

Parachute

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Parachute

by [dreamerjules \(jelaine3\)](#), [OnTheGround2012](#)

Summary

This is about Stiles too and he deserves his freedom even, maybe especially, if it permanently locks the door on Jackson's prison.

Notes

Written for the 2013 Teen Wolf Reverse Big Bang. Inspired by [fanmix](#) by the lovely otg2012. Hope you enjoy.

- Inspired by [Parachute \(Fanmix\)](#) by [OnTheGround2012](#)

Now

He shouldn't be here. He shouldn't be doing this. It's like when he was using, he knew it was wrong, knew he'd only ever end up hurt or hurting someone he loved which meant he hurt.

But this wasn't about him.

Okay. It is about him – what he wants, what he needs. He wants. No, tell the truth and shame the devil. He needs to see Stiles like he needs to breathe. He needs to see for himself how Stiles is doing and then maybe he can finally let go – anger, guilt, fear, everything but the love he feels; he'd lose himself utterly if he let go of that, just move on.

Stiles is the last person he needs to make amends to. He has the letter tucked safely in his inside jacket pocket. The letter that has been written and sealed for nearly five years. The letter he should have posted so many times, but couldn't because it would mean giving away the last bit of Stiles that he had and he just wasn't strong enough to do that.

He still isn't, but this is about Stiles too and he deserves his freedom even, maybe especially, if it permanently locks the door on Jackson's prison.

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“Lydia said she had a lecture series at Stanford and that she couldn't resist the idea of seeing Beacon Hills High again. What I want to know is who does she think is buying that bullshit? She never even looked at schools on the entire West Coast.”

“She got early acceptance into MIT. Why would she have considered any other schools?”

“Scott, my friend, that is not the point. She's had job offers in LA, San Francisco and Seattle. She's been offered lecture tours and she's never accepted them before. Why now? Why now,

when the high school she didn't even graduate from is having it's ten year reunion. She's up to something and I'm seriously pissed I can't figure out what it is."

"Stiles, can't you just be happy that your friend is coming to visit you?"

"Just? No. No, I cannot *just* be happy Lydia's coming to visit. I can be happy and wonder what the hell she's up to, too. I'm the king of multitasking. So, have you seen Allison yet?"

Stiles smirked at Scott for his game winning change of subject before taking a sip of the non-spiked punch. The one good thing about this reunion is not having to worry about Jackson showing up, whereas Allison's RSVP had thrown Scott into a state of near perpetual panic. Which Stiles thought was the funniest thing ever.

Scott and Allison hadn't even lasted through junior year, but they had managed to become friends. She was now married and living in the Picardy region of France. She requested Stiles never make a Jean-Luc Picard reference as her wedding present. It was an easy promise to keep what with being on a different continent and all.

Scott himself was engaged to a lovely girl named Janie. She was a nurse at the hospital with Melissa. Allison and Christophe were coming to the wedding, as Scott had gone to theirs. Stiles hadn't gone. He'd claimed work deadlines and needing to take care of his dad and his leg setting of the metal detectors like the Fourth of July. Everyone knew Stiles just didn't want to get that close to London and didn't push too hard. Just enough to let him know he was wanted.

"I just really want Allison and Janie to like each other. And Chris."

Stiles, who had been scanning the crowd for Lydia or Allison or hell, even Greenberg would have been a welcome distraction, turned back to Scott, some smart ass remark ready and waiting, when he caught sight of Lydia. A huge grin spread across his face until he saw the man standing by her side.

The grin crumpled and so did his leg.

Jackson was by his side even before Scott.

Then

Sophomore year hadn't gone the way he'd planned. Some stupid twins transferred in and one had been made co-captain, flirted with Lydia right in front of him and the other was dating Danny, for fucks sake. Then that mess with Peter Hale and his attack on Lydia. She hadn't said goodbye before heading to Boston. Which he couldn't really blame her for, even if he did. He'd never wanted any of that to happen. He cared for Lydia. A lot more than he was comfortable with and then there was fucking Stilinski. Picking up all the pieces, sometimes even before they fell. Being with Stiles was even better than taking his favorite drug and didn't that just terrify the ever loving piss out of him.

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It was a cool, crisp January morning and the sky was a bright, brilliant cloudless blue when Jackson loped down the front steps of his house, heading to his Porsche. The last thing he expected was to see Stilinski's piece of shit Jeep blocking his driveway.

“Do you know she's going to Boston? Her parents – her very much divorced parents – are moving across the country to get her the fuck away from you. How do you live with yourself? Or would the better question be how can you live yourself if your dealer is in jail for beating the shit out of your girlfriend? He fucking bit her, Jackson. Do you have any idea how filthy the human mouth is?”

“I know how filthy Lydia's mouth can be. Now move your....”

The right cross took him by surprise. The little shit could hit, he'd had to give him that. Jackson swung blindly, not yet fully recovered. Stiles tackled him down onto the sloped, immaculate lawn, knocking the breathe out of Jackson. Stiles was on top of him, right fist raised, but he just stayed like that, finally letting his hand drop.

