and nothing's wrong when nothing's true

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by 2_infinity

Summary

The game had been long, and Shane Hollander had been a pain in the ass as usual. Not only because of his skill but also because he was distractingly pretty on the ice. These years somehow more so than when they had been Rookies. Or Ilya had just learned how to appreciate it, whatever that was supposed to mean. This newfound appreciation however didn't help when he had to face off with Shane and he darted out his tongue to wet his lips. Distracting Ilya immensely, his mind wandering off to what Shane could do with that tongue. Or the times when Ilya shoved Shane against the barricade and felt his rival's body underneath his. Only to be reminded of all the times Ilya had gotten Shane underneath him without all that protective gear.

They had been doing this for years by now. And by now they had a routine they stuck to. There was a city where their teams would play each other, there was a text and a suggestion for a place. Then they played the game and riled each other up. Afterwards, they met up in secret to fuck. That was what they did and what Ilya was used to.

Until Ilya received a text after their hook up that disrupted their routine for the first time after years.

Notes

My close and personal friends Hollanov have taken over my brain and made me write this. I want to preface this by saying that I don't have a dick nor is English my first language so I just made shit up until it sounded right. And et voila 15k were written.
Nonetheless I hope you enjoy reading about how the little autistic boy and the raging bisexual fuck and then both spiral because they're messed up and cannot talk to each other for the life of them. Or because I didn't make them talk. ;) For reaching optimal flow state i recommend listening to Love Talk by WayV and I Found by AmberRun directly after another and then repeatedly to reach stages of insanity i didn't know possible.
The title is taken from the song Buzzcut Season by Lorde.
Anyway these two idiots mean a lot to me hope you like it <3

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Boston, November

The stadium erupted in deafening cheers and their victory song started playing on full blast. The Boston Bears had won the match against the Montreal Voyageurs and a stone dropped from Ilya's chest. Winning a home game always felt extra special especially against their biggest rivals. Ilya skated a victory lap around the rink and then came to a stop where his teammates had gathered around the trophy. Ilya's heart was beating out of his chest and breathing rigid as he got swarmed by celebrating teammates. They were patting him on the back nearly jumping him in ecstasy almost causing him to lose control. Ilya was met with excited and victorious faces and could feel pride bubble up in his chest as he let himself get infected by their joyous celebration.

They had won their home game and had made their fans proud, and Ilya was truly happy that they had won. But somehow instead of his teammates faces he only wanted to see one face in front of him, one with stupid freckles and plump red lips. Belonging to none other than the captain of the opposite team. The game had been long, and Shane Hollander had been a pain in the ass as usual. Not only because of his skill but also because he was distractingly pretty on the ice. These years somehow more so than when they had been Rookies. Or Ilya had just learned how to appreciate it, whatever that was supposed to mean. This newfound appreciation however didn't help when he had to face off with Shane and he darted out his tongue to wet his lips. Distracting Ilya immensely, his mind wandering off to what Shane could do with that tongue. Or the times when Ilya shoved Shane against the barricade and felt his rival's body underneath his. Only to be reminded of all the times Ilya had gotten Shane underneath him without all that protective gear.

But nonetheless his team had won, and Ilya's mind was already jumping ahead to what Shane, and he would do later. Thus, he nearly missed that his team was lining up for the handshake on the centre ice. He quickly skated over and joined the line of his teammates and started shaking hands of the opposing players. Ilya stretched his neck to look ahead in an attempt to spot Shane. But it was no use; with their helmets on, they all looked the same from his perspective. So, he shook hands waiting a little impatiently for Shane's turn. With a smirk on his face Ilya squeezed the shorter man's hand tighter than needed whose ears flushed red. Shane quickly diverted his gaze from Ilya acting annoyed. The stadium cheered loudly at their interaction like they always did. The fans thinking they saw a spark of their rivalry but they both knew that what was about to happen later, certainly wasn't rivalry.

They had been doing this for years by now. And by now they had a routine they stuck to. There was a city where their teams would play each other, there was a text and a suggestion for a place. Then they played the game and riled each other up. Afterwards, they met up in secret to fuck. That was what they did and what Ilya was used to.

The handshake line ended, and he skated of the ice and transferred onto solid ground. Ilya followed his teammates into their locker room. The spirits were high and the atmosphere light. A victory was always great, but a home victory meant even more. It meant that most of his teammates had won in front of their family and friends.

Ilya went over towards his bench with his gear and sat down pushing away the thoughts of how he would never get to play in front of his family. Or how they were never proud regardless of what he won. He untied his skates and got rid of his protective gear while the guys around him joked and romped around. Only then did he pick up his phone to shoot Shane a quick message.

Ilya:
My place, later?

As he hit send, the Coach barged in and congratulated them. Clapping certain teammates on their backs before he stopped in front of Ilya.

“Think you’re ready for an interview? The press wants to see you, Rozanov.” The Coach asked and Ilya just nodded in response. He had expected it, the press always wanted to get Ilya and Shane for an interview especially after an exhilarating match against each other. They always asked the same boring questions they both had answered multiple times before. But it was part of the job and so it had to get done. Ilya didn’t even mind all that much to stand in front of cameras or answering questions, at least not anymore.

He had for quite some time, because he hadn’t been able to understand anything the reporters asked him or knew how to respond to those questions. At the beginning of their carrier Ilya had envied Shane for his eloquence in English and French, making him feel incompetent and stupid in comparison. But after all those years Ilya’s English had improved a lot and thus press time had turned into a time where he was able to see Shane Hollander in his element without the helmet in the way.

They gave their interviews and got asked the same questions repeatedly. Every now and then Ilya turned a little to look at Shane from the corner of his eye. His black hair was pulled back and drenched in sweat, his cheeks were a lovely pink shade, and his eyes sparkled in the bright lights of the press room. They finished up soon enough and split up without even looking at each other once. Ilya returned to his locker room and while he had been gone someone had turned on some loud music, the showers were running, and loud conversations were had. Filling the room with a plethora of sounds overshadowing Ilya’s reappearance.

He went back to his bench where he pulled out his phone again. His heartbeat quickened for a short second with worry that Shane would say no or that he hadn’t responded yet. But sure, enough when he unlocked his phone a message form Jane awaited him.

Jane:
Sure.

It was not much, but a confirmation that Shane would come and for the time being that was good enough.

Ilya stripped out of the rest of his sweaty gear and clothing and walked over towards the shower. More than ready to clean up and get out of here to get his own celebration started.

Ilya had gone straight home after the game, turning down the guy's invitation to join them to go clubbing. He had more exciting things to do. Ilya had changed into some black sweatpants and a lose fitting t-shirt some time ago. And since then, he was walking circles in his penthouse, debating whether Shane would appear or not.

He grabbed a glass from his sideboard alongside his favourite vodka and walked over towards his couch. Deciding that he had walked around enough and needed to do something sensible. Ilya poured himself the vodka and swung it around in his glass, watching the liquid shimmer in the soft light and how it shifted and swayed.

Just as he wanted to take a sip a short knock on the door interrupted him. Ilya promptly discarded his freshly poured vodka on the coffee table in the living room and made his way to his apartment door. He swiftly opened the door and sure enough a short dark-haired man stood in the lowly lit hallway.

Ilya moved to the side making space for Shane to enter his apartment. As he closed his door Shane dropped his hood from his head and turned around towards Ilya. He was wearing grey sweatpants, a t-shirt and a hooded jacket. Even in the dim light Ilya could tell that Shane's hair was still damp. Their gazes locked and Ilya just stared at that goddamned pretty face and traced Shane's ridiculous freckles.

"Took you long enough it's freezing out there." Shane complained as he kicked off his shoes. And Ilya just rolled his eyes at the impatient comment.

"Have some respect in front of the winner, Hollander." Ilya smirked as it was now Shane's turn to roll his eyes.

"Fuck of Rozanov. I am here am I not." Shane retorted back a flicker of bratty impatience and frustration of losing the game hushed across his face.

"Yes, you are. Such a pretty prize I won today, don't you think?" Ilya took a few steps closer crowding into Shane's space who stumbled backwards until his back connected with the wall with a dull thud. Shane's eyes widened in surprise as if he had not expected to meet the wall that fast.

"Yes, and why aren't you out there celebrating that trophy with your teammates then if you like it that much?" Shane replied mockingly for someone who had been cornered and pushed against a wall.

Ilya stared at him and could feel a smirk form on his face. It was adorable how Shane took everything for word.

"Yes, I could. But I prefer a different reward." Ilya supplied tentatively. Shane raised his brow seemingly wrecking his brain for what that could be.

"And that would be?" Shane implored and swallowed audibly when he had gotten to a conclusion.

The air grew thick between them, laced with something neither of them wanted to name. The tension grew heavier, prickling on Ilyas skin. Tentatively Ilya took another step closer, and Shane had to tilt his head back to still meet his gaze. Looking up at Ilya through his stupidly pretty lashes, causing desire to settle deep in his stomach.

"*You*." Ilya said simply.

Shane's tongue darted out to wet his bottom lip as Ilya studied him intently and he could've sworn Shane's pupils were growing bigger and darker by the second.

"Then what are you waiting for Rozanov?" Shane asked impatiently and attempted to get away from Ilya into the living room. What a brat.

