in the flare of protective anger that had washed over him. Criminal activity's a one way ticket to the camps. As Stiles berates him, Peter catches the scent as a wave of anxiety comes rolling off her. And that's when it clicks. She's not angry at him. She's worried about him, about his safety. And he's just thrown himself under the metaphorical bus. At the realization, he groans. "I'm an idiot, aren't I?"

Stiles catches his expression and her tone softens. "I didn't marry you to keep you safe just for you to pull stupid stunts like this, okay?"

She finally moves off him, and he sits up with a sigh. "I lost control," he admits. "I saw him push you, and then he was up against the wall."

Stiles pulls him to his feet and wraps her arms around him. "Goddam overprotective idiot. What am I going to do with you?" Her ire has dimmed, and Peter can feel that her body has lost a little of its tenseness. He can't help but scent her, hold her close. She allows it, tilting her head back, and Peter feels his wolf settling at the physical contact.

"I think I need to just hold you a little," he mumbles into her neck, and to his relief, she doesn't say no.

Stiles can't even stay mad.

She tries, but Peter just looks so broken when he realizes what he's done. And when she points out that he put himself in danger, and he admits that he couldn't help himself, a part of her brain whispers *maybe he cares*.

She knows it's wrong, but right at this moment, she thanks her lucky stars that it was Jimmy that Peter threatened, and not someone who's sober enough to put a complaint in. She's gotten used to living with Peter, would even say she's fond of him, and she'd hate to see anything happen to him just because of one stupid mistake. It would be the ultimate irony, she thinks, if he got taken because he was protecting the woman he married to keep himself safe. So when he tells her, "I think I need to just hold you a little," she doesn't have it in her to say no.

"Come on then, big bad wolf. Let's get comfortable," she says with a sigh. She walks over to the couch, Peter still draped around her, and sits down. He sits beside her, holding on tight. "Head in my lap," she orders, and Peter complies wordlessly. He lies curled up on his side, head resting on her thighs, and Stiles begins to card her hands through his hair softly, calming him. He lets out a shuddery sigh, and relaxes under her touch. Stiles keeps stroking his hair, making the odd soothing noise, as Peter gathers himself. They sit there for a long time. Finally, Peter sits up slowly.

"Hell of a lunch date," he says. Stiles shoves at him fondly, and gives him a soft kiss so he knows he's forgiven.

Later, they sit down and discuss it properly. "I can't have you going off half cocked every time someone bumps into me with their shopping trolley, Peter. You need to get some control. You're putting yourself in danger."

Peter rubs a hand down his face. "I know. And it's never been a problem before, I swear. My wolf just got upset at seeing someone shove you like that." He pauses, before asking, "Exactly how often does that happen, by the way?"

She flaps a hand at him, dismissing his concerns. "Barely. It's normally more along the lines of getting called a bitch, being told they'll be waiting for me later, that sort of thing. Nothing serious."

Peter growls.

Stiles looks up, startled, and sees that he's closed his eyes and is breathing deeply. She notes that his fangs are out. "OK, new rule," she declares. Peter's eyes snap open, and she's relieved to see they've stopped glowing, at least. "You," she pokes him in the chest, "are banned from coming to the station. Ever."

He frowns, and starts to speak, but Stiles cuts him off. “No. You only drop in as it is because you’re bored. And we got lucky today, but I’m not taking the chance of this happening again.” Peter knows just by looking at her that he won’t win this.

“Fine. I’m barred from the station,” he grumbles.

“Stop sulking.” She can’t resist adding, “You know I’m right.”

Peter gives her a look that borders on betrayed, and mutters “I’ve married a tyrant.”

“Yeah well, this tyrant is going to do what she needs to, to keep your ass alive. Besides,” Stiles adds, “this is a red letter day for me. For once, you’re not the one who’s right.”

Peter lets out a snort at that, and Stiles can’t help but pull him into a hug. It breaks the tension between them, at least.

Stiles goes down to the station to see Noah, and find out if they need to do damage control.

“Nope. Jimmy was so drunk that he didn’t recognise you in your own clothes. Once we told him who it was that he pushed, he was so busy apologizing to me that he seems to have forgotten the part when Peter held him against the wall and threatened him.”

“Oh, thank God.” Stiles pulls her dad into a quick hug.

“Stiles, you know he can’t do that again, right? He’s damned lucky there was nobody here who would report him,” Noah tells her, brow creased.

“Don’t worry. Peter’s barred from the station,” she says.

There’s a moment’s silence before Noah says, “I gotta ask, kid. Should I be worried about you? I mean, the man threatened to *break someone’s hand* because they touched you. Makes me wonder what his temper’s like at home.”

Does he hit you? hangs unspoken between them.

Stiles sighs. “Dad, I was as shocked by today as you were. I’ve never seen Peter lose his temper like that before. I promise, you don’t have to worry – he’s nothing but sweet to me.”

“I’ve noticed. But I had to check. You know how it goes – perils of the job.”

Stiles does know. She’s seen plenty of cases where a couple appear to be perfectly happy, only for it to all be revealed as a sham when the station gets a call at 4am and somebody’s missing their teeth. She reassures her dad. “We’re good, trust me. You’d know if we weren’t.”

Noah takes her at her word, commenting, “I gotta admit, you two go together better than I thought you would. Next thing you know you’ll be falling for each other.”

“No chance, pops. Peter’s just driven by the wolf to protect me,” Stiles says, a little wistfully. She’s fully aware that no matter how well they get along, and how good the sex is, Peter’s being led by instinct alone – today’s just proved it. And if sometimes, as she lays in bed at night and looks at her husband, she wishes it was real, nobody needs to know that but her.

Noah catches her expression, and shakes his head. “Stiles, I’ve seen the way he looks at you. That’s not instinct. He genuinely cares. And looking at your face right now, I’d say you like him back. Maybe you should talk to him.”

Stiles hums noncommittally, but mentally she dismisses her father’s suggestion. She’s not going to start talking about feelings with Peter. It would just make things awkward.

They’re settled, she tells herself. It’s enough.

When Stiles gets home, Peter asks “He’s not laying charges?”

“Nope. Jimmy’s one of my regular drunks – normally wouldn’t hurt a fly. He was just too far gone today to recognize me out of uniform. He’s apparently forgotten that you were even there.”

Peter nods at that. “Just do me a favor, and don’t tell me if anything like that happens again. I don’t like thinking of you in danger.”

Stiles rolls her eyes. “I’m not in danger, Peter. I’d be in more danger if I was a school teacher, to be honest. Or a cashier at a gas station, or if I worked in a bank –“

“Yes, fine,” he cuts her off. “I know that, logically. It doesn’t stop me from worrying.” He pauses before he asks, “I don’t suppose there’s any chance –“

“Peter David Hale, if the next words out of your mouth are find another job, I swear you’ll find yourself sleeping alone for a month.”

Peter’s mouth closes with a snap.

“I like my job, I’m keeping my job, just so we’re clear. But if it makes you feel better, I promise to text you every day at lunch time to let you know I’m all right,” Stiles concedes.

She can see Peter considering it. “Actually, that would make me feel better. And there’s one other thing I’d like to do to keep you safe.”

“Uh huh.” Stiles looks at him dubiously.

“That jeep is long past retirement date, and it’s not safe.” Stiles starts to shake her head, but Peter holds up a hand. “I know it was your mothers, and I know it has sentimental value. But for the love of god, can I please at least get it rebuilt?”

Stiles stares at Peter. That wasn’t what she was expecting. “It would probably cost as much as a new one,” she says weakly.

“I don’t care. I just want you to be safe. So if you want to drive the jeep, it needs a rebuild.” Peter looks like he’s waiting for her to argue about it, but Stiles can’t.

Peter *hates* the jeep. He complains every time he has to ride in it, muttering under his breath. But he’s willing to get it rebuilt, all because it was her mom’s, and it means something to her. Maybe he does feel a little something, after all.

Peter’s still looking at her, waiting for a reply. “Yeah. We could fix up the jeep. That’d be nice.” He beams at her, as if she’s the one doing him a favor.

For their three month anniversary, Peter presents Stiles with the keys to her rebuilt jeep, on a pony keyring. Stiles laughs, and says, “Now I just need the yacht.”

Her gift isn’t quite as extravagant, but Peter’s thrilled with it anyway. It’s a punching bag and a set of boxing gloves. “For when your wolf needs to calm the fuck down because you’re worrying about me at work,” Stiles explains. Peter laughs, but he hangs the bag up under the back veranda, and later that day Stiles hears the rhythmic thump, thump, thump, of him punching steadily.

She pokes her head out the back door, and sees him in a wifebeater, his arms moving in a fast, solid pattern of punches. He’s worked up a sweat, and his hair’s sticking to his forehead, but there’s a grin on his face as he hits the bag repeatedly. Stiles just stands there quietly, watching him. She’s tempted to go and wrap her arms around him and suggest they go upstairs to bed, but he looks so content, she doesn’t want to break his mood, so she just enjoys the flex of his muscles, the way his body moves, the curve of his ass in the sweats he’s wearing. Eventually Peter says, “Enjoying the view, sweetheart?” without breaking his rhythm.