“What are you boys up to?” hollered Coach Lahey from across the street.

Stiles jumped off of Jackson and helped him up.

“Nothing, Coach,” said Jackson, projecting sole captain of the swim team at him. Coach was a dick, but he was a winning dick and that's what mattered most to Jackson.

“Well, take nothing off the front lawn, Whittemore. Bad behavior will get you benched just as fast, if not faster, than bad grades.”

“Will do, sir.” Jackson resolutely ignored the incredulous stare Stilinski was giving him. He waved to Coach Lahey, grabbed Stiles by the arm and dragged him toward the house without ever once looking at him.

“Sir?”

Stiles' voice echoed in the tiled entry way.

“Look, Finstock's crazy as fuck, madly in love with suicide runs and possibly Greenberg, but Lahey's a straight up psychopath, okay. Hell, I wouldn't be surprised if he's beating on his own kid. There is something seriously wrong with that man.”

“If you think he's beating his kid, why don't you say anything?”

“Why haven't you said anything about why Peter Hale attacked Lydia? I know you know the whole story.”

Fuck! Why had he said that? Any of that? Jackson headed into the kitchen. He'd kill for a drink, but he was pretty sure his parents had set up nanny cam things on the liquor cabinet since the Winter Formal. He knew they had a lot of suspicions about what happened, but he also knew they'd never confront him without hard evidence. The joys of an attorney father.

“She asked me not to.” Stiles had trailed after Jackson and nodded when Jackson lifted a pitcher of orange juice in offer.

“Why'd she do that?”

“I think she thought she was keeping you safe. She really loves you, you know. Fuck if I know why.”

“You and me both.”

Stiles stared at him and right then, in that second, Jackson didn't care what Stilinski saw. He really didn't understand why Lydia loved him, but he knew she did. He was handsome and wealthy and popular, but he wasn't smart or funny or even a particularly good person. They'd looked good together. That was all it was supposed to have been. Well, that and sex.

But it was just Stilinski. It didn't matter what he saw when Jackson's defenses were gone. It didn't matter what he said to anyone about what he saw because who was going to listen to the loser with a ridiculous crush on Jackson's girlfriend. The girlfriend who'd been blackmailed into going to the Winter Formal with Stiles. Which wouldn't have happened in the first place if Jackson hadn't had his head so far up his ass.

They drank their juice in silence, a feat Jackson hadn't thought Stilinski could manage when Jackson himself spoke.

“She hasn't spoken to me since that night, when you guys got there. I've called, e-mailed, texted. I went to her house. Her mom was supervising the packing. She told me Lydia was better off without me and I'd stay away if I cared about her at all. And I know she doesn't know why Peter attacked her. She just knows what a dick I was to her before.”

“You might be giving her too much credit. You realize it's entirely possible she thought you were me.”

“No way, no how, could anyone think I'm as big a loser as you are and her mom's known me for years.”

“Point, but I'm not entirely convinced she knows what day it is. Or month for that matter. She didn't come to the hospital once.” Stiles leveled Jackson with a look that let him know Mrs. Martin wasn't the only one Stiles knew hadn't visited Lydia.

“What do you want me to say, Stilinski? That I'm a coward who couldn't face his battered and beaten girlfriend because I didn't want to see what had happened to her because I'd decided to piss off the local Heisenberg?”

“It would be a start and did you?”

“Did I what?”

“Actually *decide* to piss off Peter Hale. I just find it hard to believe that even you would be that stupid.”

“I didn't think about it in those terms. He just kept raising the price and raising the price and making the perviest comments about Lydia. He pissed me off, so I returned the favor. How the hell was I to know he'd figure it out?”

“Anonymous tips aren't all that anonymous when they're obviously in response to your drug dealer being a creeper.”

“It would have been okay if your dad had arrested Peter instead of his nephew to begin with.”

“Second point to J-Whitt, but don't blame my dad for a change in routine. Derek's arrest could do some serious damage to the drug dealing in Beacon Hills even if he doesn't say anything. Which he won't.”

“Which he won't.”

After a minute or so, Stiles spoke again, so quietly that Jackson almost didn't hear him.

“The drugs. Are they, were they, really that important?”

Jackson took a moment to think about that. He wasn't sure why, but he felt the need to be honest for Lydia who had suffered so much because of him, for himself because someone had bothered to ask, even if it was Stilinski, maybe because it was Stilinski because with Stiles, what you saw was what you got – a guy with a smart brain, a smart mouth, and a clumsy body who would live and die for the people he loved.

“Yeah, they are, but you know that. It's not like you've never been drunk or high. You understand what it's like.”

Stiles nodded and though he didn't seem to completely agree, he didn't argue. Jackson thought that may have been another first.

“She was probably just being polite, but Lydia said she'd keep in touch, e-mail me. You want me to let you know if I hear from her?”