Ilya grabbed him by the waist before he could get past and pushed him into the wall again. Crossing the last distance between them, fixing Shane against the wall with his hands on his hips. Instinctively Shane placed his hands on Ilya's biceps, not pushing away but rather holding him close and spreading warmth.

"Impatient today." Ilya commented before he caved and leaned down to press a kiss against Shane's jawline. From there on he kissed upwards to Shane's ear, paying extra attention to the soft spot underneath his ear. And was promptly rewarded by Shane dropping his head to the right offering Ilya more space for his ministrations. His tongue darted out and he licked along Shane's jawline before he nibbled at his earlobe. From there he kissed down his neck scraping his teeth along Shane's soft skin here and there. Turning it red instantly, leaving a trail of spots behind. Marking Shane's honey skin as his for the time being without leaving any real marks someone could find suspicious later. *Someone*. Ilya didn't like that. Didn't like the idea that someone else saw and had Shane in the way he did.

His grip around Shane's waist tightened as he nestled his knee in between the smaller man's legs. Shane moved his hands up to Ilya's shoulder and loosely tangled them behind his neck as he started to rub himself against Ilya's knee.

No, right now, there wasn't a someone. Right now, there was only them. There was only Shane, and he was only for him.

A moan escaped Shane and Ilya could feel it going directly to his cock. Desire burning up in his abdomen and taking over, fuck he needed that. He needed Shane in every way he could possibly get him.

Shane bucked his hips forward to seek even more friction against his knee and Ilya could feel Shane growing hard. But so was he, his boxers slowly tightening around his growing erection. Suddenly feeling desperate to touch and reach more of Shane, Ilya wrangled his hands underneath Shane's jacket and t-shirt. Keen on touching some of Shane's ridiculously soft skin.

"Take it off." He whispered against Shane's neck and Ilya could've sworn he saw a small shiver run through Shane.

Without hesitation Shane unzipped his jacket and dropped it down to the floor and with Ilya's hands already pulling his black shirt up he quickly got rid of that too. Giving Ilya access to run his hands across his abs and up towards his pecks and nipples. Teasingly Ilya rolled them between his fingers successfully making Shane shudder in his hold. Ilya twisted them, causing Shane to squint his eyes shut and throw his head back hitting the wall in pleasure as he let out another toe-curling moan. Ilya swallowed around a knot in his throat, fuck Shane was going to be the death of him. He soothingly rubbed across Shane's nipples until they were perky, and he could feel Shane already half hard rubbing against his leg.

With Shane's head thrown back against the wall Ilya was offered the front of his throat and couldn't resist but lean in and kiss Shane's Adam apple. Ilya pulled away a little and let his tongue travel along it, feeling the hitching breath in Shane's throat followed by the bopping of the Adams apple. He retracted his tongue and reeled back until he could look into Shane's half lidded eyes.

"Get on your knees." Ilya said his hands wandering from Shane's nipples towards his shoulders ready to guide him down. But Shane dropped to his knees without hesitation and Ilya bit down on his lip as his stomach did a flip. His hands followed Shane down and now rested on top of his shoulders, his thumbs rubbing soothing circles into his skin.

Ilya stared down at the man at his feet who moved his hot mouth closer towards Ilya's crotch. Shane pressed hot kisses against the fabric of Ilya's sweatpants making him groan and causing his cock to twitch. He leaned forward and pressed his arm against the wall to hold himself up as Shane let his hands wander up Ilyas legs up towards the side of his hips. Until he removed his mouth and rubbed over Ilya's still covered erection with his right hand. Making Ilya groan in pleasure.

Ilya stared down at Shane kneeling at his feet, unblinkingly as not to miss a single second of what Shane was doing. Until the black-haired man tilted his head back and their eyes locked. His hand was still teasing Ilya's cock in his now painfully tight boxers. Shane looked up at him with his big brown eyes, slightly rosy cheeks and open mouth and he already looked so gone, so blissful that Ilya's heart tightened.

He moved his left hand from Shane's shoulder to caress him under his chin. And Ilya took it all in locking it up in his heart, memorizing it for whenever they couldn't be doing this anymore. After a short moment where neither blinked nor looked away Ilya moved his hand from Shane's soft chin towards his lips. Tracing his cupids bow and then dipping his finger into Shane's lax mouth ever so slightly. Ilyas finger was immediately met by Shane's tongue rolling around it. And suddenly Ilya felt hot, way too hot and he could feel butterflies spread in his stomach tingling in every vein.

"Suck my dick." Ilya said voice thick with something unnamed. He removed his spit laced finger from Shane's mouth who swallowed eagerly in anticipation.

Promptly Shane's hand on Ilya's erection moved under the waistband of his sweatpants and lowered them and with that the boxer's underneath. Just enough for Shane to free his cock and balls. Once again surprising Ilya just how pliant Shane was when given orders, how eager he was to please, to satisfy him.

Shane's soft hand stroked him to full hardness before he moved closer again. Hot breath mingled against his erection and Ilya's cock jerked in anticipation waiting for Shane's gorgeous mouth to connect with his skin. Shane pressed chaste kisses against the side of his cock all the way down to his base. Where he nuzzled his balls and took one gently into his mouth. Sending pure pleasure through Ilya's body making him suck in a breath and groan. Ilya was already way more affected by this than he had expected to.

Shane licked his way back up again before he took the head of Ilya's cock into his mouth. The sudden wet warmth made Ilya shiver and lean forward against his hold on the wall. He could feel Shane's tongue tease his slit and hollow his cheeks for more suction around the head of his cock. And then Shane slowly took his cock deeper and deeper, and Ilya couldn't repress his wanton moan anymore.

"Fuck, Hollander." Ilya sighed breathlessly as Shane began bobbing his head on his cock. As if his hand had a mind on its own it found its way into Shane's black hair. Ilya combed through it while he tried to not buck into Shane's mouth.

As Shane went down on Ilyas cock again he started to twirl his tongue around and hollowed his cheeks once more. Causing Ilya involuntarily tightened his grip in Shane's hair, who moaned around Ilyas cock in pleasure. The vibrations of Shane's moan made pleasure pool in the pit of Ilya's stomach.

"You like it rough, don't you?" Ilya remarked as he let go of the tuft of hair, he had grabbed soothingly massaging the skin underneath. Before he tightened his grip again and Shane let out another moan around his cock.

With his mouth occupied Shane let his hands travel further upwards Ilya's body tugging at his t-shirt he was still wearing. The black-haired man looked up at Ilya through his lashes, while his cock was deep down Shane's throat and Ilya could momentarily do nothing but watch in awe. Before he realised what Shane was silently asking of him. He let go of the wall and quickly took off his shirt and discarded it somewhere behind him on the floor. His gold crucifix dangled down and now rested against his bare chest, cool in comparison to Ilya's hot skin. His now bare chest earned him and appreciative hum from Shane around his cock. It made Ilya groan as he leaned forwards again needing support from the wall with how good Shane was using his pretty mouth.

Shane's hands now caressed Ilya's lower abdomen, spending a second to trace his happy trail from his belly button down before Shane reached up further towards Ilya's nipples. With his soft hands Shane rolled them between his fingers and Ilya released a stuttered breath. Shane continued teasing them alternating between rolling and pinching without ever stopping his ministrations with his mouth. Slowly driving Ilya insane and closer to the edge.

He was doomed. Utterly and helplessly doomed. There was just no one who could press Ilya's buttons like Shane did, who seemingly didn't even realise that he was. And here they were Ilya fighting the urge to buck his hips into Shane's mouth, occasionally tightening his grip in his black soft hair. While Shane kneeled blissfully unaware of how close to falling apart Ilya was.

“God, Hollander- you continue to get better. Trained on someone else since the last time I got to fuck you?” And even before Ilya had finished his sentence, he regretted ever opening his mouth. Fuck why was he so stupid. He hated even thinking about Shane sleeping with someone else so why on earth did he have to bring it up.

Shane let his hands fall down from Ilya’s nipples, letting his nails scrape along Ilya’s skin. Creating red lines all over his torso. Shane pulled of Ilya’s cock a string of saliva dripping down connecting them. He wrapped his hand around the base of Ilya’s cock and began stroking him, painfully slow and teasing. With his head tipped back Shane looked up at Ilya, his lips parted and slightly breathless. He blinked slowly and looked torn between pride and annoyance at Ilya’s comment.

“No, I didn’t practice.” Shane admitted in a manner that made it seem important for Ilya to know that he didn’t. That he hadn’t slept with anyone else, since their last time. He watched Shane’s cheeks flush at the admittance and Ilya’s heart ached. Ached for the man in front of him. And strangely enough relief flushed his system because Ilya too hadn’t slept with anyone else. Nobody else was good enough anymore. Nobody else felt like Shane, felt like warmth and comfort. Nobody else felt like a place where Ilya could relax while having sex. Or where he could enjoy it so fully in the way he did with Shane. He swallowed around the lump in his throat.

Ilya let his hand run through Shane’s hair while he continued to pump Ilya’s cock awfully slow. Their eyes never leaving the other and, in that moment, it felt like something passed between them. Something close to mutual understanding that Ilya too hadn’t slept with anyone else.

Ilya couldn’t help himself and whispered: “Good boy.” Into the space between them. At that praise Shane’s eyes fluttered shut for a second and a whine escaped him from the back of his throat which made Ilya’s cock throb.