“I am, actually. I think this present’s going to be for both of us,” Stiles says.

Peter stills the bag with his gloves, and comes over to her, encircling her with his arms. He leans in and kisses her forehead. “I love it. It’s perfect. Happy three month anniversary.” He leans in and nuzzles into the crook of her neck, and they stand there, content.

Later, Peter takes her out to dinner, and afterwards he peels her carefully out of her dress, and slits the sides of her silk underwear with a single claw. He takes his time, makes her come twice just with his fingers and his tongue before he even gets out of his dress pants. When he finally fucks her, it's long and slow, with Stiles laying beneath him as he rolls his hips, fucking her deep, driving her out of her mind with want as he takes her to the brink, the delicious friction nearly but not quite enough to get her off. He knows it too, judging by the smirk on his face as he pushes into her, tortuously slow. She can't stand it, crying out "Peter, please!" in desperation, squirming beneath him helplessly.

He has the effrontery to laugh, the bastard. "You only had to ask, darling." He moves a little faster, fucks in harder, starts to pull at her nipples with his teeth because he knows she loves it. She gasps at the sensation, and arches up into it. Peter latches on and starts to suck hard, and Stiles knows she's going to have a bruise there, but she doesn't care, and when Peter shifts the angle of his thrusts and fills her just right, it's enough, and she comes with an animalistic grunt. Peter slows a little as she shudders beneath him, kissing her neck and murmuring, "There's my good girl, just like that."

Stiles feels like all her bones have been replaced with liquid, and she lets out a soft sigh. Peter continues to kiss and nip at her skin as he thrusts into her, chasing his own release. It's not long before his movements become jerky and urgent, and Peter buries his face in the crook of her neck, grunting as he slams into her hard one last time. Stiles lets out a groan at being so full, at the feeling of Peter spilling inside her. It satisfies her on a primal level, seeing him like this, sweaty and flushed and desperate.

She tangles her fingers in his hair and drags his head up so she can kiss him properly, wanting to taste him. He responds eagerly, kissing her till she's breathless. She can feel him still inside her, and something in the way he's still rocking his hips lazily as his lips are on hers is incredibly sensual. He starts to pull out, but she puts a hand on his hip and stops him. "Stay there?" she asks softly. "I like it," she adds, at his puzzled look. "Feels like you're mine."

Peter nods like he knows what she means, and maybe he does, because he rests on his elbows, holding himself above her, cock still lodged inside. They trade slow, lazy kisses, until finally he slips out unbidden. Stiles make a tiny sound of dismay. Peter rolls off to the side, and Stiles props herself up on her elbows so she can look at him, and figure out what to say to him. Because lying beneath him just now, Stiles had felt a deep affection welling over her, and she doesn't know what to do with that. But her father's advice comes to mind, and she thinks she should at least let Peter know, find out if maybe, *maybe*, he feels the same. Finally, she says, "Three months, and we haven't killed each other. I'm impressed."

Peter laughs softly, and says "I never thought we would, sweetheart. I think it's working out well, as arrangements go." Stiles feels a queer little twist in her gut at his words. They tell her all she needs to know. This is a marriage of convenience. The gifts and the lovemaking are nothing more than Peter ensuring she's kept happy.

She withdraws to her side of the bed quietly, and turns her back to Peter. He knows immediately that something's wrong, must be able to smell it on her, or perhaps he just knows her well enough by now to tell. Either way, he rolls over and plasters himself along her back. "Stiles? What's wrong? What did I say?"

She lays there silently, not sure what to tell him, because he's right. At the end of the day, it *is* an arrangement, and she can't really get mad at him for remembering that. It's not his fault she thinks she might want more. She settles for saying "Arrangement's such a cold word. I thought maybe we'd moved past that."

Suddenly Peter's rolling her over so she's facing him, wearing a concerned expression. "Stiles, you know this wasn't a love match. But please don't think that means I don't care for you. I'm the first to admit that I've grown rather fond of you."

Stiles' gut unclenches the tiniest bit. "You're fond of me?"

Peter leans in and kisses her. "Of course. I couldn't think of anyone else I'd rather have done this with. I like you, Stiles, I always have. Not to mention the fact you drag me to bed every chance you get, wanton little thing."

Stiles relaxes a little further. Maybe she's overreacted. "I'm fond of you, too," she says quietly. It's not what she wants to say, but she's not brave enough to put how she thinks she feels out there, not yet. She hopes that Peter will understand anyway.

"I should hope so. I've done my very best to court you, since you're stuck with me," he says with a soft smile.

"Well, it's working. I'm happy." Stiles hesitates before asking, "We're both happy, aren't we?"

He rests his forehead against hers, and says "Yes sweetheart, we're both happy."

The tight feeling in Stiles' gut is replaced with warmth. They're happy. Peter's fond of her. It's going to be all right.

Fourteen weeks into their marriage, Stiles is watching a movie and idly scrolling through social media on her laptop when Peter comes into the room looking vaguely concerned. She looks up at him with a smile, and pats the couch next to her. Peter sits down and accepts the kiss she gives him, but there's definitely something off. Stiles frowns, and pulls him in for another kiss. He doesn't really respond to that one, either. She huffs a little and pauses the film. "All right, you're twitchy as hell. What gives?"

Peter seems surprised that she's noticed, but he takes a deep breath and starts to speak. "Stiles, we've had three full moons since we got married," he begins. Stiles nods. She likes the full moon - the sex is phenomenal. Peter looks like he's searching for the right words and she waits patiently. Finally he says, "I can't help but notice that I've had my time of the

month, so to speak, but you haven't. And we've had a lot of unprotected sex. So I was just wondering, how effective is your contraception, really?"

Stiles frowns, because it's so completely out of left field, but then she gets what he's hinting at. "Oh! No, I'm not pregnant. I just don't take the sugar pills, so I don't have to deal with periods," she tells him. "I promise, there's no patter of little claws on the way."

"Oh," he says quietly, and Stiles could swear, just for a second, that he looks disappointed. But then it's gone, and he says, "Thank you clearing that up."

He disappears into his office for the rest of the day, and when he emerges for dinner he's still awfully quiet. Stiles watches him as he eats silently, not even complaining about the fact that the beef's well done, and she knows that he's more disappointed than he wants to say. In the end, she can't take it. This is something they need to talk about. She asks him, "Would you want that, someday?"

His head snaps up quickly at that. "Would I want what?" he asks, tone carefully noncommittal, but Stiles knows that he knows exactly what she's talking about.

"To hear the patter of little werewolf feet. At some time in the distant future. And I'm talking the far distant future, mind you."

Stiles sees the way Peter's eyes light up with hope, but then he seems to catch himself, saying, "I couldn't ask that of you, Stiles. You don't want children."

That makes her bristle a little. "You're telling me what I want now? How do you know I don't want a brood of ten baby Hales?" Because she's thought about it, in an abstract way, and if she's honest, she doesn't hate the idea. The thought has definitely crossed her mind that any children she has with Peter would be gorgeous.

"Do you?" Peter asks, getting to the point as always.

Stiles takes the time to consider her answer. "Honestly? I'm not sure. But I don't *not* want to. And it doesn't look like they're repealing any laws anytime soon, so if we're stuck with each other till death do us part, we should probably talk about this. So like I said, would you want it?" she says finally.

"In the right circumstances, yes," Peter says, hesitant. "But I'd want you to be certain. It's not something I'd consider right now. "

"And I'm not offering right now. But I've thought about it, you know? With you, I mean. So I'm just saying, if that's something you ever wanted, I'd possibly be open to the idea. Hypothetically. After all, it would be a crime not to pass down the Hale cheekbones." Stiles looks steadily at Peter as she speaks, and she could swear she sees the beginnings of a smile.

"Oh well, if it was something you wanted to discuss in the far future, *hypothetically*, I'd be happy to oblige. I do have very good genes," Peter replies, and this time there's a definite smile.

“Good. Glad we cleared that up,” she says. Shortly afterwards, Peter tells her that well done meat is an abomination, and she knows he’s feeling better. After dinner, she slides into his lap, straddling him and kissing him long and slow, before whispering “You know, we could practise. For when you want to fill me up with your babies.”

Peter groans, and his hands grip her hips a little tighter. “Stop, sweetheart. You don’t know what that sort of talk does to me, to my wolf.”

Stiles gets a wicked smile, and murmurs in his ear, “Oh, does that get you hot? Talking about you breeding me, making me all fat and round and pregnant?” as she grinds down in his lap.

Peter’s kissing down the side of her neck, humming as he mouths at the tender skin there. He stops long enough to say, “Keep talking like that and I won’t be able to help myself, sweetheart. I’ll take you right here on the table.”