“Yeah, I would, thanks.”

And because it was the day for his mouth to operate without permission....

“I was on my way out to pick up the new Halo expansion. Danny's supposed to come over later and play if he can surgically detached himself from Ethan long enough. It might not totally suck if you showed up. With or without McCall, because I know you can't be away from your boyfriend for long.”

Stiles looked at him the same way Lydia did sometimes. It unnerved him and unsettled him in exactly the same way. He hated being under scrutiny for all he wanted (needed) to be the center of attention. Stiles took so long staring (calculating) that Jackson was about to take it back.

“I’ll see. Scott’s mom’s off tonight, so he might want to spend some time with her. We’ve both been saving up for it, so maybe. I should head out, my dad has the swing shift tonight and I need to get him fed and his lunch packed.”

“Mama Stiles.”

“Just making sure he takes care of himself.”

“That’s really good of you.”

Stiles gave a sharp nod and left.

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Danny hadn’t managed to detached from Ethan and Scott ended up on a date with Allison Argent, so it had been just Stiles and Jackson. Jackson was confused about how happy he was to see Stiles. No, happy wasn’t the right word. There was no way in hell he could be happy to see Stilinski. He just really wanted a distraction (company) tonight. He hadn’t been able to score anything since mid-December and Stilinski was a distraction. A distraction who loved Lydia more than he did. A distraction Lydia was willing to talk to and who was willing to talk to him in return. He didn’t let himself think about what Stilinski might have seen that morning. It was just Stilinski. It didn’t matter.

They played late into the night, trash talking the order of the evening. Jackson was pretty good at it, though he did pick up a couple of things from Stiles. His parents had been confused to see someone not Danny or Lydia come over, but didn’t say anything. His mom hovered a lot more than she did when Danny was there. Stiles actually managed to be charming in a total loser way and Jackson thought about teasing Danny that he was no longer

Mom's favorite, but that would mean admitting he'd voluntarily let Stilinski into the house and that was never going to happen.

Stiles started coming over about once a week to play video games and he at least was willing to watch *Hoosiers*. Lydia e-mailed him about once a week too and he let Jackson know how she was doing. He'd even forwarded the last one when Lydia said it was okay. There had been some pictures and Lydia had looked as beautiful and fierce as ever.

Conversations had moved past trash talk and Jackson found he could say things to Stilinski he'd never even said to Danny. But he didn't have to say a lot to Danny because they'd known each other so well for so long. That was all.

Stiles mentioned his mom once or twice and Jackson knew how rare that was. Jackson remembered her. She'd been a really neat lady who'd been nice to him even when he'd be a real jerk to Stiles and McCall.

Not that any of that made a difference at school.

Well, not much of one anyone. Jackson was less inclined to be a dick to either Stiles or McCall, but he still kept up appearances when necessary. It wasn't his fault if it doesn't have quite the same bite as it used to.

So in some ways the only thing that changed was his dealer.

He doesn't know, or care, about Matt's connections, just that he can get him the good stuff at a reasonable price.

Spring semester rolled on, Jackson as busy as ever with sports, dating every popular girl that says yes, getting high and playing video games with Stiles. Even Danny doesn't know about that, but it's not like it's a secret. It's just never come up. It's not like it's Jackson's favorite part of the week or anything. He can't even say any more it's for the Lydia updates since Lydia e-mails him herself now. Not as often as she does Stilinski, but it's a gift he treasures. He's learning to actually like Lydia as a person and a friend. He doesn't want to get back with her even if she weren't a continent away. It's just that Stiles is showing him the value of a

friend. Yeah, there's always been Danny, but there's always been Danny. There had never been a time when they didn't know each other, hadn't been best friends. He knew Danny as well as he knew himself.

Better really, because he was still learning things about himself.

Like how much he really liked watching Stiles talk. The way his hands and his mouth moved when he was going on about something he was interested in or pissed off about, made Jackson think about handing the Porsche on a twisty stretch of highway, seeing how fast he could go and still be in control.

The thing though was that he wasn't sure if he'd be handling Stiles or if Stiles would be handling him and he really wanted to find out, but how does he cross that line.

That fine line between straight and not, between friends and more. Everything would change and enough had changed already and this side of the line was pretty damn good. Until his dumb ass drug dealer tried to kidnap Allison Argent to prove his love for her. Jackson knew Matt wasn't the smartest guy, but he thought the guy had more sense than that.

Somehow Matt had managed to get one of the deputy's guns at the station and started shooting. Matt shot three deputies, killing one outright. The Sheriff had had to take the kill shot on Matt though.

Breaking every speeding law on the books, Jackson headed straight to the Stilinski house when Danny told him what happened. He didn't even remember parking the Porsche, just banging on the front door.

“Can I help you? Jackson?” said the Sheriff. He was wearing an old BCSD tee shirt, faded jeans and no shoes. It wasn't the way a sheriff should look. It might be the way a dad should look though.