When Shane opened his eyes again, he leaned in closer again let his tongue dart out of his mouth to tease Ilya’s slit. Causing his breath to stutter at the sudden touch and attention to the head of his cock. Shane the put his mouth around the head and let his tongue wander while his hands stroked around Ilya’s base. Increasing his tempo slightly.

That was when Ilya noticed Shane bucking his own hips into the air, searching for friction from something. At this pathetic sight his stomach tightened, and he spilled precome down Shane’s throat who moaned around Ilya’s cock and swallowed readily. Prompting another moan from Ilya at the pleasure. His hand tightened in Shane’s hair, and he curled his toes as not to start fucking Shane’s mouth and set the tempo chasing his own relief.

Shane moved his hips at the same time as he went down further Ilya’s cock, finding his own rhythm. Apparently blissfully unaware that he was even doing it and for some time Ilya just watched Shane enjoy giving him a blowjob and he could feel himself draw closer to his own orgasm.

He gasped before he said through his clenched teeth. “Don’t come yet Hollander.” Reminding Shane teasingly about the time he came untouched while giving Ilya a blowjob.

Overshadowing the fact that he was painfully close to his own orgasm just from Shane using his mouth and enjoying himself while doing it. He perhaps had taught him too well.

Shane pulled off Ilya's cock once again and promptly rose from his kneeling position. Breaking the moment and Ilya once more regretted to have said anything at all. Because Shane looked embarrassed at being caught enjoying himself so much and Ilya wanted to do nothing more than tell him how much he loved watching him. Shane slapped Ilya's chest annoyed as his ears turned red. And Ilya could feel the edge to his orgasm fading.

"You're such a fucking asshole." Shane huffed and crossed his arms as he leaned back against the wall his head ending up next to Ilya's hand. While he tried for an annoyed expression.

"I really don't know why I keep coming back to you." Shane said his gaze scanning Ilya's face as if he was searching for answers or reasons for why he did.

And for a short moment Ilya's heart stopped beating and cold dread filled his chest. Along with the all too familiar fear and worry which settled in the pit of his stomach. Momentarily overshadowing his desire. Because what if Shane truly stopped whatever was happening between them. What if Shane stopped coming back to him. What if he would lose all this which had started to mean more and more to him over the years than he would've wanted to.

"Seems like my irresistible charm is working very well on someone as boring as you." Ilya replied trying to overshadow his momentary anxiety with cocky charm, the only way he knew how to. Because he too didn't know why Shane was returning to him every time they played against each other. But he would love for it to never stop.

"Irresistible wow, such a big word for you, so late at night." Shane mocked Ilya's English accent, but his eyes betrayed him. They grew softer, looking nearly- no Shane was surely just amused by this. Ilya was reading too much into this. They were teasing each other like they normally were, and Shane found it amusing. There was nothing else there and there also was no reason for the butterflies to reawaken in his stomach.

"Just for your information then being irresistible doesn't work if you're being a dick." Shane informed him once again trying to school his facial features into a mask of displeasure. And Ilya loved watching him fail spectacularly. Or perhaps Shane thought he succeeded and only Ilya could tell that the corners of Shane's mouth were twitching.

"Well, your right that never stops working." Ilya winked at him a smug smile plastered across his face as Shane's face flushed even redder.

He sighed and rolled his eyes at Ilya. "Unbelievable." Shane muttered under his breath as he stared at the idiotic confident smile on Ilya's face. And his hands twitched with the urge to push Ilya's curls out of his forehead so that he could see his eyes more clearly.

Then suddenly big arms wrapped around Shane picking him off the ground. He yelped at the sudden change of position and instinctively wrapped his legs around Ilya's waist. Their cocks

now rubbing against each other.

“I can walk just fine. Let me down.” Shane protested and shoved against Ilya’s bare chest. Feeling like a stupid small child throwing a tantrum.

“How many times can you come?” Ilya asked him instead of answering Shane at all or putting him down. He opened his mouth in shock and the closed it promptly again. What had he just been asked?

“Why would I tell you this. Now let me down Rozanov I am leav-”

“You aren’t leaving not with how close you already are.” Once again shocking Shane, what a fucking asshole. But what agitated him even more was that Ilya was right, that he was so attentive that Ilya had noticed that. Because Shane was close, embarrassingly so by doing nothing but kneeling and sucking a cock. But even more annoying was the notion that they both knew that he wouldn’t leave not now, or ever perhaps.

“I guess three times.” Ilya carried on with his train of thought while moving with Shane towards his bedroom.

“Excuse me?” The audacity of this man was truly unbelievable. He shoved against Ilya’s bare shoulders once again, but Ilya didn’t budge an inch, his hold on Shane unwavering.

“I say you can come three times. Want me to prove it to you Hollander?”

Shane swallowed heavily as Ilya pushed the door to his bedroom open. He never had more than two orgasms in a row and Ilya knew that. Because Ilya had made him come those two times. But three times in a row? It sounded scary but at the same time oddly alluring. There was a promise in there of Ilya being so committed to giving him that pleasure and spending this time on him rather than being out there celebrating in bars. The time he could’ve spend with his teammates partying, hooking up with whoever Ilya fancied. But Ilya hadn’t, he had chosen to spend that time with Shane.

“I have a curfew- an early flight.” Shane got out before Ilya let him down on his bed stopping to tower over him. And Shane felt small in his presence, like a beetle stranded on his back waiting for help to flip him. He felt so out of his place every time Ilya stood over him like that. Like his body, which he trained every day, which was the one thing he knew better than anything, just stopped working. Like his limbs weren’t his anymore, like they were out of his control.

“Curfew, so boring.” Ilya rolled his eyes. “Nobody cares about that.”

And Shane wanted to argue that he did when he was cut off by Ilya pulling down his pants and boxer finally freeing him in one smooth movement. His cock sprang free embarrassingly hard and already leaking precome. The cold air of the bedroom made the hairs on his body stand and goosebumps erupted on his arms.

“You are my prize and as reward you get to come often, yes?” Ilya asked letting his eyes travel over Shane’s body like he was the best thing he had ever seen. Like he was more

worthy of being a prize than his actual trophy. And Shane had never felt less like he could meet that standard than now.

He just nodded and arched his head back into the bed as anticipation and nervousness settled in his stomach. Shane heard some rustling and the felt the bed dip around him and when he looked up again Ilya was above him. His hands placed next to Shane's shoulders and knees on either side of his hips. Ilya's crucifix was dangling alongside his curls in front of Shane's eyes.

Ilya dipped his head down and kissed his chest and from there on down his stomach leaving a trail of heat behind. But before he reached Shane's aching cock, he looked up to meet Shane's gaze who had been following him intently.

"Move upwards, towards the pillow." Ilya asked him and Shane complied awkwardly shuffling up until his head laid on one of Ilya's pillows and the smell of cologne and clean cotton filled his nose.

When he looked back at Ilya the man had stayed where he was on the bed and had just watched Shane's embarrassing shuffling. His ears heated up once again but before Shane diverted his gaze again Ilya touched his ankle. He let his hand massage Shane's right calf before he lifted it up from the bed and leaned down to press a kiss against his ankle. And then Ilya kissed up his leg over his knee and then onto the inside of his thigh. There he surprised Shane by adding his teeth, prompting a shocked groan from him. Ilya soothingly let his tongue run over the sensitive spot before he moved his head an inch closer towards Shane's cock and repeated it again. A scrape of teeth and a soft lick. Slowly driving him insane, with his skin already being sensitive he was sure Ilya was leaving marks. And because he had admitted that he wasn't sleeping with anyone else Ilya knew that only Shane would see those remainders.

Then finally Ilya pressed a kiss on the head of Shane's cock, and he couldn't help himself but arch his back of the bed at that teasing touch. He was immediately reprimanded by Ilya who placed his big hands onto both sides of his hips pressing him back into the mattress. He looked up from where he was hovering over Shane's cock and Shane could see Ilya's own desire in his blown pupils.

"Be a good boy and stay still. I will take care of it." Ilya said as he taunted Shane by breathing hot air onto his erection.

"Okay then hurry up Rozanov, I don't have all night." Shane said impatiently because sadly he truly didn't. He had to return to his hotel before anyone suspected anything. He had to leave Ilya again and they both would go their separate ways again with nothing binding them together. But Shane had a feeling if Ilya asked if he would stay, Shane would. Shane would have all night, if Ilya would just ask.

"Ask politely."

"Please…" Shane said. Begged. "Please suck my dick." Shane begged Ilya desperate for his mouth around his twitching cock, as he had done embarrassingly often before.

And as all those times it didn't take long for Ilya to comply, Ilya let his tongue glide over Shane's slit before he took him into his mouth fully. Shane moaned loudly as he fisted the bedsheet for support as to not buck his hips forward. Ilya expertly rolled his tongue around Shane's length and slowly started to bop his head up and down. He wouldn't last long not like this, not with Ilya between his legs delivering him and amazing blowjob. Shane had been close when Ilya had picked him up by the door but now, he could slowly feel the familiar pleasure build in his abdomen.

He moaned loudly and shifted one hand from the bedsheets into Ilya's curls. Gripping those tightly as he encouraged Ilya to speed up a little. Who complied readily and Shane threw his head back in pleasure.