That sounds like a challenge, if ever Stiles heard one. “If it’s a summer baby, I’d just have to walk around the house half naked,” she purrs. “I’d wear your shirts, and they’d get all stretched out over my belly. My tits would be all swollen and dripping milk – “

Peter cuts her off with a kiss, growling out, ”You damn tease,” as he picks her up, lays her out across the table, and fucks her hard.

Then he takes her upstairs, and they do it all again.

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

I'm sorry.....

There continue to be grumblings in the media about the Werewolf control laws being repealed, but it seems that they're at a standstill. Stiles wonders if it makes her a bad person that she's not in any hurry. She knows objectively that of course it makes her a bad person, that she should be campaigning with all her might to get the restrictions lifted, but it also means Peter will be free to divorce her, and she's not sure she wants that.

She likes being married to Peter. If she's totally honest with herself, he's perfect for her. He snaps if she doesn't put her laundry in the hamper, and he tends to be a little condescending, and sometimes he's just a flat out little shit, but he wouldn't be Peter if he wasn't. And he certainly keeps life interesting. But that's not what makes her want this for real.

It's the way that he looks at her sometimes, like she's precious. The way he listens to her when she tells him something important. The fact that he's respected her ban on him coming to her workplace, even though she knows it kills him. The fact that he lets her drag him into the hot tub and lean against him after a hard day at work, and how secure that makes her feel.

And afterwards, when he wraps her in a bath sheet and carries her upstairs, sometimes just to dry her off and massage the knots out of her shoulders, sometimes to tease and coax her into bed, she gets the impression that he cares more than he lets on. She just hopes she's not imagining it, hopes they can make this something more than it is.

She thinks, she hopes, they'll get there, with a little more time. And so, if it makes her a bad person to hope the laws don't change any time soon, she guesses she can live with that.

They get dragged along to a pack meeting four months into their marriage, to discuss Derek and Lydia's wedding, as well as Scott and Kira's. Time's ticking away for both couples, and somehow Scott thinks that Peter and Stiles need to be here for this.

The current debate is whether to have a joint wedding or not, and the discussion's seesawing back and forth as Scott dithers about what he wants. Kira's for it, Derrek and Lydia are for it, but Scott can't seem to decide. It's painful to watch, and it's been going on for more than an hour.

Stiles sits next to Peter, comfortably curled up into his side, and she idly links their fingers together. Peter sees Scott watching, sees the way his eyes narrow at their linked hands.

Peter's bored, and he wants to get this over and done with. He knows Scott doesn't like to be reminded that Stiles is sleeping with Peter, even less so that she likes it, and it's with this in mind that he leans over and whispers in her ear, "Want me to hurry this along?"

"Oh god yes," she breathes out.

He starts kissing softly at the nape of Stiles' neck. She giggles, and tilts her head to the side with a sigh. He grins. That's his girl. When he glances up, Scott's glaring at them. Peter makes a show of burying his face in the crook of Stiles' neck, murmuring just loudly enough for Scott and Derek to hear, "You smell delicious today, sweetheart. Just wait till I get you alone."

Stiles replies breathily, "Just thinking about you, baby, what I want you to do to me later." She turns her head for a kiss, and it turns into a long, protracted affair. When they part, all eyes are on them.

Peter straightens up and clears his throat. "If we could make a decision, my wife and I have things to do," he says with a smirk that leaves nobody in any doubt what those things are. "Scott," he says, "You need a joint wedding, for two reasons. One, Lydia is an organizational goddess. She'll make sure everything's perfect, I'm sure, and it will take a lot of the stress off Kira." Lydia nods regally in agreement, and Kira breaks into a wide smile.

Peter continues, "Two, it means you can split costs, and not expect your poor mother to bankroll this. In fact, I'm guessing Derek will be happy to pay for the whole thing. Am I right, nephew?"

Derek, who's scowling so deeply his eyebrows have morphed into one, nods, and suddenly there's an honest to god smile on his face at having the decision made.

"Excellent. Lydia, come by later and I'll give you the names of who we used for our wedding." He looks at Scott's stunned face, and smirks. "Do you need us for anything else?"

Scott starts to say, "I was hoping Stiles could help with—" but Stiles cuts him off.

"Oh, I'm sorry Scott, whatever it is, I'm far too busy. Demands of being a married woman, you know." She stands, dragging Peter with her, and they make their escape. Stiles laughs loudly all the way to the car over Scott's sour expression.

They haven't even started the engine when their phones both chime. They both have messages from Kira simply saying THANK YOU. Peter gets one later from Derek saying *I was this close to strangling him I swear.*

He doesn't reply, because a certain young wife is making him follow up on promises about when they were alone.

The punching bag was a good investment. Peter uses it daily, partly to release tension while he tries not to imagine Stiles getting assaulted at work, partly to show off his strength and skill to her. It's peacocking, pure and simple, and he doesn't even deny it. His wolf wants her to know what a good husband he is, how strong, how able to take care of her. He usually tries to time his workout for when Stiles comes home from work, because he knows she loves to watch him in action, and he does enjoy the look of pure want on her face when he puts on a show.

She'll stand at the back door silently, and he'll pretend he hasn't noticed her there, but he'll hit a little harder, a little faster, let out soft grunts as he hits the bag, toss his head back to get the sweat out of his eyes, all the while perfectly aware that Stiles is watching him. Sometimes she'll come out with a towel and wipe his face softly, then tell him he's in need of a bath and lead him into the hot tub, and those are the days he likes best, because nothing relaxes him more than laying in the swirling water with Stiles leaning back against his chest, sighing happily as he drags his fingertips over her body. Having her naked and where he can touch her calms his wolf, but it's more than that.

Today, Peter's assaulting the bag viciously in an attempt to clear his head. He's had to admit to himself that it's not his wolf that wants to wrap Stiles up in a fluffy towel after a bath and carry her upstairs. It's not his wolf that wants to take her out to movies and for dinner dates, and rebuild her jeep. It's him.

And he doesn't know quite what to do about it, which is why he's outside, despite the cold, punching away furiously.

Jab, jab, hook. Left, left, right.

Stiles has said she likes him, is *fond* of him. She does nice things for him. But that doesn't mean she cares for him. He only has to look at her track record with McCall to know that she's fiercely loyal to those she considers her friends, will always go above and beyond what's expected. It doesn't mean anything, not really.

Left hook, uppercut.

She's asked him if he's happy. She says she hopes it's more than an arrangement. And that makes him think that maybe she does have feelings, the same as he has for her. But the more sensible part of his brain, the one that's kept him alive all this time by being suspicious and cynical, points out that of course she wants him to be happy. He's providing her with a comfortable lifestyle, and he's treating her well.

Jab, jab, cross.

Stiles has even said that sometime in the future, assuming they stay married, she'll consider carrying his children, and oh, the thought of that makes him hunger for it. It's overwhelming. And surely, that means she feels something for him. You don't offer her children for someone who's just a friend?

She married you, though, as a friend his treacherous brain reminds him. He ignores it and punches harder, making the bag swing.

When he'd thought she might be pregnant, he'd spent half a day thinking of ways to ask her to keep the child, to let him take care of it if she didn't want to. He'd even had the nursery planned in his mind. Hearing that she wasn't expecting was like a punch to the gut.

But then Stiles, wonderful, perceptive, unpredictable woman that she is, had tantalized him with the thought of maybe, someday, having a family, something that Peter had long given up hope of. And *then*, the little minx had tapped right into his hindbrain, talking about breeding and babies and tits full of milk, and he'd fucked her harder than he ever had before. She'd mocked him gently about it afterwards, and he'd had to make her promise not to do that again, because it's just too much for his wolf to handle. She'd promised, but she'd looked far too smug while she did it.

Right cross, left cross, uppercut, uppercut, hook.

To offer to carry his child, even as a possibility, must mean she has more than a passing affection, right? Peter doesn't know how to ask what he means to her, doesn't want her to feel pressured, but he needs to know if she feels the same. Because he acknowledges now, even if it's only to himself, that it's not instinct that's driving him to provide for and protect and pamper his wife. It's genuine affection, and it runs deeper than he could have predicted.

It makes him vulnerable, open to rejection. And he can't cope with that.

The bag shakes under his relentless assault, and the rhythmic pounding echoes loudly. He lets loose with a flurry of uppercuts, and the bag groans dangerously before coming loose and hitting the ground, sand spilling out of the split seams.

Well, fuck.

He's breathing heavily from the exertion, but he feels better. He decides that he'll say nothing for now, but if it seems Stiles returns his affections, he'll definitely tell her how he feels.

Definitely.

Maybe.

When Stiles comes home and sees the split punching bag, she just laughs delightedly and calls Peter her very own Steve Rogers. Then she winks at him and says “Carry me upstairs, Cap? It’s been a busy day and I need you to rub my feet.”

“Oh?” Peter asks, instantly alert. They have an agreement that Stiles won’t tell him anything that happens at work that might upset him unless he needs to know about it, but that doesn’t stop him fishing for information.