“Yes, sir. Are you alright? It's just... I heard what happened and....”

Jackson was lost and confused and this really didn't seem like a good idea any more.

“Why don't you come on in, son, and maybe we can figure out what's going on.”

Jackson followed him into the kitchen, noting without really seeing the differences between this house and his. This house was a home, lived in and loved and not as nice as his. Everything here was worn, but cared for and clean. He vaguely wondered what Stiles saw when he came over.

The Sheriff sat him down at the dining room table.

“Now, you've obviously heard what happened at the station. What I don't understand is why you're here asking about my well being. Care to throw a little light on the subject for me.”

“You're important to Stiles.”

“Yes, I am, but that doesn't explain why you're here.”

The Sheriff stopped, a look of understanding dawning on his face. Jackson wanted to know what he understood because he still didn't really get it himself.

“Stiles is important to you.”

It's said gently, as though the Sheriff were trying not to spook a wary animal.

“Of course he is. He's my friend. I love him.”

The Sheriff leaned back in his chair, watching Jackson. He looked a little sad. Jackson wondered why until he thought about what he'd just said. What he just said that he never said.

Not to his parents. Not to Danny or Lydia. Not to Stiles.

“I’ve got to go.”

Jackson stood, being careful not to get up so quickly he turned either the chair or the table over.

“Dad, why's Jackson's Porsche parked out front? Oh, they were out of regular sour cream, so I had to get the light kind. Hey, Jackson, what are doing here? I thought you had a date with Brittany tonight.”

“She canceled.”

Jackson did not miss the “oh, she did, did she?” look the Sheriff gave him. At least he didn't look sad anymore.

“Really? Allison said it was all she talked about in gym class today. And by talked about I mean announcing it to everyone who got within three feet of her. I heard it four times in the last two days.”

“Yeah, there was some family thing or something.”

He should probably call her and let her know the date was off at some point. It would be the polite thing to do. Maybe he could get Danny to do it. Girls took bad news really well when it came from him.

“Jackson, why don't you go wash up for supper? Bathroom's down the hall to the left. Oh, and you might want to call your parents and let them know where you are.”

Jackson was sure the Sheriff knew he wouldn't be calling his parents.

“So, the gigantic grocery store was out of regular sour cream. Did you try anywhere else?”

“There wasn't anywhere else on the way home and I didn't want to leave the steaks out in the hot sun.”

Jackson closed the door to the bathroom and called Danny. Maybe Danny could help him understand. It wasn't supposed to be *that*. It was supposed to be teenage hormones and healthy curiosity.

In the end, he didn't say anything to Danny about Stiles just then. It was too long a conversation to have in someone else's downstairs bathroom.

Supper was a relaxed affair, though Jackson spent it divided between figuring out how to deal with the Stiles thing and being in awe of Stiles' relationship with his dad. A father and son being that close just didn't make sense to him and he wondered why his dad didn't love him. He tried really hard, but it just wasn't enough. Maybe it wouldn't be for Stiles either.

Jackson even helped with clean up a little, but Stiles and his dad had a routine that didn't really allow for a third party. He didn't feel left out though. The Sheriff made a point of explaining everything to Jackson, much to Stiles' confusion.

“You want to play some games? My set up isn't as sweet as yours, but I do have some classics.”

“That's just another way of saying old, Stilinski.”

“Can I help it if I take care of my toys?”

“Then how do you explain the Jeep?”

“Roscoe is in perfect condition. Haven't you ever heard 'don't judge a book by it's cover'?”

“Resorting to cliches. That piece of junk must run ever worse than it looks.”

“Okay, that's it. Game offer rescinded, invitation rescinded, bye, don't let the door hit you on the way out. Nobody insults my baby and gets away with it.”

“Wow. Denied the pleasure of your company. I'm not sure I'll ever recover.”

“See, you admit my company is pleasurable. I win.”

“Only losers say that.”

“Okay, boys, that's enough for tonight. Jackson, it was nice having you for supper, but I'm sure Stiles has a ton of homework.”

“Did it during detention.”

“I didn't hear that.”

“It's okay. Your dad's right. I should be going.”

“Let me get my keys. Jeep's behind the Porsche.”

“Take the garbage out while you're at it.”

“Yeah, yeah, yeah.”

The Sheriff blocked Jackson when he went to follow Stiles.

“Look, I'm not a fan of yours. I think you're a spoiled, selfish, entitled brat who most likely is neither good for nor good enough for my son. I don't even know if Stiles is interested in guys or you, but I do think you need to tell him what you told me. I think it's something you need to say and something he needs to hear. I think he could be good for you and maybe I'm wrong about you, maybe it's not too late for you to become a human being. Just remember I'm the Sheriff and I'm sworn to uphold the law. Which means I know a lot about breaking it.”

The Sheriff let Jackson pass when he was finished. He'd given Jackson a lot to think about and think Jackson did.

“Guess Dad had a lot to say. Sorry about whatever it was. I guess you coming over surprised him. And me. So, why'd you come by?”