"Fuck, Rozanov. 'm close." Shane got out breathlessly as he could feel waves of pleasure start rolling over him. But Ilya didn't stop instead he hollowed his cheeks around the head of Shane's cock and let his tongue tease Shane's slit once again. And that was too much for Shane. He instinctively tightened his hold on Ilya's curls as he came into Ilya's mouth, who swallowed Shane's cum willingly. He was moaning and muttering nonsense as his body was wrecked by his first orgasm. His heart was beating fast against his chest.

As he slowly came down from the pleasure, he eased his latch on Ilya's hair who then pulled off his cock, which continued to twitch in the air. Ilya ran his hand across his mouth and smirked at Shane victoriously.

God the way Ilya had worked his mouth Shane had come humiliatingly quick. If Ilya kept this tempo up Shane might truly come three times in a row.

Still slightly shuddering from the aftershocks the curly haired Russian moved to the side and opened his drawer and procured lube and a condom. He closed the drawer and turned back around to Shane wiggling his eyebrows like an idiot.

Shane was surprised by Ilya's restraint because the last time he had checked that man had been painfully hard as well. Dribbling precome down Shane's throat. But now he seemed all to focused on Shane and giving him the pleasure he had promised.

"Ready for the second round?" Ilya asked his voice low with desire as he shifted his body back over Shane's body making him disappear beneath him.

Shane shuddered at that, and his cock twitched in anticipation, his body once again betraying him. He should say no and offer to take care of Ilya's business. He should leave and return to his hotel. But Shane didn't do any of those things. He stayed right underneath Ilya like his body had forgotten how to move.

"Sure." Shane said instead aiming for a confident tone even though he wasn't sure he was able to come two more times. His stomach tightened under Ilya's scrutinizing gaze. He wanted to please Ilya, he wanted to give him his prize like he deserved to. And even though Shane was used to performing under pressure, this felt different. Ilya was different. They were different.

Shane was just scared to disappoint Ilya with his performance, afraid that Ilya would grow bored. Bored of him or bored of this and decide to move on with someone else because Shane couldn't satisfy his desire. Because for once Shane couldn't match him or his experience. It was always like this in the bedroom. Ilya was experienced and he wasn't. Ilya led and Shane followed, Ilya took the directions into his own hands and Shane was glad he did. Because his mind was miles ahead of him and he wasn't getting behind. Stuck and helpless.

A hand softly touched his cheek, Ilya's thumb caressing his skin. "With me Hollander." Ilya said his voice softer than before and Shane imagined having seen worry in those gold freckled eyes.

"You are scared. There is no pressure here."

"No not scared." Shane argued weakly failing spectacularly at coming off confident. But at the same time a small knot of worry loosened in his stomach at Ilya's words and at the way he looked at him. Surprising Shane once again with how attentive he was and how well he seemed to know Shane.

"Okay then worried." Ilya corrected himself after Shane's overt refusal. His hand wandered from Shane's cheek into his hair combing through it. And Shane continued to calm down and relax again underneath Ilya's weight.

"Relax Hollander, I just want to make you feel good. I won't take it personal if you won't come three times. Just say stop and I will stop." Ilya explained and dipped his head down to nuzzle against Shane's cheek, kissing him softly. Ilya might not take it personal, but Shane might. Nevertheless, he had needed that reassurance, those boundaries. And with Ilya's hand in his hair petting him and Ilya's mouth so close to his it was hard to think about anything at all. Hard to feel anything other than the pleasurable buzz underneath his skin and the lightness that settled in his chest. His body still tingling from his first orgasm.

"Oh okay." Shane whispered against Ilya's ear who rose again and shifted away from Shane's face. Even though Shane wanted nothing more than for him to stay close.

On his way down Ilya left a kiss on his collarbones, one in the middle of his chest and on above his belly button. Ilya straightened up and picked up the bottle of lube he had discarded somewhere on the bed.

With practiced ease he squirted lube onto his fingers and quickly warmed it up before he brought his hand down to Shane's hole. Softly Ilya's index finger traced his rim, and Shane released a breath to let himself relax further. Only then did Ilya push one finger in. Shane groaned and clenched involuntarily around Ilya's finger. Who had stilled after penetrating waiting for Shane to relax again. Shane parted his legs to offer Ilya better access for preparation and did his best to let go. Ilya groaned appreciatively and kissed Shane's thigh as a reward.

Ilya started to move his finger around while he relaxed his lower body further. Ilya removed his finger after a short while and when he penetrated him again, he had added another finger. Shane felt comfortably filled with two digits inside him and he could feel his arousal return.

His cock was slowly growing hard again as Ilya was scissoring him open with practiced movements, occasionally kissing his thigh.

Ilya retracted his fingers for a short moment and Shane whined at the loss. He was left to clench around nothing, already feeling oddly empty and Ilya hadn't even been inside him. Quickly Ilya applied more lube to his fingers and returned his fingers to Shane's hole. He circled it once more spreading lube around his rim before he pushed in again.

Shane moaned loudly at feeling Ilya's fingers back inside him. He arched his back and spread his legs further, now lying splayed in front of Ilya. Shane should be embarrassed or ashamed for how vulnerable he was, but he wasn't. Not in front of Ilya, not anymore. His mind too occupied with how to get more of Ilya inside him and how to make him hit his prostate. Shane's cock was now fully hard, flopping against his belly.

Ilya continued to open him up, two knuckles deep inside until he hit Shane's prostate. And Shane moaned wantonly, fisting the bedding by his side once again. He wanted more, he needed to be filled further and most of all he needed Ilya to hit that same spot once again.

Ilya moved his hands again and sure enough he hit that same spot again and Shane threw his head back in pleasure. He could feel Ilya retract his fingers and when he pushed back, he had added a third finger, stretching Shane further. For a short moment a burning pain spread, and Shane gritted his teeth and clenched his muscles. Ilya stilled immediately eyeing Shane intently.

"Too fast?" Ilya asked sounding genuinely concerned. His tone was patient and gentle and his accent wrapped softly around those English words. With his other hand he was massaging soothing circles into the skin of Shanes thigh.

But Shane just shook his head as the burning lessened and he unclenched around Ilya's fingers again.

"Just- just hurt a little," Shane admitted. "But it's okay now." He reassured Ilya who still hadn't started moving again.

Only then did he pick up his ministrations again, opening him up quickly. Thrusting in and out however without hitting his sweet spot once. Like Ilya knew exactly where to find and how to avoid it. Teasing Shane, making him crazy for that pleasure. While he worked his fingers he leaned down and started kissing Shane's belly, worshipping his already sensitive skin. After some time with three fingers inside of him, Ilya changed the angle and once more hit Shane's prostate.

"Please-," He moaned as Ilya thrusted in again hitting that same sweet spot once again. Shane arched his back to meet Ilya's fingers to get him deeper inside of him. And he hit his prostate again at an even better angle, making him squeeze his eyes shut and whimper breathlessly. When he opened his eyes again, he met Ilya's gaze who stared at him heatedly like he wanted to devour Shane. And Shane would let him. Shane would give Ilya everything if it meant that he continued hitting his prostate.

Shane could feel heat pool in his lower abdomen and his cock started to twitch against his belly. He wouldn't last long if Ilya kept this up.

"Fuck. Rozanov." He gasped breathlessly as Ilya relentlessly fucked him with his fingers. "I need you. I need you inside of me." Shane begged as his sight grew blurry with tears of pleasure collecting in the corners of his eyes. "Please fuck me Rozanov."

Ilya groaned at Shane's request but didn't stop thrusting into Shane with his fingers. Instead, he snatched the condom of the bed and gave it to Shane. Who with trembling hands tried to open it quickly.

Heat curled inside Shane's abdomen and precome leaked onto his stomach. "Please-Rozanov." He moaned; he begged unashamed of how fucking needy he must sound. Shane was driven by need and the first tear fell from his lashes and rolled down his cheek.

Ilya removed his fingers from inside Shane leaving him gasping and empty. He whined at the loss and nearly didn't even notice how Ilya took the condom out of his hands and rolled it onto his cock. Another tear rolled down Shane's face as he was left lingering on the edge of his orgasm, as Ilya squirted more lube onto his hands and leathered it onto his cock.

Shane felt Ilya line up with his hole and then he finally pushed in. It burned but in a good way and Shane finally felt full and claimed and it was too much. Without even being able to utter a warning he came untouched all over his stomach. His breath stuttered and he moan ed loudly as he threw his head back and grabbed Ilya's bicep for hold. Shane clenched down around Ilya's big cock inside of him and let his orgasm rock him. His heart was racing and breathing was rigid. He felt his cock twitch and squirt spurts of cum over his abs.

And only then did he notice Ilya's groaning and panting above him. As well as Ilya's cock jerking inside of him. As if he too just had an unexpected orgasm just by pushing into Shane. They both panted for a while Shane still clutching Ilya's bicep.

"Holy shit, Hollander." Ilya said his voice strained and Shane tried to blink away his tears to focus on Ilya's face. But he couldn't, the tears wouldn't stop, and he felt spent. His dick felt overly sensitive as did his whole body. Shane was shuddering and his skin tingled from every slight touch.

Ilya moved his hands to wipe away some of the tears on Shane's face. "You look so pretty when you cry." He whispered against Shane's neck sending a shiver down his back which went straight to his hole. He whimpered in Ilya's hold but didn't know what for.