“Settle down, protective panda, it was just busy because there are a couple of guys off sick. No danger, I promise.” Stiles crosses her heart, and Peter relaxes at the gesture.

He still snarks, just on principle. “Panda, Stiles? Really? Are you saying I’m fat?” he pulls up the edge of his shirt, so she can see his tanned, muscled abs, and makes sure to flex them. He knows what she likes.

Sure enough, she comes closer and runs her hands back and forth over the exposed strip of skin. “I dunno,” she muses, pulling him in close and slipping her hands inside the back of his jeans, kneading his ass. “Maybe you could do with a workout of some kind. Come upstairs. The foot rub can wait.”

Part of what he ~~loves~~ enjoys about Stiles is she has an absolutely shameless streak that’s only becoming more pronounced the longer they’re together. She just laughs when he tells her she’s wanton, and says he’s corrupted her. She’s probably right, he reflects, but she doesn’t seem to mind it. He hoists her up into his arms, and carries her bridal style up the stairs. “I’ll give you something to rub,” he murmurs, and she snickers.

“Promise?” she says with a grin, arms wrapped securely round his neck.

“Oh, I promise. You can ride me if you like,” he purrs.

Stiles hums. “Yes, please. You’ll massage me after?” she asks with a hopeful expression.

Peter can’t help but melt a little at the way she looks, with her turned up nose and bright eyes and hair mussed from work. “Anything, sweetheart,” he says softly. And he means it. Afterwards, looking at her, Peter nearly tells her. But she looks so peaceful, and he doesn’t want to ruin the mood, so he hesitates.

Next time, he thinks. Definitely next time.

The week before the double wedding, Stiles walks in the door from work, and for once she doesn’t hear the steady pounding of Peter attacking his replacement punching bag. (she knows damn well he does it to give her a show, and she appreciates the hell out of it.)

Instead she can hear the tv going, set to one of the news channels, and see Peter staring at the screen, watching with rapt attention.

She glances at the screen and stares, frozen in shock. *Werewolf Control disbanded. Laws repealed. Executive order issued, effective immediately* reads the writing scrolling across the bottom of the screen.

Stiles tries to parse what she's seeing. Repealed? Immediately? She just stares at the screen and blinks. The president's making a speech, something about the road to Damascus, realizing the error of his ways, Stiles isn't really listening. Peter reads the words, muttering to himself. "monthly check ins abolished, no more accompanied travel, werewolf partnership decree rescinded, effective immediately...." his face lights up as he turns to Stiles. "All of it, sweetheart! They reversed all of it!" He doesn't notice the way Stiles curls into herself.

He didn't have to be so damned glad to get rid of her, she thinks.

She looks at his expression. His face is relaxed like it hasn't been since the day that were married, like he can finally let his guard down. She watches the news with Peter as he flicks from channel to channel trying to find out more about what caused the sudden change of policy. "There must be something," he mumbles under his breath, but for now all they can find is the president droning on about how sometimes, things happen in life that make you reassess your world views.

And then their phones are both ringing, Peter's with a call from Derek, and Stiles' with a call from Scott, helpfully telling her she can get divorced now, as if she didn't know.

And then Lydia calls. "Well, the wedding's still on," she says as soon as Stiles picks up. "Derek and I were always going to get married, so this doesn't change anything."

Stiles can't say she's surprised – she's seen the way Derek looks at Lydia, and lord knows that man deserves a smart woman that he can trust. "Have you told Derek it's still on?" she asks.

Lydia laughs. "Not yet. I'll talk to him next, reassure him I'm still interested. I just called to see if you know what you're going to do now?"

"I guess we'll separate," Stiles says. She hates saying it out loud.

"Hmmm," is all Lydia says. Then she has to go because she has an incoming call, and it's Derek.

Peter gets off his call. "Derek's hoping Lydia will still marry him. I'm amazed he can't see she's smitten."

Stiles gives him a weak smile. "Yeah, that was just her. She says they're going ahead, and you know Lydia gets what Lydia wants."

Peter pulls her into his arms and kisses her, which she wasn't expecting. She supposes it's just habit for Peter, now. She lets herself be held, and welcomes it. She doesn't know how

much longer she'll get to do this, so she closes her eyes and tries to memorize the feel of Peter's hands on her, his breath against her neck, the smell of him. She breathes in deep, and doesn't even realize she's crying until he pulls back, concern on his face, saying "Sweetheart? What's wrong?"

As he gently wipes her tears away with his thumb, she looks at him and just wants to hold him and never let go. But she knows that's not what he wants, so she puts on a brave face, and says "I guess they're happy tears."

Peter looks like he wants to say something, call her on the lie, so she distracts him by pulling him in for another kiss. He responds just as eagerly as he always has, and Stiles closes her eyes and just enjoys it until she feels she has herself a little more under control. When they part, her heartbeat is steady as she tells Peter, "I really am happy for you."

She is, honestly. The laws needed to be repealed, and just because it doesn't suit her, doesn't mean it's not a good thing.

She just has to keep reminding herself of that.

When it's time for bed that night, Stiles climbs in and curls up on her side of the bed in a small ball. Peter looks at her, and something in him breaks. He'd hoped, somehow, that Stiles might want to stay with him anyway, but her body language is screaming *don't touch me!* and her scent is sour with anxiety.

Peter wants nothing more than to bundle her up and hold her close, rock her and coo at her and comfort her, but she doesn't want that, obviously doesn't want *him*. So he keeps to his own side of the bed, settling for a quiet "Goodnight, Stiles." He doesn't expect a reply, and he doesn't get one. It's the first time they haven't shared a goodnight kiss. They lay there like that in the dark, both awake, both pretending to sleep, both blanketed in misery.

Peter hates it, and his wolf hates it. Stiles was his, and now she's going to leave him because he wasn't enough for her. It takes all his willpower not to drag her into his arms and beg her to give him a second chance, at least.

He finally falls into a restless sleep, his wolf whining at him.

They pretend nothing's changed the next morning. Peter still makes coffee and breakfast for Stiles and tells her to stay safe when she leaves for work, still gives her a peck on the cheek,

but the atmosphere is charged. Stiles can see that Peter wants to say something, but keeps changing his mind. She decides she'll make it easy on him, and move out after work. She doesn't say anything though, because she really doesn't have time for this discussion now, she's running late.

She heads to work, where her dad pulls her into a hug. "I dunno what changed El Presidente's mind, but I'm glad something did," he says, holding her tight. Stiles lets his touch soothe her, just as it always has, and ignores the part of her brain that's busy reminding her this is the only hugs she'll get from now on.

During the course of the morning there's another press conference, and Stiles can't help but cackle when it's revealed that the First Daughter is engaged, and also expecting a happy event. In a beautifully ironic twist of events, the father of the baby is a born werewolf, almost guaranteeing that the First Grandchild will be too. No wonder they changed the laws so damn quick. Stiles knows that Peter will laugh madly when he hears. She thinks about calling him, but in the end she puts her phone back in her pocket. She may as well get used to doing without him.

As the day goes on, she tries not to dwell on the thought that there'll be no more slow kissing, no more late night sex, no more teasing Peter till he bends her over the nearest flat surface. She wonders for a second if she can persuade him to indulge in the occasional weekend fling, and dismisses it immediately as a terrible idea. No. She's better to move out and move on. Peter had been quite definite when they first signed up for this thing. She remembers it clearly. *"Rest assured Sheriff, when the law gets repealed, we'll be divorced within the week and Stiles can go on with her life."*

Noah notices she's distracted, but he doesn't call her on it. She sticks her head in his office door at lunch and asks, "Hey, Pops, my room still free?"

"When are you moving back?"

"I thought maybe tonight?" she asks, hating the very thought of it.

He looks at her, surprised. "That fast?"

Stiles shrugs. "It's better that way. Like ripping off a band aid, you know?"

Noah sighs. "Sure thing. See you tonight."

Stiles spends the next few hours drifting around, and in the end, Noah sends her home two hours early. "Get out, you're useless to me," he tells her as he shoos her out the door.

She gets into her jeep, thinking again about how Peter rebuilt it even though he loathed it. He did a lot for her while they were married. The least she can do is make this easy for him. She drives home, and when she walks in the door Peter's sitting at the table, writing something.

"Hey," she says quietly. She wishes this was normal day, and she could slide up behind him and run her hands under his shirt while she read over his shoulder. But instead, she walks into the kitchen and starts poking in the refrigerator, not even sure what she's looking for.

“You’re early,” Peter observes, leaving what he’s doing and coming over to her.

He pulls her close and scents her, just like always, and Stiles can’t take it – it’s like he’s taunting her with what she’s losing. She worms her way out of his grasp, and says “Dad sent me home early so I could pack. I’ll move out tonight.”

Peter looks stricken, saying “Stiles, you don’t have to move out.”

Her heart clenches in her chest at the words. Maybe Peter wants her to stay. She closes her eyes and allows herself a moment of hope. “No?” she asks, voice shaking.