“Heard what happened at the station. Do you want to go out sometime?”

Stiles just paused, looking at him strangely.

“Like to a movie, cause I really want to see that new movie with Chloe Grace Moretz and Scott's”

“Like a date.”

“Did not see that one coming. Jackson, dude, maybe you need to stop getting high so much because we both know you are not into guys and even if you were, you would not be into me.”

“But I am into you. I don't even remember the drive over here.”

“Can see that from the way you parked.”

Jackson glared and Stiles threw up his hands in surrender.

“Because I needed to know you were alright. Your dad's really important to you. If anything happened to him, you'd have been devastated. I had to see how you were for myself.”

He couldn't say what he said to the Sheriff. He just hoped Stiles understood what he was saying anyway. Hell, Jackson hoped he understood what he was saying. He just knew it was the first thing that felt really right since he broke up with Lydia.

“Jackson, look, man, I'm really flattered. Really, I am, but I don't know about this. I'm ... can I just think about it? Cause I've really enjoyed the time we spend together and I'm not saying I don't find you attractive, cause you are, very attractive even, and I might be attracted to you. I tried not to think about it what with the whole Lydia thing and all cause that would just be weird.”

“Take all the time you need. I'm not going anywhere.”

At that moment, more than anything else, Jackson wanted to kiss Stiles to show him how good they could be together. Instead, he got in his car and drove away, taking care to obey all the traffic laws between Stiles' house and Danny's. Seemed like a good way to start proving he was good for Stiles.

Now

“What are you doing here? Were you in on this? You were, weren't you? How about you, Scott? Did you know he was going to be here?”

Scott and Jackson had managed to get Stiles to a table and Scott was trying to help massage Stiles' leg, but Stiles kept batting his hands away, preferring to do it himself. He hadn't bothered to bring his cane because he almost never needed it anymore.

“No. I'm just as surprised as you are.”

“Of course I was in on it, Stiles. Don't tell me you didn't know something was up when I agreed to come to California and a high school reunion. I didn't even go to the reunion for my own high school. You two need to talk.”

“You don't get to tell me what to do, Lydia. You may be my friend, but that does not give you the right to....”

Jackson pulled the letter out of his jacket pocket and laid it on the table in front of Stiles.

“I asked her. I couldn't do this on my own. Didn't want to. Whatever. I just wanted to see how you were doing and to give you that. I hope you read it, but I'll understand if you don't. She didn't want to do it like this. It was my idea. I just really didn't think it would upset you. I'm sorry.”

Jackson turned and walked away, getting lost in the crowd that had finally stopped gawking at them.

“You two are the most infuriating, stubborn, pig-headed, jackasses I've ever met. Read the damn letter, Stiles. He crossed an ocean and a continent to give it to you. I swear to God, you two deserve each other.”

Lydia hugged him as tightly as she could while he was sitting and she was standing.

“He's never stopped loving you,” whispered Lydia. “Just like you've never stopped loving him.”

She kissed him on the cheek and followed Jackson.

“She's right, you know.”

“About what?”

Stiles picked up the envelope. It was thick, it's weight heavy in his hand. He wanted to want to tear it up, set it on fire, shred it, but he didn't. He didn't want to read it either; didn't want Jackson Whittemore upending his world one more time.

“You two deserve each other.”

Then

It was six weeks before Stiles gave Jackson his answer. Neither one had brought it up since Jackson's first visit to the Stilinski home. Some days, usually when they were playing video games, Jackson thought he would claw his way out of his own skin not knowing what Stiles wanted, what he was thinking, what he was feeling. But nothing had changed either. Well, Jackson was nicer to Stiles at school and that had raised a few eyebrows, but that was it.

“So, that whole date thing. You meant it, right? You weren't just fucking with me for some weird Jackson reason, right?”

“No, I wasn't fucking with you, Stilinski.”

For about ten minutes the only sounds came from the game.

“Do you still want to?”

Jackson considered playing dumb, a little payback for taking so long, but he couldn't do that to either of them.

“Yes.”

They killed a few more aliens and made it to the save point.

“Okay. Just don't expect me to put out on the first date.”

&&*&*

He didn't put out on the first, second or even the sixth date.

The seventh date however.

They had gone to a concert a few towns over. The music had been loud and energetic and they had danced and kissed and groped. A joint had been passed around and beer was easier to get than water and though they had indulged in both, they hadn't overindulged. The Sheriff had the night shift that night.

So they did just enough to relax. It was Stiles' first time ever and Jackson's with a guy. Being pleasantly buzzed would keep them from over thinking things too much.

They stumbled into Jackson's room. Turned out taking off your clothes and kissing weren't compatible activities. Who knew?

Shirt and shoes off, they fell onto Jackson's bed with Jackson on top. He positioned himself so that his full weight wasn't on Stiles and so that their legs were tangled together and they could feel each others hardness through their jeans.