Ilya was still buried inside of him, rock hard.

"Is okay when I move?" Ilya asked Shane nibbling on his earlobe and then down his neck again. He lifted his head and stared at Shane waiting for an answer with an open expression on his face. Ilya's hand stroked his cheek and drew lines across his face, gently brushing sweaty hair out of his face. Shane blinked a couple of times, trying to wrap his head around the question Ilya had just asked. But the soft touches on his tender skin made it hard, his brain feeling foggy.

“Yes.” Shane answered after fighting through the comfortable haze and getting his tongue to work. Ilya started to roll his hips experimentally but gently. Causing a bolt of pleasure to run up Shan e’s spine, drawing out another moan.

Steadily Ilya thrusted into Shane to get him used to his cock, with every thrust pulling out further until he bottomed out and started fucking Shane properly. One of his hands stayed buried in Shane’s hair petting and pulling it, anchoring him there with Ilya while he floated back into the haze. Ilya picked up Shane’s left leg folding him in half creating a whole new angle to penetrate him. He gasped and moaned incoherent things as the pleasure started taking over his body once again. Shane was gone, his entire body was tingling and overly sensitive, he was lightheaded and floating in pleasure. Tears were rolling down his face as Ilya continued to pound into him. Shane just clutched Ilya’s arms tightly.

“Such a pretty crier.” Ilya said so softly that Shane almost missed it.

He dipped his head and kissed Shane’s forehead and then the top of his nose. Making Shane sigh in pleasure and hope for more. For Ilya to kiss him properly, to devour his mouth and silence his moans by slotting his mouth on top. But Ilya was somehow carefully evading his mouth by kissing every other part of Shane. And still Shane was waiting, for soft lips to meet his.

But at the same time, Shane wasn’t sure that would be a good idea because if Ilya did kiss him Shane would break. Certain that his heart wouldn’t be able to take it. To take the want and the desire to be loved and fully embraced by Ilya. Because he was sure that it would explode right out of Shane, and he could never take it back. Never hide it again so that Ilya would come and fuck him again. So that Ilya would spend time with him like this again. They had kissed before sure but today felt different and Shane couldn’t explain why. Couldn’t explain why Ilya wouldn’t kiss him. And couldn’t explain the steadily rising panic and anxiety about what that meant for them and what this meant for Ilya. One thing Shane was sure about was if Ilya kissed him right here, he would never be able to leave this bed ever again.

Ilya tugged at his hair again and then immediately smoothed it out again, reminding Shane again of where he was. Pulling him back out of that haze that had turned from comforting to distressing. His mind had spiralled taken him away from the pleasure which now hit him full force again.

With that new angle Ilya was able to thrust deeper into Shane, hitting his prostate with every other thrust. Ilya was grunting and Shane moaned in pleasure. His cock was flapping against his stomach overly sensitive and stinging every time it flapped onto Shane’s skin. More tears were forming in the corner of his eyes and rolling down his cheeks.

“Good boy, Hollander. You are doing so good.” Ilya praised him breathlessly, and it felt like honey filling the cracks of his battered soul. Warmth spread in his body pulling him down again, nothing else was important anymore. Shane was good, he was good for Ilya.

Ilya picked up speed and started thrusting faster, now hitting Shane’s prostate with every push. Shane moaned loudly as pleasure was building rapidly in his abdomen.

“Please-,” Shane begged his voice sounding broken through the tears. A big hand wrapped around his sensitive cock, and he hissed at the sudden touch. He arched his back and pressed his head into the pillow. Ilya matched his strokes to his thrusts and Shane was reduced to those two points where Ilya was touching and fucking into him, everything else disappeared.

“Gonna cum.” Shane got out before his orgasm hit him and he came loudly, moaning incoherent things. He clenched around Ilya’s huge cock who was groaning in pleasure and riding him through his own orgasm. He could feel Ilya’s cock twitch inside of him spilling another load into the condom. They were both panting and catching their breaths as Ilya slowly stilled but stayed inside Shane.

Shane’s whole body pulsated when Ilya removed his hand from around Shane’s sensitive cock. He had come dry, completely spent. Ilya removed his other arm from underneath his leg and lowered that down onto the bed before he collapsed forwards onto Shane. Curls were tickling his nose as Ilya buried his head into the crook of Shane’s neck.

“See told you, you could come three times.” Ilya mumbled against Shane’s skin, and he was certain if he could’ve seen the Russians face, he would’ve been met with a shit eating grin.

They stayed like this for some time to calm down, Shane trapped under Ilya’s body mass which nearly felt like a weighted blanket. His body still shivered and trembled every now and then as they both came down from their highs. Shane slowly returning from the haze and the comforting warmth.

After some time, Ilya stirred and pushed himself up and off Shane who instantly mourned the comforting pressure of Ilya pinning him down into the mattress. Ilya met his gaze as he slowly pulled out, removing the last of his body warmth from Shane. Who was left alone clenching around cold air. With practiced movements Ilya pulled of the condom without spilling anything and walked over towards the bathroom to get rid of it. When he returned, he carried a wet towel and wordlessly cleaned up Shane’s stomach. Afterwards Ilya helped Shane sit up and down from the bed.

And Shane wished Ilya would say something, anything really. This silence hurt more than expected. It felt wrong, sharp and cold, completely opposite of the warmth they had just shared. However, Shane wouldn’t be the one to fill it either, afraid of what would come out of his mouth if he did. So, he just waddled after Ilya towards the adjacent bathroom,

Shane turned on the water as Ilya laid out some towels and joined him not shortly afterwards. They stood opposite carefully avoiding the others gaze and let the hot water wash away the traces they had left on each other’s bodies over the past hours. They were carried away down the drain until nothing remained that proved that Shane had ever touched Ilya. Until they were just two separate bodies again and not one, like they had been just minutes ago. Until Shane was just Shane again, feeling utterly alone next to Ilya.

His hands twitched against his side with the urge to reach out to connect their bodies again. To feel Ilya close and to know that he wasn’t alone. But his hands stayed besides his side, and they remained a foot apart underneath the shower, following their routine like always. And Shane couldn’t shake the feeling that something had changed, changed between them. But he didn’t know what or whether it was good or bad. And maybe he didn’t want to, not yet.

They stepped out and Shane dried up and walked back into the bedroom to collect his boxers and sweatpants. The silence between them awkward and big, ill formed and twisted. And it lodged right in between Shane's ribs filling his chest. As he saw Ilya getting dressed in new boxers from his closet.

"I should leave."
"You should leave know." They said at the same time and Ilya turned around to face Shane again. Shane met his gaze for the for the first time after he had pulled out and he wanted to imagine having seen something else in Ilya's eyes. Something that didn't say that he should leave. Something that wanted him to stay right here.

"I know the curfew." Shane swallowed audibly around the lump in his throat. This wasn't like this usually went. They weren't this awkward and insecure around each other.

"Yes curfew." Ilya said as he pulled on a new pair of sweatpants. Shane stood there in the doorframe of the bedroom waiting for something else. For what he didn't know. Maybe the offer for a drink, or some banter like they normally would. But Ilya remained silent and so did Shane. After waiting for another heartbeat, he reluctantly turned around and walked through Ilya's apartment towards the door. There he put on his discarded shirt and jacket before he slipped into his shoes. It felt odd not even two hours ago, Ilya had pressed him into that same spot with desire thrumming in his veins and now it almost felt like that had never happened.

"Goodnight." Shane said to Ilya who was leaning against the wall behind him. The light from the living room making him seem softer and bigger. Like he was just waiting for Shane to come to him and hug him so he could carry him back to bed. But Shane didn't do that.

"Goodnight, Hollander." Ilya said and Shane's heart tightened. Hollander? Was that all he was? Hollander and Rozanov, rivals on the ice and something different in private. Was that truly all they were? Shane pressed his eyes shut trying to keep the tears at bay that dared to fall from his lashes as he reached for the door handle and pulled it open. And he stepped out into the grey hallway, away from the warmth and away from Ilya.

Shane knew that they had their routine, they never stayed behind to cuddle because they weren't a couple. They were fuck buddies or friends with benefits or whatever you wanted to call them. But they weren't together and wasn't that the good thing about this thing with Ilya. That there were no strings attached, no feelings involved. But then why did it feel so difficult to leave this time.

The door fell shut behind him trapping him in the cold hallway of Ilya's apartment complex. The light flickered on at the movement, illuminating the way towards the elevator. His chest ached for warmth and comfort. For contact but not for this. Not for this depressing reality of being alone. Not for this dark corridor in the middle of the night away from his own bed and away from Ilya.

He took a step forward and could feel a twinge in his back and thighs. Thank God he didn't have a game tomorrow. Another step. And another. Farther away from the source of comfort and peace he had found just moments ago behind Ilya's door.

They had a routine, and Shane was good by honouring it. He was being good by walking away from Ilya's apartment. Shane had been good for Ilya and now he continued to be good by leaving regardless of how shitty he felt. Because that's what he always did. Or that's what he told himself, trying to ease the onset of anxiety. As he started to fiddle with the hems of his sleeves.

Another step closer towards the grey monstrosity of an elevator. He pressed the button and could hear the lift spring to life. Shane just stood there and stared at his distorted reflection on the silver surface. The elevator took long to arrive but as it opened its door it was suddenly too fast. Too demanding of Shane to leave.