“No, sweetheart. The house is yours. I put it in your name when we bought it. I’m the one moving out.” He nods towards a suitcase by the door, and just like that, all her hopes are dashed.

Stiles could swear that someone’s standing on her chest, and she can feel the blood draining from her face. She thinks she’s going to pass out. Peter wraps an arm around her shoulders and guides her to a chair, all care and concern, damn him, and she wants to hug him and hold him and punch him in the face all at once.

But she doesn’t. Instead she breathes slowly, in and out, until she feels a little better. “It was the shock. About the house, I mean,” she lies, when he asks her.

“It’s a gift, sweetheart, a thank you for what you did,” he says, one hand resting on her shoulder.

She shrugs it off, saying, “Don’t call me that.”

“Sorry.” Peter reaches over and grabs the paperwork he’d been filling in, and hands it to her. “I’ve filled in my half. Just file it when you’re ready,” he says quietly.

Stiles stares at the divorce papers in her hands. Peter gives her one last kiss on the forehead, picks up his bag, and walks to the door.

The word falls unbidden from her lips. Barely a whisper. “Wait.”

Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

"Just...tell me what you want?" she pleads.

Peter hesitates. "I want us both to be happy," he says finally, looking down at his hands.

"That's what I want too," she says quietly. "And I don't think I will be, if you leave."

Chapter Notes

Wow, you guys really did NOT COPE with that last chapter, huh?

Hopefully this one will make up for it.

Also, full credit to Twisted_Mind for "The Hale eyebrow game is strong." I totally stole it from her :)

Stiles stares at the divorce papers in her hands. The word falls unbidden from her lips. Barely a whisper. "Wait."

Peter turns back, giving her a searching look, and Stiles just needs to hold him, one last time. She stands and wraps herself around him tightly, burrowing into his neck and unable to stop the tears.

Peter brings his arms around her back, and rocks her gently where they stand. It reminds her of the way they danced in their hotel room after their wedding, and she holds on tight while Peter makes soothing noises as she sobs. "I wish we didn't have to end this," she whispers, more to herself than Peter.

He murmurs, "I wish we didn't, either." His voice is muffled, thick. Stiles pulls away, and looks at him. Peter has a stoic expression on his face, but his eyes are red. There are tear tracks down his face.

"Why are you crying? I'm the one getting left high and dry," she manages, breath hitching.

Peter's brows furrow. "You're the one who told me you're moving out."

"You're one to talk," she sniffles. "You've already packed, and filled out the paperwork. If I hadn't come home early, you probably would have been gone."

He doesn't deny it. "I was trying to make it easier."

"But you're still leaving me." It's not a question.

Peter rubs a hand across his face and sighs. "Stiles, I can't ask you to stay with me."

Stiles feels like she's missing something. They're both standing here in tears, and Peter's saying he can't ask her to stay. There's a tiny flicker of something in her chest. She doesn't dare call it hope, couldn't stand for it to be crushed again, but it's enough that she's willing to take a chance. She takes a deep breath, and asks the question. "Why can't you?"

Peter stills. "Why can't I what?" he asks, wary.

"Why can't you ask me to stay? Do you want me to?" she says, throwing caution to the winds.

Peter slumps into a chair, and pulls Stiles into his lap. She arranges herself so she's straddling him, because she wants to see his face. He regards her with a wistful expression for a long moment, before saying, "Sweetheart, you have no idea."

"No, I don't. Because you *won't talk to me*. And I'm done with it. Just...tell me what you want?" she pleads.

Peter hesitates. "I want us both to be happy," he says finally, looking down at his hands.

"That's what I want too," she says quietly. "And I don't think I will be, if you leave."

Peter's head snaps up, and he looks hopeful. "Are you telling me you want me to stay?"

Stiles shakes her head. "No. I'm saying I need you to *be honest* and tell me what you're feeling. Then maybe we can figure it out." She's stopped crying, feels a little more in control. She's starting to think that if she can just get Peter to *talk* to her, things might be OK.

She can see him fidgeting, knows he thinks he's protecting her or some bullshit, but she's not having it. Stiles folds her arms and gives Peter her patented *don't start anything in my station* look. He wilts under her glare, takes a deep breath, and starts to speak. "You know that the wolf wants to protect you, and take care of you." Stiles nods. "I've recently come to realize that only some of that desire comes from the wolf. Some of it's me."

"Some of it?" Stiles raises an eyebrow.

"Fine, most of it's me," he amends. "I care for you, more than I ever thought I would. And I like living with you. I know I said we'd get divorced if the laws changed, but I'm not sure that's what I want anymore. But I don't want to force you into anything," he hastens to add.

Stiles is quiet, as she considers what he's said. "So, you don't want a divorce?"

"Not really, no. But if that's what you want, I'll do it. The agreement was that you'd marry me to save me from the camps, and you fulfilled your end of the bargain. It feels wrong to ask for anything more when I don't know how you feel about me. I'd prefer to keep you, Mrs

Hale, but the decision's yours." Peter looks so earnest, Stiles kinda wants to kiss his stupid perfect face.

She doesn't, though. Because there's still too much to talk about. "Peter, we talked about having children. How could you not know how I feel about you?"

"How *do* you feel about me, Stiles? You've never actually said," he challenges. "I've told you what I want and how I feel, how about you extend me the same courtesy?" Stiles bites her lip as she realizes he's right, yet again. He's looking at her intently, waiting for a reply, and she finds herself distracted by the blue of his eyes, the curve of his lips. She leans in and kisses him, soft and sweet. He lets her, but when she pulls away, he says, "That's not an answer, sweetheart."

She sighs. "Do I have to spell it out for you? I like you, kinda a lot. I like living with you, too. You make me happy. And I don't want a divorce, at least not like this, with you running out the door and throwing paperwork at me."

She sees the smile spreading slowly over Peter's face as he registers exactly what she's said. "You don't?"

Stiles shakes her head firmly. "Absolutely not. If we're going to get a divorce we'll do it the old fashioned way, driving each other up the wall for years before deciding to call it quits."

Peter's smiles widens, and there's a glint of mischief in his eyes. "We could do that. You could keep leaving your laundry on the floor, that would probably do it."

"You're never going to let that go, are you? I'll end up divorcing you for badgering me about it," Stiles tells him, with a roll of her eyes. She drapes her arms over his shoulders, and leans in for another kiss. Peter kisses her back, and starts mouthing down the column of her throat. She can feel the curve of his smile against her skin when she tilts her head back for him. She lets herself enjoy his attention for a few minutes, before she threads her fingers into his hair and tugs him away, tilting his head up so she can see him properly. "Stop trying to distract me. This conversation's not over, not by a long shot," she tells him, but there's no heat to it.

Peter sighs, and stands up, still holding her. He carries her over to the couch and sets her down, and makes a point of sitting at the opposite end. "Fine. What shall we talk about?"

Stiles hesitates. She has so many questions right now, but what comes out of her mouth is, "I don't love you."

Peter tilts his head for a moment. She knows he's listening for any trace of a lie, but he won't find it. She's fond of him, she enjoys his company, and she loves what they do together in bed, but it isn't love. "I don't love you either. But I think, in time, we could get there. I certainly have strong feelings for you, stronger than I've ever had for anyone else," Peter admits.

Stiles can't stop the smile from spreading across her face. "Peter Hale, did you just use your words like an adult?" she says gleefully.

He huffs a little, but she can see he's smiling too. "If you're going to mock me, this conversation is over. But you wanted to know how I feel, so I'm going to tell you." He scoots over so he's next to her, and when he kisses her this time, it's with intent. He slides a hand behind her head, holding her in place as he slides his tongue into her mouth, exploring the warmth there. Stiles opens for him, helpless to resist, eyes fluttering closed at the familiar feel of Peter's body close to hers.

When they part, he leans in close to her ear, and growls, "You make me want to pin you down and claim you, every chance I get. I hate it when we're apart. I want to argue with you, and laugh with you, and tease you till I make you blush, every single day. I want you to *stay*."

Stiles makes a tiny whining noise at the back of her throat, but Peter's not finished yet. He continues, "I want to spoil you, buy you expensive, beautiful gifts. I want to see that special smile of yours that you save for when you're totally thrilled. I want to see that other smile, the one that you can't keep off your face when we're in bed, and I've made you come so often you can't take any more. I want to see your bed hair every single morning. I want to bring you coffee every day. I want to take you places, parade you as my wife, show you off. But I also want to hide you away so it's just you and me, and spend hours kissing every inch of your skin. I'm addicted to you, darling, and I don't think I'll survive without you, if I'm honest."

Stiles sits there, stunned by the sudden flow of words, but the main thing she hears in all of it is *I want*. She surges forward and grabs Peter's face, and there's a clash of teeth and tongues as she kisses him greedily, only pulling away long enough to mutter, "You smooth bastard."

Peter laughs softly, and murmurs "Shall we take this to bed?" as he slips a hand under her shirt, splaying a warm palm across her back and making her body sing with just the touch of his skin.

