

morning light falls on you

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by [Daykeeper](#)

Summary

As usual, Ilya waits for Shane for their post game hookup. There seems to be something off with Shane today, though.

Notes

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

Two knocks on the door in quick succession - it's their usual signal for each other.

Ilya swings the door to his apartment open. He's already in only his boxers, ready for Shane's arrival, as this little post game ritual between the two of them dictates.

"Mister championship winner," he purrs as Shane comes in, trying to hide how on edge he's been this entire night, waiting for this moment where he can finally have Shane all for himself again. "Congratulations on the victory. Are you ready for your prize?"

He trails a hand down his chest, tweaking his nipple in a way that should drive Shane mad. "What'll it be tonight, hm? Do you want to fuck me, hard and fast? Or," he says, lowering his voice, "Do you want to take me slow tonight, hm, Hollander?"

It's fun playing this game of appearances, pretending as if most of the time, Shane doesn't end up beneath him anyway, no matter what Shane says about wanting to fuck him. He thinks that they both know how much more Shane likes being taken, in all kinds of ways.

This night is different, though. Something feels off.

For one thing, Shane is usually quick on the uptick. Quick to make a snappy reply or to crash into him the moment that he enters his apartment, capturing his lips as if one second longer spent without kissing is agony.

Except tonight, Shane does not respond to Ilya at all. For the first time tonight, Ilya takes a moment to take in Shane, to fully study him.

"Hollander," he says when he sees just how tense Shane looks, standing with his arms crossed around himself. But he pauses because calling Shane by his last name feels wrong. There is a time where playful teasing and name calling would have been welcomed as fuel to the fire for their meetups. But this is not one of those times, not when Shane looks.. dare Ilya say, uncomfortable, in front of him.

And that is a sobering thought in and of itself. After a lifetime of feeling deeply uncomfortable around his family, Ilya never wants to make Shane feel the same way, not if he can help it.

"Shane," he tries, to which Shane picks up his head and finally meets Ilya's gaze for the first time this night. "Hey," he smiles, relieved to at least have gotten through to Shane. "What's wrong?"

"What if I don't want that tonight?" Shane asks and blinks rapidly. "What if I want -" he trails off. "It's stupid, I'm sorry."

Which feels all kinds of wrong. Because first of all, Shane never apologizes to Ilya. If Shane has never apologized for calling him stupid names like *asshole* and *idiot* and *idiot asshole*, then what would possess Shane to feel the need to apologize now? And second of all - Ilya's heart stops - is Shane *crying*?

All of a sudden, Ilya is guiding Shane to his bed, patting the foot of the bed for Shane to sit down. Although if Ilya had his way, he would be pressing Shane into the covers and tucking him into the blankets until he stopped goddamn crying.

He didn't know it was even possible to feel this emotionally devastated from the sight of someone crying *until now*. And honestly, fuck this stupid man named Shane Hollander and the way he makes him feel all kinds of stupid emotions, like concern and care and fucking *love*.

"It's stupid, I should just leave," Shane says. "I don't know why I came. I know you were expecting to fuck me tonight and I'm being stupid and I-"

"No," Ilya cuts him off. "Fuck, *Shane*. Look at me." He's torn between trying to be gentle with Shane, something that he's never tried to be with *anybody*, and being just forceful enough to show Shane that he doesn't care about him being stupid, or whatever Shane is thinking in his stupidly dense head full of thoughts and ideas that are clearly not true, if they're making Shane this upset.

"Just tell me what you want," Ilya says. But fuck, does that sound too harsh? "You're worrying me. I'm not mad if you don't want to fuck. But if you want something else, you can tell me."

It really shouldn't be this fucking hard to find the right words in English to comfort Shane, not when he's already made Shane come hands-free and probably knows Shane's body more than he knows his own body by now. But that's the thing isn't it? Up until now, they've only had sex and baring emotions to each other is a whole other challenge.

"It's your choice," he promises Shane. "Whether you tell me or not. But if you tell me what you think is so *stupid*, which I'm sure is not, I won't make fun, promise."