His distorted reflection got replaced by a clearer one in the mirror of the elevator. He looked like shit. His hair was tousled and messy, his t-shirt crumpled and the seams uncomfortable against his skin. Even his grey sweatpants sat wrong around his hips.

The door closed again, and Shane was again staring at the grey doors. He took a few deep breaths and pressed the button again. The door sprang back open and this time he entered.

The elevator went from looking big to feeling suffocatingly small. Shane promptly turned around as to not face his reflection and saw the last bit of light disappear from the corridor. Reluctantly he pressed the button for ground floor and with a thud the lift started to descend.

Taking him further away from Ilya's apartment. The ride down was mostly silent only interrupted by the occasional rattle of the cables reminding Shane that he was indeed moving down. Moving further away from that warmth and comfort.

He stared at the grey doors waiting for the lift to release him, the space suddenly seemed too small for all of the emotions he was feeling. For the turmoil inside his head. Too small for the black hollowness that slowly cracked open inside his chest. The heaviness that settled on his chest that made it hard to breathe. And the overwhelming want to return to Ilya's apartment.

The hollowness and the weight were nothing new. That was just what happened after he let Ilya fuck him. It was just the price he had to pay for the few hours he could spend with the Russian. He had accepted that years ago. And he could usually drown out the feeling after one or two beers or excessive workout at the hotel gyms. Or he stayed under the warm shower for longer than necessary pretending to be engulfed by the warmth of another person. They had their routine and the deal and that just didn't include aftercare. It was each for their own afterwards. And Shane was fine with that had been fine with that because the black hole in chest had never expanded like it did now. The weight had never felt this crushing. It had been manageable so why was it different now. Why did it feel worse than usual?

The doors opened with a ping and a swoosh of cold air from the entrance hall made him shiver. On wobbly legs he stepped out of the lift and into the entrance where the lights flickered on. Before his only half functioning brain would convince him otherwise. Would convince him to take the lift back up and return to Ilya, like the pull in his chest told him to. But Ilya hadn't asked him to stay so he didn't, he would respect that. Shane could feel the ache in his lower back and the sensitive spots on his thighs where Ilya had been rougher than usual. Claiming his prize for winning the game. Every step he took Shane was reminded of the claim Ilya had made on his body and he felt less like himself than he had in a while.

He pushed the glass doors open and stepped out into the night onto the pavement. Shane zipped up his jacket and pulled his hood over his head as to not be recognized immediately. Coincidentally his taxi pulled up right at that moment and he didn't have to spend more time in the cold.

Quickly he opened the door and told the driver the address of his hotel. Who luckily just drove off without making any attempts at small talk.

Shane was thankful unsure if he would have been able to produce anything other than his address. He leaned back on the squeaking leather seats inhaling the scent of cigarettes. Reminding him of the taste on his tongue whenever Ilya smoked, of the scent which surrounded him after he left the Russians apartment. But this time this scent only felt cold and empty. Not as comforting because it wasn't accompanied with big, muscled arms which wrapped around his waist pulling him closer. Making him feel safe and secure under Ilya's body weight.

Shane turned his head to stare out of the window only to see vague shapes of buildings and lights pass by. He was past the point of recognizing anything. The streetlights changed from bright LED to warm yellowish lights and with the blur he couldn't help but think about the gold flecks which appeared in Ilyas eyes when the light hit them just right. Fascinating him every time he saw it.

The taxi came to an abrupt halt in front of his hotel. He hadn't even realized how much time had passed. Shane handed over some cash and stepped out of the car. His muscles twinged with every step. Hell, he was a world class athlete he should be able to let Ilya take him for a few hours the way he wanted to and not feel a thing.

The lobby was empty, and he walked over towards the lifts. This time as he was waiting for the elevator to arrive he was left staring at gold doors. Shimmering in the bright overhead lights of the hotel. With a ding the doors opened, and he stepped inside, welcomed by irritating upbeat elevator music once again. Contrasting his worsening mood.

With a slightly shaking hand he selected his floor. The doors closed and the lift started to ascend. Shane felt horrible it almost made him want to laugh. He had just been fucked by the hottest guy in the entire NHL, he had had a good time or so he told himself. Shouldn't he be in an amazing mood, perhaps even dancing along to the stupid pop song that doodled out of the speakers of the elevator.

But instead, Shane wanted to curl up and never emerge. He could feel the tears stuck in his throat and his chest tightening. Shane felt more alone than he had ever before. He felt lost and lonely, and those feelings grew. Grew in his chest writhing the heavy hollowness.

By the time the doors of the elevator opened again and spit him out on his floor his legs were shaking. He wobbled over towards his room and with a beep of his keycard his door unlocked letting him in into his unfamiliar room. It was huge and probably nicely furnished. But it was empty and cold, lacking comfort and warmth.

His door fell shut with a full thud and the first tear fell from his eyes. With trembling legs, he kicked of his shoes and slid down the wall as another tear fell down. Shane hugged his legs

close and buried his head in between his knees as he began sobbing. Tears streaming down his face relentlessly wetting his sweatpants. Sobs shook his body as he tightened his grip around his body trying to contain himself. Trying to hold himself together and not break apart fully. Trying to simulate someone hugging him.

The heaviness grew in his chest making him gasp for air in between his sobs, making it hard to breathe. His body felt so heavy and so far away from him so not like his own.

And as if his brain wanted to play a trick on him, he saw images of Ilya in front of his inner eye. His soft smile which only Shane ever got to see, the crinkling around his eyes, his pretty lips wrapping around his own. The one thing Ilya hadn't done today. Ilya hadn't kissed him, and Shane found himself mourn it more than he should. He let himself go more than he should, he let himself drown in that darkness, to exhausted to do anything else. So, Shane just sobbed and let the blackness expand indefinitely inside of him.

Ilya had been frozen in his hallway staring at the door for God knows how long hoping that Shane would return. But nothing had happened. The door had stayed closed and the hallway behind quiet. No pretty freckled boy knocked and returned to his arms.

Then a sound of the elevator opening and steps coming down the hallway and Ilyas heart skipped a beat and hope dared to bloom in his stomach. Was Shane really coming back. He felt stupid waiting there in front of his apartment door desperately awaiting a knock with his heart in his throat. But the steps died down and his neighbour's door fell shut and Ilyas heart dropped.

"Fuck you Hollander." He cursed under his breath and let his hand run through his slightly damp and tangled curls. He should have never let him leave. He should have never let him mess with his heart like this.

Ilya knew he was hot, that he was loud and cocky and perhaps obnoxious and annoying. Those were the things he was good at, the parts of him he let people see. But what he wasn't good at was the quiet part, the feeling's part. Because everything he has ever loved or cared about had left him. And Ilya was scared that if he admitted that Shane meant more to him, that Shane too would leave. That this would stop, and he would never see those stupid freckles or those boring brown eyes again.

He sighed and turned around to walk back into the living room. He walked over towards the coffee table and picked up his glass of vodka he had abandoned when Shane had knocked. Ilya put his head back and downed the rest of the liquid in one gulp. But even that couldn't bring feeling back into his body.

He felt like shit, his heart and body ached. It was as if Shane had taken the contentment and peace with him out of the apartment. Leaving Ilya behind in the silent and unsettling quietness of his penthouse.

He slumped down on his couch arching his neck backwards, so he was left to stare at the blank ceiling. His body felt heavy like his limbs had suddenly gained weight. Ilya traced

imaginary lines on the ceiling as everything started to feel pointless again. He felt like he never wanted to move again if it didn't mean seeing Shane again. His time felt wasted if Ilya didn't have Shane around to tease, to argue and to fill the empty spot in his heart he tried his best to ignore. He missed the cadence of his voice filling the quiet that had settled around him years ago. And every time Shane smiled it felt like the sun had risen tainting everything in soft light.

But now it seemed as if there were only white walls and darkness inside him. And the darkness felt all too familiar. Scaring him more than it should. Ilya could feel the heaviness turn hollow leaving him empty and numb.

Usually when Shane left Ilya only felt a little lost, his mood just slightly off. Nothing a glass of vodka or two and a cigarette couldn't fix. Normally he just needed to get his mind of his supposed rival to feel slightly better. But right now, it felt like Shane took over his entire being, like he was his centre gravity and now that he wasn't there it got tipped off. Shoving him of a cliff he couldn't climb back up on his own.

The glass of vodka had done nothing and not even a cigarette sounded good right now. Because all he thought about was how Shane didn't like the taste of them when they kissed- when they kissed.

Ilya swallowed against the lump that formed in his throat. He hadn't kissed Shane properly today but neither had Shane. They hadn't kissed and just perhaps that had been for the better regardless of how much he regretted that now. Because if he had kissed Shane, he would've broken right there. He would've spilled his heart and would've admitted how much his feelings had changed from the moment they had started this all those years ago. He would've admitted all those things he kept hidden in his heart because something had changed between them. And it frightened Ilya. It scared him to think about how Shane might view it and if he would stay. If he would be the one to stay. And he was certain that just one kiss from Shane would've got all of that rolling. Perhaps ruining everything they had built, and Ilya wasn't ready for change or for this to stop. So, he had just let Shane leave without offering him to stay for aftercare because they didn't do that. They had their routine, and they didn't do change. He was doomed and already in too deep.