They took their time kissing, just letting hands wander where they would, though Stiles' hand had found the curve of Jackson's ass easily and hadn't strayed too far since then. Jackson's hand was in constant motion, delighting in the smooth plains of Stiles' chest and finally he went to unbutton Stiles' jeans.

Stiles jumped a little. He was expecting Jackson to do that. He wanted Jackson to do that, but he was still caught by surprise. Still a little apprehensive because it was the first step in a big change.

Jackson pulled back a little, checking in with Stiles, making sure they were both on the same page.

Stiles nodded and maneuvered so he could unzip his own jeans. Jackson moved off the bed and followed Stiles' lead.

Jeans and underwear discarded, they didn't waste time appreciating the view and got back down to business. Stiles was a little bolder, pushing Jackson on his back and kissing and touching his way down Jackson's body. It was obvious he was a man on a mission with one goal in mind. While Jackson is not one to turn down a blow job, he doesn't want this to go the same way all of his other encounters had.

He stopped Stiles and motioned him back up.

“Did I do something wrong?”

Jackson kissed him deeply and moved them again so he was on top.

“No, baby, you're doing fine. I just wanted something different, okay.”

He reached under the pillow for lube and straddled Stiles once he found it, lining up their hard cocks as much as possible.

He poured some of the cool lube onto Stiles' hand before doing the same himself. They jacked each other, friction and slick and together becoming the only things in the world.

Stiles changed things so their joined hands wrapped around both their cocks, sliding together, a different sensation that took Jackson closer to the edge. He grabbed both of Stiles' hands, pinning them next to his head.

He thrust harder against Stiles and Stiles matched him, head back and mouth open, lost in the moment. Jackson leaned down covering Stiles' mouth with his own, taking possession, claiming what was his.

It wasn't too long before Stiles came, followed quickly by Jackson.

“Well. That happened.”

“Damn and here I thought I'd finally found a way to shut you up.”

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Stiles and Scott made first line in lacrosse and Scott and Allison broke up before Thanksgiving and had become friends by spring break.

Not everything was rainbows and kittens between Jackson and Stiles. Stiles was still a spaz who spoke without thinking. Jackson was still a spoiled brat who had trouble believing the world didn't revolve around him, but they found ways to make it work. Jackson was not going to let anything go wrong.

Now

Stiles sat at the kitchen table, staring at the letter from Jackson. He wanted a beer or a shot of Jack so bad, but he hadn't any alcohol or drugs since the accident and wouldn't no matter how much he wanted to.

His emotions were all jumbled and he was reminded of his ADD at its worst. Thoughts flew through his brain at top speed: how good Jackson had looked, how he just wanted to talk to him again, make sure he was alright, how he wanted to punch him in his perfect face for just walking away, how he had crossed that continent and ocean to get away from him in the first place; how he wanted to apologize for not reaching out, for staying silent and letting Jackson think he was angry and blamed him for the accident, how he was angry, but not about the accident, how he didn't blame him, how he wanted to know everything about Jackson's life for the past six years; had he found someone else, had he moved on, what he was doing with his life, was he happy.

“Hey kiddo. Scott called. How ya doing?”

Stiles raised his head and had to blink before seeing his father clearly. He raised a hand to rub his eyes and was surprised to find they were wet.

He stood and hugged his dad hard.

“So, that good, huh.”

Stiles gave a weak laugh. It wasn't funny, but it was better than crying.

“You guys talk?”

“No. I yelled at Lydia and Scott and ignored him as much as I could. He gave me a letter and left.”

“Have you read it yet?”

“No.”

“Are you going to?”

“Yeah, I am. I've been holding on to all this shit for too long. I'll read the letter and that will be the end of it.”

“It won't be that easy and you know it.”

“What? I can't keep any delusions?”

“Not if it's going to hurt you more in the long run. I am glad you're not going to hide anymore though. You're better than that. You need to really live your life again.”

“I'm not sure I know how to live a life without Jackson though. I still love him so much and he's never even said to me.”

“Really? That was practically the first thing he said to me.”

“What?”

“Remember when he just showed up here after the Matt Daehler shooting at the station?”

“Yeah. It was the first time he asked me out. It took me six weeks to say yes. I thought he was fu... messing with me. It didn't make sense.”

The Sheriff smiled. "He came because he was worried about you. About how you'd react if anything happened to me. He said I was important to you. When I asked him if you were important to him, he said, 'of course. He's my friend. I love him.'"

"I can't decide if I'm more shocked he said the L word or that he called me his friend."

"I was a little amazed myself. Stiles, just know that I'm fine with whatever you decide to do."

"Decide to do?"

"Stiles, there's still a lot between you two. You need to talk to him."

"Jesus Christ! Did you and Lydia rehearse this shit? I have nothing to say to him and I don't care about anything he has to say."

"Then why read the letter?"

"Wait. What?"

"If you don't care about what he has to say, why read the letter?"

"I owe it to him."

"You owe him. You love him. Are you really sure you're finished with him?"