"I feel like I should turn you down. An hour ago, you were ready to leave me," she points out.

"And that was a stupid, stupid idea, and I was wrong. Let me make it up to you," Peter purrs, and then his other hand is undoing the button on her pants and sliding her zipper down. "Would you like me to carry you upstairs, sweetheart, or shall I eat you out on the kitchen table?"

Stiles' breath catches at that. "Upstairs," she replies breathlessly. "Table's too hard."

Peter laughs, and throws her over his shoulder.

He gets to see it, the smile that Stiles can't keep off her face, when he's buried his face between her legs, licked her open till she's begging for more, and then made her come twice.

She tugs at his hair, and pants out, “Cock, now. Get it in me.”

He moves up the bed, and rolls Stiles over so she’s on her stomach. “Want you like this,” he growls out, and she lets out a lovely breathless moan. She loves it when he takes her from behind, says she feels it more. She’s flat against the bed, and Peter lays down on top of her and ruts into her, hard and desperate. She grunts at the first thrust, and Peter lets out a breathy laugh against the back of her neck as he rolls his hips, finding his rhythm. “You like that, my good girl? Like me pinning you down, making you take it, filling you up?”

Stiles arches under his touch, under his words, and groans. Peter knows what she likes to hear. “Look at you, sweetheart. Desperate for my cock, all wet and open for me, always wanting more.” He grinds in hard, and Stiles makes a tiny shocked sound, but her scent spikes with arousal. His hips move fluidly, in and out, in and out, as deep as he can get, and he whispers filth in her ear. “Let me in deeper, sweet thing. That’s right, spread your legs wide for me, take what I give you, like the wanton little thing that you are.”

Stiles makes a broken sound beneath him as Peter pulls out, then grabs Stiles by the hips and drags her so she’s on her knees, chest pressed against the bed. He wastes no time plunging into her again, fucking her deep, listening to her pant and whine. Peter knows what his girl likes, so he slides a hand under her and rubs his fingers skilfully over her clit, murmuring “Come for me, baby.” And she does, with a wail. He feels her muscles fluttering around him, and drives in harder.

He nearly lost her, and now his wolf feels the need to claim her back. He doesn’t hold back, slamming in and out, making her body shake beneath him and revelling in the noises she makes. He’s keyed up and desperate, and it only takes a handful of thrusts before he’s hissing between his teeth as his orgasm overtakes him. He grips her hips tightly as he presses in as far as he can, pumping hot come inside her, muttering ‘*fuck, fuck, fuck*’ under his breath.

A full body shudder goes through him, and he makes a sound that’s halfway between a laugh and a sigh. He drapes himself over Stiles’s back, exhaling loudly. Stiles straightens her legs so she’s flat in the bed, and Peter follows her down. He tries to keep his weight on his elbows and off her, but she squirms beneath him, saying, “You can be big spoon.”

Peter knows an order when he hears one, so he rolls them into their sides and snuggles up behind her. His cock slips out when he moves them, and he catches a glimpse of creamy white dribbling down Stiles’s thigh. He smiles to himself, satisfied. Stiles is his. The evidence is right there. They lay quietly together, and he lets his hands roam over her body, stroking and touching. He kisses at the back of her neck, and snuggles up a little closer, holding her tight. He’s just getting comfortable when Stiles says, “I can’t believe you actually admitted you were wrong for once.”

It takes him a moment to catch up to what she’s talking about. He sighs. “I really am sorry, sweetheart. I got too caught up in not pressuring you, and I missed what you were trying to tell me.”

“That’s because always you think you know best,” she says, and Peter can hear the smirk in her voice. Peter doesn’t bother to reply, busy nuzzling into the crook of her neck and

scenting her. He can smell the contentment rolling off her. “Happy, Mrs Hale?” he asks quietly.

“Happy, Mr Hale,” replies just as quietly.

They sleep, the stress of the day catching up with them. When they wake, it’s late, and Stiles’s stomach is growling. Peter rolls out of bed and pulls his boxers on. “I’ll make us some dinner. Any preferences?” he asks.

“Mhmm. Anything,” Stiles says as she kneels and stretches her arms above her head. Peter takes a moment to look at the long, lean lines of her body, and he has a sudden impulse to get his mouth on her. He moves quickly, grabbing her ankles and dragging her down the bed. Stiles squeals and flails, but she doesn’t object when Peter kneels at the end of the bed between her legs, grinning.

“Did I mention wanting to kiss every inch of you?” he asks, before bending forward and starting pepper her torso with kisses and tiny love bites. With every bruise he sucks into her, his wolf settles a little more, and he doesn’t even notice that he’s chanting “*mine, mine, mine.*” He doesn’t stop until he’s covered her body with marks, the bruises and beard burn stark against her pale skin. Peter looks at his handiwork with satisfaction, and then leans down and licks long and slow, dragging his tongue over her opening, tasting the slickness that’s gathered there.

Stiles shivers, and her voice is rough with want when she says, “More.” Peter starts suckling on the tender flesh, flicking the tip of his tongue against her clit expertly and teasing her open, before fucking her with his tongue. Stiles pants and begs, and when Peter slips a long, clever finger inside her and crooks it just right, she comes, shaking under his touch.

He gives a couple of last lazy licks before he sits up and looks at her, and he can feel his wolf preening. Stiles is smiling at him, that fucked out smile he loves so much, and she reaches her arms out to him in invitation. He moves up the bed and kisses her, heedless of the juices smeared around his mouth and chin. Stiles doesn’t seem to care either, tangling her fingers in his hair. Finally, he pulls away when her stomach growls again. “I really need to feed you, sweetheart.”

“Wolf wants to take care of me?” she teases.

“Wolf wanted to mark you. *I* want to take care of you,” he corrects.

They end up sharing grilled cheese sandwiches curled up on the couch. Stiles flicks the TV on for some background noise, and they stumble across the last ten minutes of *Sabrina*. Linus Larrabee is sending his love to Paris because he can’t admit to having feelings for her.

When she sees what's playing, Stiles can't help but elbow Peter and point at the screen. "Hey look, it's that guy who won't use his words and thinks he knows what's best for everybody."

Peter leans in and steals a bite of her sandwich. "What an idiot."

The next morning when Stiles wakes up, she remembers that she never called her dad. She sits up and grabs her phone, and sure enough there are several missed calls and a single text. The text says *I guess you're not moving home tonight huh kid?*

In spite of the fact that it's 6 am and she hasn't had coffee, Stiles calls Noah's number. He picks up immediately, saying "Are you all right?" His voice is concerned, and Stiles feels a little guilty, but honestly, calling her dad was the last thing on her mind last night.

"Yeah, Pops. I'm fine. Peter and I got talking, and I forgot to text you that I wasn't coming home."

"It's fine, kiddo. I figured something like that had happened. So, no divorce?" he asks.

"No divorce. How did you know?"

"You didn't come home dragging your boxes of crap and telling me what an asshole he is, for a start." His tone turns serious for a moment. "He's not making you stay, is he?"

"No, he's not. He was going to leave. I asked him not to," she reveals. She wishes she was more awake for this conversation, because she's not sure she's ready to defend her decision.

But all Noah says is "I guess you know what you want, kid. And Stiles? Take the day off."

"Really?"

"Really," Noah confirms. "I'm guessing you guys still have a lot more to talk about."

Stiles isn't sure they do, but she's not about to turn down a day off. "Thanks, Pops. Love you."

"You too kiddo."

Stiles gets off the phone just in time to take the coffee mug Peter hands her. She takes a mouthful, and sighs happily – it's perfect, as always.

Peter waits till she's halfway through the coffee before he asks, "What did Noah say?"

Stiles holds up one finger - *wait* – and drains the mug before she replies. “He guessed that we’re not divorcing by the fact I didn’t come home last night, and he checked you weren’t making me stay, then he gave me the day off. Said we probably need to talk more.”

Peter drapes himself over her naked back and props his chin on her shoulder, arms wrapped around her belly. “He’s right. We probably do. But right now? It’s early, and you’re warm, and I want to hold you close, and remind myself that you’re not leaving me.”

He takes the empty mug from Stiles and places it on the bedside table, and she lets herself be pulled back down into the blankets, where Peter settles against her, making contented noises as he nuzzles her. She lays there reflecting on the emotional rollercoaster of the last 24 hours, and decides that yeah, cuddling up together sounds perfect.

They finally get out of bed nine, a far more respectable hour. Peter tries to convince Stiles to let him shower with her, but she bats his hands away with a laugh. “I need to actually get clean. You’ll just want to hold me against the wall and do terrible things to me.”

“If by terrible, you mean wonderful, then yes.”

Stiles rolls her eyes, and pushes Peter out of the bathroom. “Later. Later, you can do all the things to me,” she says firmly. She steps into the shower, and takes her time soaping her body, running her fingers gently over the scattering of bruises Peter left on her last night. She notes that he was careful not to leave them anywhere they’d be seen, and smiles to herself. Peter’s so considerate, always taking care of her.