His stomach tightened at his miserable perspective, and he let himself drown a little in this gloomy feeling, too drained to fight it. To come up with a reasonable idea of what to do. All while his thoughts circled around Shane's plump lips and how much he wanted to kiss those. For them to make his world stop for just a moment. To make everything else seem meaningless and small. And the only thing that mattered would be their lips touching and Shane right in front of him.

Somewhere from his bedroom he heard his phone chime and Ilya was up on his feet before he could even register what was going on. With quick steps he entered his bedroom and frantically scanned his surroundings for his phone. Spotting it in the pile of clothes on his floor. As he stepped closer, he had to realize that his room still smelled like Shane. The crisp musky and slightly woody scent hit his nose and made his heart tighten.

He picked up his phone from the floor and the screen lit up and there it was a message from Shane.

Jane:
We didn't even kiss.

And Ilya's heart dropped for a second before it started picking up speed pounding against his chest. He stared down at the screen and read Shane's message over and over again. They hadn't kissed and Ilya regretted that more than he should. And apparently so did Shane.

But what did it mean? What did it mean for Shane to break their routine and text him that. Ilya could almost see Shane flush and toss and turn regretting to have ever send that text. He could see him run his soft fingers against his lips while thinking and perhaps regretting that Ilya hadn't kissed him.

Shane had broken their routine. This had never happened before, and worry settled in his stomach. Shane never did that, never did something risky or stupid by breaking rules. Always staying within parameters. But now he had, and Ilya's finger hovered over the call button in their chat. The urge to call and check if everything was okay filling his chest. The urge to hear Shane's voice stronger than the logic in his worn-out brain. Without thinking about it longer he hit call. Even if it was just for Shane to tell him to fuck off and delete his text seconds after. Ilya would still hear that voice once more today.

Ilya held his phone against his ear and listened to the ringing. Shane picked up on the third ring just as Ilya thought he wouldn't anymore.

The line stayed silent, and the only thing Ilya heard was heavy breathing on Shane's end. Both scared to say something first, to say the wrong thing ruining whatever they had. They were toeing an unfamiliar thin line and Ilya's heart was beating in his throat and fear settled in his chest.

"*Ilya…*" Shane said his voice weak and wobbly. And it made his heart stop, and he forgot how to breathe. Ilya had thought about this moment so many times before and never quite thought it would come true. That Shane would use his first name. A shiver ran down Ilya's back and he took a deep breath.

"Ilya-," Shane said again his voice even quieter than before. He had never heard him sound so broken, and Ilya's heart ached.

"*Shane-*," Ilya said his voice soft, name rolling of his tongue easily. "I am so sorry." Ilya apologised for nothing in particular and then for everything all at once. Because he just felt the need to say it out loud. The need for Shane to understand that he truly was sorry.

The line went silent again, before he heard subdued sobs coming from Shane like he was trying to hide the fact that he was crying from Ilya. And his heart broke once more. He never should've let Shane leave, he was such a massive asshole, so self-absorbed in his own worries that he hadn't even realised how bad Shane was doing.

"Shane-," Ilya said keeping his voice soft. "Can you please tell me the name of your hotel?"

The sobs stopped and Ilya ran his hand through his curls getting caught up in some of his tangled strands.

“Why?” Was all Shane asked, and Ilya wanted to hit his head against the wall with how much he wanted to wrap him up in his arms.

“I- I want to take care of you and… and make sure you’re okay. Be- because right now you don’t sound like that.” Ilya explained stumbling over his words with his heart in his throat.

“I am fine.” Shane protested but Ilya could hear the suppressed emotions in his voice. He could hear the act of trying to keep up appearance and go back to their routine. But that didn’t exist anymore at least not for Ilya.

“No, you’re not. Shane-,” He stopped for a second letting Shane’s name linger on his tongue still unsure when he was ever getting the privilege to use it again. “Please don’t say you’re fine if you aren’t. Be-because I am worried, and I care how you really feel.” Ilya admitted his voice growing weaker towards the end and he bit down on his tongue afterwards. But Ilya had decided to be brave, to be brave for the both of them.

“Oh…” Was all that Shane responded with until Ilya could hear some ruffling and sniffling like Shane was crying again. This time in silence.

“Shane-,” He tried again.

“I am not fine. *I- I need you.*” Shane admitted through his tears and the knot of worry about whether Shane even wanted him there to help him unravelled while his heart constricted with complicated emotions.

“I am coming. Just tell me your address and I’ll be there.” Ilya promised Shane quickly, nothing else mattered in that moment. He needed to get to Shane or else they both would break. If they hadn’t already.

“Really?” Shane asked voice mellow and doubting. And Ilya cursed his past self for letting Shane leave and fend for himself every time they had hooked up these past years.

“Really.” Ilya confirmed and rushed over towards his closet and pulled out one of his softest hoodies to wear.

He heard Shane take a shaky breath. “The Four Seasons. 1410”

“Okay I am on my way.” Ilya said as he rushed out of his bedroom and frantically searched for his keys and wallet.

“Can- can you stay on the phone?” Shane asked uncertain and Ilya froze in his tracks in the hallway.

“Of course, if you want that.” Ilya agreed readily. He would do anything Shane asked him to.

“Please-,”

“I’ll stay right here on the phone with you, Shane. So, you can hear that I am on my way.” Ilya promised him because the last thing he needed was Shane to spiral further while he was still so far away from him.

He quickly ordered himself a ride and put on his shoes. Ilya locked his apartment door and walked down the hallway towards the elevator.

“I am on my way Shane. I’ll be right there.” Ilya reassured Shane once again who just hummed.

Ilya stepped out of the elevator not shortly after and out of his building into the cold November night. He pulled his hood over his head and kept his phone close as he waited for his ride. The line was silent besides Shane’s uneven breathing, and it stayed this way for the entirety of Ilya’s ride to Shane’s hotel. He exchanged only a few words with the driver and then when they stopped in front of the hotel, he handed over some cash. Before he swiftly got out of the car and hurried inside.

Ilya impatiently waited in front of gold doors for the elevator to arrive, his phone still pressed against his ear as if that would bring Shane closer to him. With a ping the doors opened, and Ilya entered pressing the button for Shane’s floor.

The doors closed and the lift started to ascend. “I am in the elevator on my way to your floor.” Ilya said his voice strained even to his ears. His confidence that this was the right decision and that he could be brave for the both of them wavering. Nerves settled in the pit of his stomach. What if he messed up and ruined this thing between them. What if Shane decided to hate him, after he had been such an asshole so many times. Letting him leave over and over again without once asking him to stay.

The elevator halted and the doors opened to Shane’s floor. Hesitantly he stepped out and walked over to Shane’s room. “I am here.” He announced and hoped that Shane was still on the phone with him and would open his door.

He came to a halt just as Shane opened his door. Their eyes met and surprise hushed across Shane’s pretty face, like he still couldn’t believe that Ilya had truly come. Only then did Ilya drop his phone from his ear and took off his hood. He could see the redness in Shane’s eyes and the exhaustion in his frame.

He stepped to the side the gesture for Ilya to come in. His heart was beating loudly in his chest almost like it wanted to escape, and he was almost certain that Shane could hear it as he entered his hotel room.

The door fell shut behind them and Ilya could do nothing but stare at the smaller man in front of him.

“Shane-,” Ilya whispered into the space between them unsure of what to do now. Of what Shane needed now. He had only planned this far, Ilya had only thought about getting to Shane as quickly as possible but not about what he should do then.

Shane held his gaze, and Ilya could see tears forming in the corners of his eyes. “You came.” He stated his voice fragile and unbelieving that Ilya was indeed standing in front of him.

“Of course I did. I should’ve never let you leave.” Ilya swallowed around the lump in his throat and against the tears in his own eyes. “I am sorry.”

And at that Shane darted forwards crowding into Ilya's space. Shane's arms wrapped tightly around Ilya's neck as he buried his face in Ilya's chest. His arms automatically encircled Shane's waist pulling him impossibly closer to his chest. Ilya took a shaky breath and let his head fall nuzzling Shane's neck, inhaling his musky scent. He could feel Shane's body shudder in his hold, could hear his quiet sobs and feel a wet patch form on his hoodie from Shane's tears. But Ilya didn't care, all that mattered was that Shane was safe and in his arms. All that mattered was that Shane hadn't rejected him yet, hadn't run away but instead had run straight into his arms.

Ilya hugged him close and could feel his heart swell. He pressed his eyes shut as his own tears started to fall and just held Shane. "I am so sorry, Shane." He whispered again into Shane's neck who just tightened his hold around Ilya's neck burying one of his hands in Ilya's curls.

"Ilya-," Shane mumbled against his chest, like he still couldn't believe that he was right here in front of him. A shiver ran down Ilya's back and more tears dared to spill. Hearing his name from Shane's lip felt like something holy. Like something to be treasured and not given easily. It was the most perfect thing Ilya had ever heard, even more precious than Ilya had ever imagined. And Ilya just let his tears fall, taking in all of this.

"Stay?" Shane asked in between sobs his voice muted and scared.

Ilya pulled him even closer against him and let his hands run across his back. "I am not going anywhere." He whispered against Shane's ear his voice unsteady and filled with emotions. And then Ilya decided to be even braver and placed a small kiss on Shane's temple.