"He's finished with me. He walked away when I needed him most. He's ignored me for six years."

“Do you really think that's what he's been doing?”

“I don't care what he's been doing. I care that I woke up in a hospital with my leg fucking destroyed and my boyfriend nowhere to be found. That hurt as much as my goddamn leg, by the way. And you think I should give him a second chance? Do you not remember he was high when it happened?”

“Oh, believe me, I remember, but it wasn't his fault. The accident report made that very clear. So, you read that letter. You talk to him, tell him how angry and hurt you are, how much you still love him, hell, tell him what you had for breakfast this morning, just talk to him. Stop hiding and stop being afraid. I want better for you than that.”

“And you think Jackson's it?”

“I think he was. You're the only one who can decide if he still is.”

“What if he doesn't want that?”

“Stiles, he came all the way from London just to give you a letter. I'd say he's at least open to the possibility.”

Then

High school ended the way it usually did, with college applications, acceptance letters and graduation. Stiles and Jackson both got into Stanford and worked their asses off. Stiles doubled majored in English and sociology. He planned to take a year off after graduation and decide if he wanted to pursue law enforcement or game development. He'd gotten a job doing beta testing and quality control for a start-up game developer that was really taking off. He loved the work, if you could call it that, but he'd wanted to follow in his dad's footsteps for as long as he could remember. So, he'd take that year, work at the station, not as an officer of course, but in dispatch and the property room. He already had lots of ideas for streamlining and improving some processes.

Jackson had been accepted to Stanford Law School, so they'd be separated for a year, but it wasn't like they would be that far apart. After six years together, it wasn't anything they couldn't handle.

The first few months apart were harder on Jackson than he'd expected. The work was hard and though he was up to it, he really missed how Stiles could lighten his mood, make him take a break and step back so he could focus again. It was easier and easier to use. Cocaine was his preference and easy to get, but he'd take whatever he could get his hands on.

His grades started taking some minor hits, but nothing he couldn't recover from. He just really needed Stiles, who was doing just fine without him back home. He got to play cops and robbers with his dad all day. Oh, he said all the right things when they talked. How much he missed Jackson and how he looked forward to their visits and the end of their year apart, but did he really mean it? Jackson couldn't help but wonder.

Couldn't help but take his wondering out on Stiles when he came to visit for the weekend.

“Jesus, Jackson, I don't know what your malfunction is, but you need to fix that shit and fast. I have never, and will never, give you any reason to think I don't want you. I love you, you jackass.”

“Saying it doesn't make it true.”

“And you'd know all about that.”

“Even if it does, you could still find someone else. You could figure out.”

Jackson stopped speaking. Stiles was smart. He was just shocked he hadn't figure out he could do so much better than Jackson already. Surely he'd never have Stiles forever.

“What? What could I figure out, Jackson? That you're a lunatic? Had that figured out ages ago. Look, I'm just going to go back home, let you get this little whatever it is out of your

system. Call me when you revert back to a human being.”

Stiles slammed out of the apartment and drove off in the Jeep.

Jackson just couldn't let him leave that way. He had to make him understand. He got in the Porsche and took off after Stiles.

Stiles evaded him easily, but as long as Jackson had the Jeep in sight, he kept following.

Stiles made it out of town and as he reached an empty stretch of highway, he gunned the Jeep for all it was worth.

And still Jackson followed. He was even gaining a little on the flat, open section of highway.

Stiles took his eyes off the road for just a second to check on Jackson's progress in his rear view mirror, so he didn't see the delivery truck as it jumped the median and headed straight for him.

The lights caught Stiles' attention and he jerked the steering wheel to the right, managing to avoid a head on collision, but not able to avoid contact altogether. The front of the truck clipped the driver's door. The impact sent the Jeep into a spin that ended in a roll. The Jeep flipped two, three times, coming to a stop on its right side, the left front tire spinning uselessly.

Jackson managed to avoid the truck entirely, stopping on the shoulder near the Jeep and calling 911.

The truck finally stopped when it hit the far guardrail.

&&*&*

Stiles was in the hospital for over a week. There was extensive damage to his right leg. He had three operations on his leg before they transferred him to a rehab facility. They saved his leg, but he'd need at least one more operation and no one was sure how much use of his leg he'd be able to recover.

Jackson told the officers responding to his 911 call everything, from the argument in the apartment to the truck jumping the median and clipping Stiles' Jeep.

Jackson agreed to a blood test and it came back positive for cocaine and it took all of Mr. Whittemore's considerable legal skills and connections to keep him from prison. Ultimately, it was Jackson's admittance to a drug rehab facility that kept him out of jail. When his course of treatment was up, he followed his parents to London where he ended up working as a counselor for addicts.

Stiles' rehab on his leg took over a year and he regained almost complete use of his leg, though it would give out on him when he was tired or had pushed himself too hard. He continued working for the game company and moved in with his dad.