That’s when the realization hits her. Peter’s been telling her he cares for her all along. He’s just been telling her through his actions, not his words. He tells her in the way that right now, he’s doubtless making her breakfast, and probably more coffee. He bought her a house, so that if they divorced, she’d be taken care of. He gave her the wedding she wanted, when they could just as easily have gone to the courthouse. He took her to Niagara Falls, and got soaking wet under waterfalls, just because it made her happy. He got her jeep rebuilt, even though if it was up to him it would be scrapped and replaced with a nice safe Toyota.

Maybe Peter’s not the only one who hasn’t been listening. The knowledge washes over her, and she shakes her head at the pair of them, telling each other the same thing in completely different ways, and both of them missing it. She determines that she’ll start paying more attention to what Peter’s saying without words. She shuts the water off and dries herself, dresses, and heads downstairs. Just as she’s predicted, Peter’s made breakfast and coffee.

She kisses him softly and says “Thanks,” as she takes the plate of scrambled eggs. They eat breakfast quietly, just casting glances at each other. Peter’s turned on the TV and the news

plays quietly. Stiles glances over and sees footage of the president shaking hands with his future son in law, wearing an expression like he's sucked a lemon.

She lets out a quiet huff of laughter. "Something funny, sweetheart?" Peter asks.

"The president's daughter got knocked up by a were. He must be *so pissed* right now." Everyone knows that his daughter is the apple of the president's eye, has always been presented as pure as the driven snow.

"I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall when she told him. I can only imagine how well the news went down," Peter agrees. He adds, "Did you know that the fiancé's an activist for werewolf rights? He was one of the ones pushing for an end to the laws."

Stiles nearly chokes on her eggs at that. "Oh god, so princess perfect was doing the nasty with her father's nemesis? This just gets better and better."

"It is rather wonderful, isn't it?" Peter looks supremely satisfied, and really, Stiles doesn't blame him. He's a free man, no more accompanied travel, no more checking in on the full moon, no more threat of death if he breaks the law. She's happy for him. After breakfast, Peter takes her plate and puts it in the dishwasher, before turning to her and asking, "So, is it later yet, sweetheart?" with a hopeful look.

Stiles considers it. Peter's wearing nothing but sleep pants, and they sit temptingly low on his hips, showing the delicious vee of muscle there, and framing his happy trail. She walks over and slides her hands over his stomach and chest before dipping her hand in the waistband of his pants and finding him hard. "Yes," she decides. "It's definitely later."

Stiles leaves her phone downstairs, so she misses the call from Scott. When she finally checks her phone, there's a text telling her that everyone's expected at a meeting to discuss the changes in the law. Stiles doesn't know what there is to discuss, exactly, but she guesses they'd better turn up, so she shoots off an affirmative reply, and goes to find Peter and tell him. When they get there, the only one missing is Kira. "She's probably doing wedding stuff, she's been too busy to talk for days," Scott says with a shrug. Stiles and Lydia share a look, because it's out of character for Kira. Then Scott turns his attention to Stiles. "When are you moving back home?" he asks.

Stiles takes a deep breath, but Peter beats her to it. "Stiles and I are perfectly happy as we are, thanks." Stiles wraps her hand round his waist and stands close in silent confirmation.

The only one who looks surprised is Scott. Lydia just nods, as if it was a given.

Derek fixes Peter with a questioning look, brows drawn down. Peter raises one of his in return, and tilts his chin. Derek's brows shoot up in surprise, and he tilts his head just a little. Peter nods, a tiny smirk on his face. Derek replies with a broad grin. Stiles looks from one to the other, before saying to Lydia, "Did your fiancé and my husband just have a whole conversation *with their eyebrows?*"

"Probably. The Hale eyebrow game is strong. And I'm guessing Derek can smell the satisfaction oozing off you two," she adds. Stiles thinks she has a point. It's probably not all he can smell, if she's honest.

Scott clears his throat, drawing attention back to himself. "So what, you're staying married to Peter? *Why?*"

Stiles isn't sure whose eyes roll harder, hers or Peter's. Probably Peter's, by a whisker. "Not that it's any of your business, but we've decided we're happier together than apart.," she says stiffly.

To her surprise. Scott nods in understanding. "Yeah, I get that." For just a second, she thinks that for once, Scott really does get it, but then he opens his mouth again. "I mean, Peter gets someone to sleep with, and it must be nice for you to have access to his money. That *is* why you're staying, right?"

There's a second of total silence, and then a thump as Scott's back hits the wall. Peter has him by the throat, and he's holding him up off the ground and growling, deep and threatening. "Are you insinuating that *my wife is a gold digger?*" Stiles watches on as Scott scrabbles in an attempt to escape Peter's grip, and fails utterly.

Scott's mouth opens and closes like a goldfish before he manages to choke out "That's not what —"

Peter lowers him slightly, so they're eye to eye, saying "Really? It certainly sounded like it."

Stiles interrupts, then. "Peter? What have I told you about fighting my battles for me?"

"He was insulting us both, sweetheart. It's my battle too." Peter sounds a little put out at having his fun interrupted, but Stiles stands firm.

"*Put Scott down, Peter.*" She uses her cop voice, so he knows she's serious. Peter's shoulders slump a little. His grip loosens, and Scott takes a deep gasping breath. Peter lowers him reluctantly all the way to the ground, giving him a rough shove as he lets go, like a petulant child.

Scott coughs once or twice. "Thanks, Stiles," he starts, but she cuts him off.

"The only reason I made Peter put you down was so I could do this." She hauls back and punches him in the solar plexus, and he drops like a stone.

As Scott lies groaning on the floor, Peter gives her an impressed look. "Well done, sweetheart. I should know by now you don't need me to rescue you."

“Told you,” Stiles says with a positively evil grin.

Derek looks from Peter to her appraisingly, one brow lifted. “You two belong together,” he decides with a nod.

“I think we’ll be going now. And Scott? Don’t call,” Peter says coolly.

They walk out to the sounds of Lydia tearing strips off Scott as he lies prone on the floor and unable to escape her ire.

When they get home, Peter’s so turned on by Stiles’s display of badassery that he fucks her as soon as they get inside the front door, holding her up against the wall while she hangs on for dear life and laughs.

Scott doesn’t call, but Lydia does.

“Kira’s bailed on the wedding,” she says without preamble. It transpires that Kira had deliberately not contacted Scott to see how long it would take him to pick up the phone, and while they were out of contact she’d done some serious thinking. Given that the laws didn’t apply any more, she’s decided to wait. “She says they have time, and she doesn’t want to be rushed. She wants him to grow up first, says he’s immature and self-absorbed,” Lydia reports, and Stiles detects a hint of glee in her tone.

“Well, I can’t say she’s wrong.” Stiles does feel a little bad for her childhood friend, though. “How’s Scotty taking it?”

“Oh, he’s devastated, doesn’t understand at all.” And yes, that’s a *definite* note of glee.

Stiles sighs. “I’d call him, but I’m still pretty pissed.”

“I don’t blame you, honestly. What you and Peter do is your own business.” Lydia hesitates before asking, “What *are* you doing, exactly? I thought you said you were going to separate?”

“We decided we’ll stick together until we drive each other crazy, like normal people.”

Lydia laughs, and says “As long as you’re happy, I’m glad for you.”

Stiles gets off the phone and goes to tell Peter that Kira’s postponed the wedding. Peter doesn’t say a word, just grins sharply and keeps boxing. Stiles watches him for a while, shamelessly leering at him when he strips his shirt off, before deciding he looks like he needs a shower, and volunteering to help.

"Will you lean me against the wall and do terrible things to me, wife?"

"If you're very lucky, husband."

It takes a little reshuffling to make the wedding work, but since it was fairly informal affair to start with, they manage it. Derek looks frankly mouth-watering in a suit – Stiles thinks he almost overshadows his bride. *Almost* being the key word. Lydia shines bright like a diamond, a picture of perfection. Standing next to her as her witness, Stiles gets a first hand look at Derek's face when he first catches a glimpse of his bride, and the devotion there almost makes her tear up.

She glances across at Peter standing next to Derek, and gives him a soft smile. He looks amazing, as always, but she might be biased. Peter blows her a kiss, and runs one hand deliberately over his clean shaven chin. Stiles can't help the shiver that runs through her at the gesture. Peter smirks, just the tiniest upward twitch at the corner of his mouth, and she knows exactly what he's thinking.

She makes a conscious effort to drag her eyes away and pay attention to the celebrant. Stiles remembers how nervous she was when she married Peter, but Lydia looks completely calm. She's smiling at her groom, and they're holding hands as they recite their vows. The tips of Derek's ears are pink, and he's beaming. Stiles is happy for them, and she hopes they're as happy as she and Peter are.

And they are happy, she reflects. She knows that after the reception, she'll go home, and Peter will unzip her bridesmaid's dress carefully, and slip his hands inside to help her shimmy out of it. Then he'll try and talk her into getting into the hot tub, and they'll spend the evening touching each other and kissing and laughing. They'll probably fool around, maybe more than once, since she has the day off tomorrow. In the morning, Peter will bring her coffee, and let her finish it before he speaks to her.