He let his hands run over Shane's back and just held him. Held him until his own tears had run dry and Shane wasn't shaking and sobbing anymore. Ilya just stood there with his arms wrapped around the most precious thing he knew. He got to hold him close and nothing else mattered. Not even time, they could stand here for hours or days and Ilya would be content because Shane was right in front of him hugging him. After quite some time Shane stirred and moved back a little.

The black-haired man looked up at him through stuck together lashes his eyes even redder than before. Ilya moved his right hand from Shane's back and let his fingers run through his hair and then down over his eyebrows down his cheek. He caressed Shane's soft skin whose eyes fell shut and only opened again when Ilya's hand stilled down at his chin.

Their gazes met once again, and Ilya gulped.

"We didn't even kiss." Shane repeated softly and his eyes flickered down to Ilya's lips before he looked up again.

Ilya moved his thumb from under Shane's chin and slowly dragged it across his plump limbs. Tracing its curves and up to his cupid bow.

"I know. 'm sorry." Ilya mumbled all to focused on Shane's lips. With some effort he shifted his gaze up again to meet Shane's. "But can I kiss you now?" He asked unsure if this was the

right thing to do in Shane's weak state. Ilya didn't want to add more emotional distress in case Shane hated kissing him.

"Please." Shane whispered and something in his eyes seemed to soften further and crack.

Ilya's heart jumped as he carefully cupped Shane's cheeks and leaned in. Shane met him halfway and their lips touched. Ilya's knees weakened and his world zeroed in on Shane. There existed nothing else other than Shane's lips moving softly against his own. It felt like his chest came back to life, like he was hovering above a warm light that had been previously turned off. They kissed slowly, and carefully like this thing between them could break any second. Shane's hands were still combing through his curls, and he was still holding Shane's face like it was the most precious thing in the world. And just for a second Ilya let himself close his eyes, let himself feel the butterflies in his stomach, let himself feel how delicate Shane's lips felt against his.

And he could feel something rising in the back of his throat. Something that felt like tears and when Ilya opened his eyes again, they fell down his lashes and wet his and Shane's cheeks.

They had never kissed like this before, never this deep and slow. This soft and warm that Ilya's whole chest tightened unsure of what to do with all of those emotions that dared to rise. He moved his lips slowly against Shane's, barely moving just relishing in the fact that Shane let him.

Their lips stilled, like they were both debating whether to pull away or not. Shane's lips covering his so very carefully. And Ilya tried to do the same, as if he wanted to tell Shane through that one kiss that there was no one else in the world but him.
There was nothing casual nor something heated about this kiss. It felt special and important, and Ilya never wanted to stop. Ilya took a shaky breath and slowly moved his hands to card through Shane's soft hair. After some more time where they just pressed their lips together, treasuring the warmth and comfort that came with it they separated just so much that their lips weren't touching anymore.

Their breathing was uneven and when Ilya met Shane's gaze his pupils were blown but already more alert than before. And Ilya wagered so were his. Shane moved one of his hands from Ilya's neck towards his cheek to wipe away the tears that Ilya hadn't realized were still falling. And Ilya sighed into the soft touch against his cheek.

His eyes tracked every move of Shane's face, every freckle, every wrinkle and dimple everything suddenly seemed important. Important for him to imprint to memory and to remember. And before Shane could pull away further, he leaned in again pressing a small kiss against those warm lips and once again his heart leaped in excitement. It was only a quick chaste kiss and all to soon he pulled away again. But it did make a small smile appear on Shane's face who promptly buried his face in Ilya's chest to avoid his gaze. And Ilya thought he was about to explode from happiness and couldn't help himself but grin as well.

When Shane lifted his head from his chest again, Ilya already felt miles lighter. Like the darkness had disappeared the second Shane had opened his door to let him in. And the fear was only a distant memory. He once again let his hands run through Shane's hair, like Ilya

needed to touch him to reassure himself that all of this was indeed real and not something he had dreamed of.

“Let’s get you something to drink. What do you think?” Ilya suggested his voice gentle, and Shane just nodded weakly.

Quickly Ilya kicked off his shoes and guided Shane over towards his bed to sit down. He pressed a small kiss on Shane’s forehead and then walked over towards the mini bar always making sure to stay in line of sight for Shane. He crouched down searching the fridge for a water bottle.

Ilya poured some water into a glass and turned around towards Shane.

“Here drink something, Sweetheart.” Ilya said holding out the glass for Shane. Who looked up at him his eyes widened in surprise. And Ilya bit down on the inside of his cheeks only now realising what he had called Shane. The fear was suddenly back taking a hold of his chest. Making him question everything. What if he had overstepped something already? All of this was uncharted terrain for Ilya, and he didn’t know how to act nor how Shane wanted him to.

“Don’t sweetheart me please, if- if you don’t mean it.” Shane said voice weak and vulnerable as he cast his eyes down hunching over.

Ilya stilled and the glass of water was left levitating between them.

“Then what if I do?” He asked taking a step into the dark, threading on a path he had never taken before. Taking this leap of faith that this was what Shane wanted as well.

Shane looked up at him his beautiful eyes even bigger now and Ilya hoped to appear as honest as possible in return. Because he did mean it. He saw Shane’s Adam apple bop as he swallowed and slowly Shane raised his shaking hand to reach out to the offered glass of water. Ilya watched him take a few sips and then a few more before Shane gave the glass back to him.

Ilya placed it on the nightstand next to Shane’s bed, he then turned around and walked over to the open suitcase on the ground. Ilya had decided instead of worrying about tomorrow that for now he would just follow his instincts. Because he needed to do something before he succumbed to worry and would fuck everything up again. And his instincts told him to take care of Shane.

Thus, he crouched down over the suitcase and started to search for a fresh pair of boxers and perhaps other sweatpants or anything comfortable Shane could sleep in for tonight. Because he certainly wasn’t going to let Shane go to bed in the same close, he had worn to Ilya’s apartment.

“What are you doing?” Shane asked sounding very small and very tired.

“Searching for clean clothes you can sleep in.” Ilya answered without turning around while he picked the first best pair of boxershorts and sweatpants he could find.

“But I can sleep in this. There is no need to worry.” Shane attempted to reassure him without doing a good job at it.

“No, you can’t. I want you to sleep in clean clothes.” Ilya said determined without leaving any room for argument and turned around coming up from his crouch. In a weird and twisted way, the clothes Shane was wearing reminded him of the mistake he had made. It made him feel guilty for ever treating Shane like anything other than the most important person in his life. It made him feel guilty for being so self-absorbed in fear and anxiety that he hadn’t noticed the effect it had on Shane. He wouldn’t let that be the clothes Shane went to bed with. Not when he was here and could take care of him.

“Oh okay.” Shane said faintly as Ilya came closer again. He held out the fresh change of clothes to Shane who accepted them wordlessly.

Shane placed them next to him onto the bed and slowly unzipped his jacket. Wordlessly Ilya helped him take it off letting his hand flit softly over Shane’s body. He then helped him once again to take his t-shirt off but this time there was no heat, no desire just delicate touches and soft support.

Ilya unfolded his new shirt and Shane changed into it. They did the same thing for Shane’s sweatpants and boxershorts. Switching old for new and clean ones. And Ilya tried to act as if this level of domesticity was something very normal as not to scare the already exhausted Shane. As not to make him feel embarrassed of needing help.

Ilya took Shane’s old clothes and dumped them into his suitcase. That was an issue for tomorrow them. With slow stiff movements Shane moved up the bed and under the blanket. He laid down with a sigh, relaxing into the mattress.

Quickly Ilya took off his hoodie revealing a plain boring grey t-shirt and rounded the bed. He saw how Shane watched him curiously from where he laid. Ilya pulled the blanket to the side and slipped underneath it. Lying down next to Shane while he tried not to freak out about the fact that they would sleep in the same bed and maybe if Ilya got really lucky even cuddled.

Ilya readjusted his pillow and rolled onto his side facing Shane. “Is this okay?” He asked uncertain.

Shane rolled over as well now facing Ilya, their noses almost brushing. As if on instinct Ilya lifted the blanket again with his one arm, inviting Shane closer. As if it was the most normal thing ever and they had done this a thousand times before. Nerves flared up in his chest and he almost regretted it as Shane didn’t move, feeling oddly stupid like this. But then Shane inched closer burying his face in the crook of Ilya’s neck and wrapping his arm around Ilya’s waist. Slowly Ilya let the blanket fall above them and placed his arm over Shane’s waist pulling him closer.

Ilya’s heart was beating faster as he couldn’t believe his luck. He placed a soft kiss on top of Shane’s head who sighed against Ilya’s chest. And for this moment he had everything he had ever wanted. He was cuddling in bed with Shane, and nothing else mattered.

“Stay?” Shane asked sleepily.

“I am not going anywhere.” Ilya whispered against Shane’s hair and wished that he would never have to leave again. And for the night he wouldn’t, nothing could pry him out of this bed and away from Shane.

Who hummed drowsily and Ilya placed another soft kiss onto Shane’s temple. Watching over Shane as he slowly drifted off to sleep, securely tucked away in Ilya’s arms. And only then did Ilya close his eyes as well. The comforting smell of Shane lulling him to sleep as well, reassuring him that Shane was his and close by for the night. Turning into the best prize he could have ever won.

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