Now

The day was overcast and matched Jackson's mood perfectly. Though it had only been two days since the reunion, he hadn't heard from Stiles. He hadn't even realized he'd been hoping to hear from Stiles until that hope was gone.

He was ready to leave. He'd wasted time and money on this trip. He didn't regret it though. He'd gotten to see Stiles again and that was worth everything.

There was a knock on the hotel room door. Probably just Lydia wanting to grab lunch.

“Everybody keeps telling me I need to talk to you. Lydia, Scott, my dad, Scott's mom, Allison, Allison's husband. They don't get how terrifying needing to talk to you is because they don't know how much I want to talk to you.”

Jackson thought it was probably a good thing he was frozen. If he hadn't been, it was a coin toss if he would hug Stiles or faint. Nah. He'd totally hug Stiles.

“Are you going to ask me in or do you want to go for a walk? Or do you want me to leave? Cause I can do that if you want.”

Stiles was just as nervous, just as scared as he was. It was probably the only thing that could get Jackson moving.

“Your leg.”

“It's fine. It's doesn't act up that often. There's a park just a few blocks away. It if makes you feel any better, I brought my cane.”

“Let me get my key.”

They walked the few blocks in silence, occasionally stealing glances, not quite believing the other was really there.

They headed for the closest bench facing the small man-made pond.

“I don't remember this being here.”

“It's new. The mayor went on this 'Beautify Beacon Hills' kick a few years ago and no one says no to Victoria Argent. Hell, Scott votes for her because of how thoroughly she terrified him when he was dating Allison. Apparently, a pencil was sharpened.”

“Well, I can see how that would scare McCall. I assume it was electric.”

“Knock it off. So, I read the letter.”

“I hoped you would.”

“I never realized you felt that way.”

“About you? I know....”

“About yourself.”

“You weren't supposed to. Nobody was. I never thought anyone would see past the expensive car, the perfect hair, captain of the lacrosse team and the swim team facade.”

“I thought I had. I wanted to.”

“You came the closest and I'm glad you did.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah.”

Stiles took a deep breath.

“I wasn't mad at you about the accident. I mean, I was mad at you at the time. You were being a dick and I didn't even realize you were high, but the accident wasn't your fault. I never thought it was. Even before I read the accident report, I knew. Yeah, we were both going too fast and I was checking the rear view mirror right before it happened....”

“See?! If I hadn't been chasing you....”

“The guy driving the truck fell asleep. It's possible it would have happened anyway and what would have happened to me if you hadn't been there to call 911? Or maybe it wouldn't have happened at all or maybe he'd have taken out a soccer mom carpool. There's no way to know what might have happened, but it wasn't your fault. It was a stupid accident. But what I was mad about, what I've been mad about is that you never came to see me in the hospital. You never got in touch after rehab. You just left.”

“I didn't think you'd want to see me. I thought you blamed me, hated me. I was sure your dad was going to kill me if I tried to see you.”

“Yeah, he wasn't too happy with you for the longest time, but he wouldn't have killed you. Hell, he wouldn't have even roughed you up. Much.”

They shared a companionable smile, the years slipping away.

“I prefer to keep my face pretty, thanks.”

“That makes two of us. I thought you stayed away because of my leg, because I wasn't perfect. The doctors always talked around my chances for recovery. For a week they weren't even sure if I'd be able to keep it and I wasn't sure I cared. I didn't know where you were. No one had heard from you. Dad found out you'd talked to the responding officers and talked to your dad, so I knew where you were eventually and then you left for London and the only thing I could think was that you couldn't get far enough away fast enough.”

“Not for the reasons you thought. I just wanted to give you space.”

“So you said. Wrote. Whatever. I didn't need that much space. No matter how angry I was with you, I never stopped loving you. I'd like it if we could be friends again. I just don't know how we get there from here. Part of me feels like everything is the same even though it's not.”

“Part of me thinks the way we were before was just a dream. Like it was too right to have been real. I'd like it if we could be friends again, too. I know I never said it enough, or at all, but, I still love you, too. So, maybe if we start slow, talk, hang out some time, we could get back to friends.”

“I'm not going to England just to hang out with your sorry ass.”

“I know you meant to say my incredibly fine ass, but I'm moving back to the States. I've applied to Columbia and Stanford law schools. If this went well, I'd be going back to Stanford. If not.”

“New York, New York.”

“Yep.”

“What makes you think Stanford would take you back? Or Columbia for that matter.”

“I've been picking up classes at London University. They won't transfer, but it looks good and I've done well. A couple of professors have written glowing recommendation letters. No guarantee, but I did it once. There's no reason I can't do it again.”

“Glad to see all that therapy improved your sense of humility.”

“Facts are facts. Nothing I can do about that.”

“Except be humble.”

“Not in my vocabulary and you'd think I'd been abducted by aliens or something if it were.”

“True. So. Friends?”

“Friends.”

“What if it doesn't work out?”

“Then we go back to screwing each others brains out at every opportunity.”

“I like that plan.”

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