It's how he tells her he cares.

Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

Throws confetti It's finished!!
Thanks to all you folks who came along for the ride with me!

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

Stiles tells Peter she loves him one night six months after they didn't divorce. As she lays against him in the hot tub and he kisses the back of her neck, the realization washes over her, that she actually loves this man, and she isn't sure exactly when it happened, and doesn't really care. She debates not saying anything, in case he doesn't feel the same, but pushes that thought aside. They've played enough of those games. Instead she moves away from him, turning so she can see his face. He gives her a questioning look, but she just cradles his jaw gently in her palms, and says, "I think I'm in love with you," before leaning in for a kiss.

She doesn't wait for a reply, doesn't expect one, doesn't *get* one till later, but it doesn't matter. The answer is in the way Peter kisses her back hungrily, the way he lifts her from the water and carries her upstairs with his face buried in the crook of her neck as he murmurs "Oh, sweetheart," and places her reverently on the bed, heedless of getting the blankets wet.

He works his way down her body, kissing and nipping, tugging at her nipples with his teeth, asking yet again, "Are you *sure* you don't want these pierced?" knowing damn well what the answer is. Stiles lays beneath him, enjoying the brush of his skin against hers, getting wet for him as his clever fingers stroke at her clit, teasing her, making her *want*. She tugs him up her body, suddenly needing to feel him inside her, not able to wait a moment longer, and it's as he sinks inside her slowly that he whispers it, breathing it with such reverence that Stiles just knows he's been holding back, waiting for her.

Stiles closes her eyes and smiles upon hearing the words, letting herself get lost in the heat of Peter's body, the delicious friction of his cock as it plunges deep within her, and the knowledge that he loves her. Maybe that's why she comes so hard, and maybe that's why she holds back a tear or two as she lays cradled in his arms afterwards.

"I love you, sweetheart," he repeats, and Stiles beams at him as she says it back.

“*Two years.* That boy really is useless,” Peter says out of the corner of his mouth.

Stiles elbows him in the ribs. “Behave,” she murmurs back. Peter sighs, but he plasters a pleasant look on his face obediently. “You’re right, though. Kira has the patience of a saint,” Stiles adds. Peter squeezes her hand, and they turn as the music starts and Kira finally, finally walks up the aisle to marry Scott.

Things are okay between Scott and Stiles, kinda, but they’ll never be close like they once were. Even though Scott eventually figured out that he’d been treating Stiles badly for a long time, and he’d been genuinely remorseful, she’ll never be able to trust him like she once did. And honestly, she’s okay with that. She’s moved on.

Stiles tries to pay attention to the ceremony, and ignore the hand that Peter’s sliding slowly up her thigh. She holds her breath, just for a moment, when it’s time for the vows, but Kira’s voice is strong and clear as she recites the words. They really do look happy, and Scott’s definitely come a long way. Stiles hopes it works out for them. Peter’s obviously feeling slightly less charitable, whispering in her ear, “No take- backsies, Kira.”

Stiles can’t help the snort of laughter that comes out at that, and Peter looks way too pleased with himself. “You’re a terrible person, Peter Hale,” she mock scolds.

“True. That’s why you love me,” he says with a smile, and slides his hand a little higher.

When they head home after the reception, Peter can see that Stiles is distracted. He frowns to himself. She’s never really recovered from the frankly horrendous bout of gastro she had six weeks ago, has been a little off since. He’s not surprised, honestly. Stiles had spent four full days throwing up and crying, moaning pitifully for someone to just kill her, now. Peter had done what he could, taken her pain, kept her hydrated, fed her ice chips, and let her rest against his chest and sob quietly, until finally, he knew she was recovering when she opened her eyes on day five and weakly mewled “coffee?”

But it must have taken more of a toll on her than she thought, because she’s been tired, and hasn’t really regained her appetite. And she doesn’t smell right. There’s definitely something going on. He’s thought about suggesting she see a doctor, but he knows that will just earn him a death glare and a lecture on how she’s an *adult* thank you, and can take care of her own health. He determines that if it goes on for much longer, he’ll risk the glare and tell her to go see someone. Or at the very least, call Noah and get *him* to suggest it. They arrive home, and Stiles slips her arm around his waist as they walk in the door. “You know I love you, right?”

“I do know, sweet girl, and I love you too,” he says, stealing a kiss. Stiles looks and smells distinctly nervous, and he wonders what’s going on. She guides him to the couch and sits him

down, instructing him, “Wait there,” before disappearing into the spare room and coming back with a parcel. She sits next to him and hands it to him without a word.

Peter takes the gift box and lifts the lid off. He’s not sure what the occasion is, but sometimes they surprise each other with gifts for no reason. Inside the box is a series of smaller boxes. He looks at Stiles and raises a brow. “What’s this for, sweetheart?”

Stiles bites her lip, and takes out the first box, and hands it to him. When he opens it there’s...a small plastic toy boat. Peter looks at it blankly. “You never got me my yacht, so I thought now would be a good time for it.” Stiles places the boat on the coffee table and hands him the second box. Peter opens it, pulling out a yellow rubber duck. “It could go with this,” she says, and places the duck next to the toy boat.

Peter nods, clueless. He hopes the rest of the boxes help him figure it out. He opens the third one and finds a set of bright plastic bath rings, like the ones he remembers Derek having when he was a baby. He looks up quickly at that, but Stiles just nods for him to go on. He pulls out the last box, and opens it to find a tiny onesie, barely big enough to cover his hand. His heart thunders in his chest as he realizes what, exactly, she’s telling him. He drops the box and stares at her, eyes wide. “Really?” he asks, breathless.

She nods.

“But how?”

“So, when I had that gastro bug, apparently it wiped out my contraceptives.” Stiles is biting her lip again. “Please tell me this is okay?” she asks, and the scent of nervousness floods the room. He can see the sheen of tears in her eyes, and he can’t have that. His wolf won’t allow it.

“Stiles, it’s wonderful,” he says softly, overwhelmed.

“Are you sure? I know we said hypothetically, maybe-“

“Stiles, it’s *wonderful*,” he repeats emphatically, and he grins widely. He sees Stiles take in the look on his face, and relax a little. “My sweet girl, I’m thrilled. I can’t wait to take care of you, and I can’t wait to meet our baby.”

He moves over so he can pull her in for a hug, and he feels the rattling sigh she lets out. “Thank god,” she breathes. “I’ve been trying to tell you for days, but I didn’t know how you’d take it. Guess I was worrying over nothing, huh?”

Peter just hums, as he lets the news really sink in. *He’s going to be a father.* He can’t help the happy sound that escapes him, and Stiles lifts her head and looks at him. “You should see your face right now,” she observes. “You’re really freaking happy about this, aren’t you?”

“Sweetheart, I’m over the moon.” It occurs to him that Stiles hasn’t actually said how she feels, so he asks her. He’s gotten very good at using his words, over the last two years. “Darling, is this something you want? I mean, are you happy about it?”

She smiles at him, warm and genuine, and her heartbeat is steady when she says, “Yeah, I’m happy. It was a shock, but I want this with you.” One of her hands strays to her flat belly absently, and Peter can’t stop staring at it, imagining the new life growing there. “Gonna be a daddy, Peter,” Stiles says softly.

Peter knows he’s grinning like a fool, can *feel* it, but he doesn’t care. “How far along?” he asks.

Stiles shrugs. “To be honest, I’m guessing. May be five weeks? No more than six, definitely.” She adds “I’m going to the doctor next week, we can probably find out more then.”

He frowns. “You haven’t been to the doctor yet?”

She shakes her head. “I thought it was just a hangover from the gastro, so I called Melissa, to see if she could recommend anything to help me shake it. She’s the one who suggested I take a test. I haven’t told her the results, though. I haven’t told anyone. Not before you.” Peter preens a little at that, at knowing that this is just for them.

They’re having a baby.

The knowledge shakes him to his very bones, and he suddenly needs to be close to Stiles, to strip her out of her clothes, hold her close and touch her. “Come to bed? I want to make love to you. I want to hold you, and kiss your belly, and to imagine you all round and full of our baby,” he tells her, completely honest.

“You’re such a sap,” Stiles says, rolling her eyes fondly. “You’re going to spend the next eight months hovering, seeing to my every whim, and touching my stomach every chance you get, aren’t you?”

Peter grins at the very thought of it. “Absolutely, sweetheart.”

Stiles takes his hand, and leads him upstairs to bed.

Chapter End Notes

It’s short, but it felt right. Honestly, the temptation to keep going was strong, but then we would have had a monster of a fic, so I’ll just let you all imagine sweet, doting Peter, and sigh along with it in the privacy of your own homes.

ETA: I WAS WEEEEAK
I WROTE THE SEQUEL

[Proof Positive](#)

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!