Shane looks down at his lap. "I want to held. Just that." He starts to explain, "The game was so overwhelming and afterwards, my mother wouldn't stop nagging in my ear, and I-"

Ilya stops him right there. He doesn't need to hear another word of Shane's explanation. "Okay," he says.

Shane whips his head up. "*Huh?* Just like that? You're fine with that?"

And honestly, how is this man real? Someone who manages to pull at Ilya Rozanov's heartstrings in ways that he has never felt before? Ways that he never thought possible?

Ilya crawls into his bed and leaves a large Shane-shaped gap in the blankets beside him. "Yes," he says and gestures for Shane to come lie next to him. "I'm more than fine with it."

He aches for Shane. He also aches for himself. He aches for the part of himself that has suppressed the want to be held for so long out of shame. A shame that no doubt, Shane feels too.

Shane deserves to feel safe in asking for what he wants though, Ilya admits. Shane deserves to feel safe in all the ways that Ilya has always wanted someone to make him feel. And if Ilya can provide Shane that comfort and reassurance and safety, then so be it. Perhaps in the process, the *both* of them can try to heal.

Shane strips himself down to a shirt and boxers and lowers himself next to Ilya. "I've never done this," he says. "How do we-"

Ilya laughs. He feels the laugh run through his entire body. Shane always surprises him in the best of ways. "Neither have I, but don't worry, this is nothing as difficult as a hat trick or *anything* you've done all season." He places a hand on Shane's shoulder and strokes gently. "Let's start with this. Touch like this ok?"

"Mm, okay," Shane hums.

It scares Ilya just how much he cares for Shane, how much he doesn't want to fuck this up when Shane is at his most vulnerable. Ilya has never been good at taking care of people, but Shane makes it surprisingly easy to want to. To dote on him, to hang on to his every breath so that Shane never hitches his breath like he does when he's crying again.

"Roll over on your side," Ilya guides. "Just like that." And then he brings himself closer until he has Shane held in his arms.

They both exhale at the same time, and isn't that a novel experience, being able to *feel* the way Shane's heartbeat starts to slow down. Ilya could almost get addicted to this feeling of Shane in his arms, breathing in tandem with him.

"Ilya," Shane murmurs. "This is good. Thank you."

Ilya can recognize the sound of Shane's voice as he's about to fall asleep.

With Shane's back turned to him, Ilya wonders what kind of expression Shane is making right now. Shy, maybe, with a small smile? Selfishly, Ilya wishes that he had guided Shane into his chest instead, so they'd be able to look at each other face to face. But maybe that can wait for another day. They have time, after all.

Shane is both perfect on the ice and perfect off the ice in his interviews and television appearances. And yet, this side of Shane is something that only Ilya has the privilege of seeing. Soft Shane, vulnerable Shane, *imperfect* Shane. The existence of imperfect Shane only makes Ilya fall harder.

"You can fall asleep anytime you want," Ilya whispers into Shane's ear. "I will keep holding you."

This will be his first time seeing Shane asleep. Would Shane get even softer in sleep, impossibly more lovable?

Shane shifts a little and settles deeper in Ilya's arms. Ilya's heart flutters in his chest in response. Will Shane Hollander never stop surprising him?

“Promise?” Shane asks.

Ilya cannot remember a time when a promise has meant as much to him as this one.
“Promise.”

When the morning comes, Ilya wakes up for the first time next to Shane. He turns over and is met with the sight of sunlight falling onto Shane’s face, lighting him up with a morning sort of softness.

Ilya’s in love, isn’t he? Undeniably and utterly in love with Shane Hollander. He’s terrified, but it’s a good kind of terrified. The kind of terror that makes him want to repeat this experience again and again just to see how he’ll feel if he wakes up next to Shane for say, five nights in a row. Or ten, or more. Who’s counting, really?

End Notes

Guess who just finished Episode 4 and needed to write something to heal from the emotional damage ✨

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