

untouched

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by [thesehands](#)

Summary

Shane dropped his gaze. “You’re really going to make me ask?”

“Yes,” Ilya said. “You ask, maybe you get. So, ask.”

“Okay,” Shane said. “I want you to fuck me.”

Ilya started to laugh.

“Don’t—this isn’t a fucking joke, alright?” Shane snapped. “Shut up. I want it to be different. Or, no—the same, but more. I want you to just make me fucking take it. Shit. I don’t know how to ask you for this.”

“No, no, is good start so far,” Ilya said. “Go back to the part where I get to make you fucking take it. That’s good. Tell me more.”

Notes

happy finale how are we feeling :)

if you’re new here, welcome. if you’re not, no we’re not gonna talk about it. okay. standard opening crawl: herein there be kink with a basis in canon. yes i’ve read the books. yes i’m sticking mostly with the television canon. the kink is only under-negotiated in the sense that i don’t think they would sit down together and fill out the BDSM questionnaire before trying things. that said: no traditional hard limits, nobody reds out. they're crying. they're spitting in mouths. they're going on insanely debauched journeys of self discovery. do not worry: shane loves it. he is exactly where he wants to be. you’re going to love it. do not worry: ilya is going to take care of him. that is his baby, for real. everybody’s here to have fun. this takes place after vegas, after the tuna melts, somewhere in that space in between, before ilya's father dies. idk, it’s probably probable. we can hand wave it. there’s a lot going on.

as always:

there's a [playlist](#)

this is [rebloggable](#)

i am on [tumblr](#)

thank you to [neuroses](#) for their tireless presence in my google doc comments.

as a bonus: there's also a [shane specific playlist](#). so have fun!

okay that's all! now please hold my hand. walk with me.

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

- Translation into Русский available: [untouched](#) by [Unserious_translator](#)

*I feel so untouched and I want you so much
That I just can't resist you
It's not enough to say that I miss you
I feel so untouched right now, need you so much somehow
I can't forget you
Goin' crazy from the moment I met you*

— 'Untouched'
The Veronicas

Everything was moving incredibly fast.

For the most part, Shane was used to it. On the ice, even a fraction of a second mattered. The moment that existed between heartbeats could change a whole game; it had the potential to change an entire career. Shane skated fast, he played fast, he thought fast. He knew fast better than most people.

It was just that on some days, everything seemed louder and quicker and more overwhelming than other days. Some days, Shane could physically feel the world moving around him at a pace so breakneck that his pulse thrummed in his throat, as if his heart was struggling to keep up.

Today, he could feel his heart in his throat, because the team was going to Boston. It wasn't the travel that bothered him. They did this often enough that they had the trip down to a science. Airport security moved quickly; the flight was short; the taxi ride from the airport to the hotel was over before the meter reached double digits. Shane carried himself from one thing to the next on autopilot. It helped that he was familiar with this routine. He could walk it blindfolded, no matter the speed. It also helped that Boston was the same as he remembered it: crowded and cloudy and cold, sort of like home.

Fortunately, the hotel was just blasé enough that he didn't need to pause and take it in. A hotel was a hotel. He had seen enough marble and glass foyers to last a lifetime. As long as the gym was nice and Shane was given a bed and a shower, he didn't really care. He would obviously prefer to be at Ilya's, rather than in another of the finest hotels Massachusetts had to offer. Ilya's house didn't have room service or an elevator, but it had a huge walk-in shower, and it had an enormous King bed, and it had Ilya. This hotel did not have Ilya.

The elevator whisked him upward with dizzying efficiency. A headache throbbed persistently in Shane's temples; he was exhausted, worn out by his grueling schedule and a long day of travel. It didn't help that his phone sat heavily in his pocket like a millstone, cumbersome and stubbornly silent. He wished he didn't know precisely how many days, hours, minutes, seconds it had been since he'd heard from Ilya. It was easier to pretend not to miss him when

he was further away; now, on Ilya's home turf, in a city that reminded Shane so much of him, it was impossible to stop his mind from racing. Shane had been deeply preoccupied enough by his thoughts that he'd almost forgotten to say *thank you* when the clerk gave him his room key.

A mass market abstract art print greeted him when he opened the door to his room. Shane was almost disappointed to find that it was just another hotel suite—dark carpet, dark wood, an almost obtrusively loud mini fridge, and heavy beige drapes hanging from ceiling to floor with sunlight peeking through the space in between the panels. He wanted to abandon his bag by the door and go right to bed. He wanted a long, hot shower. He wanted Ilya to fuck him until he was breathless and sore. His hypothesis was that if Ilya fucked him, it would probably go a long way towards dispelling the undercurrent of frenetic energy he'd been battling with. Ilya could wipe his mind clean for a couple of hours, and then Shane would be able to go on about his day.

They would have time, more time than usual, if they were to meet that afternoon. If Shane was lucky, Ilya would hold him until the adrenaline had burned off and the sweat had dried. For a few blissful moments right after the big finish, he would be able to convince himself that he couldn't overstay his welcome in Ilya's bed. His brain never let him get away with that for long, and neither did Ilya. Even with the world slowed down and everything narrowed to the space between their bodies, Shane was always acutely aware of those seconds slipping through his fingers. Every time he blinked, he wasted more time. Every time he breathed, the end crept closer.

At the moment, nothing in Shane's room was moving. The stillness was a welcome change from the airport terminal and the hotel lobby. He stood by the door, his duffel in hand, and stared into space until he found himself able to move. As much as he wanted to skip unpacking and curl up into bed, he knew it wasn't going to happen. It wasn't like him to leave his things on the floor; it wasn't like him to neglect his personal space.

He tossed his traitorously silent cellphone onto the stiff loveseat in the main room, and he took his bag into the bedroom. When he was unpacked, he took a shower. When he was showered, he lay down on the bed with his limbs starfished out and his damp hair wild on the sheets. His head still roared like a packed arena minutes before game time. He couldn't put his finger on what was wrong with him. He wanted something, needed something, though he had no idea what to name it or how to get it. A lingering sense of dissatisfaction loomed over him, one that grew larger every day.

The abrupt vibration of his phone in the other room snapped him back to reality. With a grunt of surprise, he quickly heaved himself out of bed.

When do you land?

Shane breathed a short, sharp sigh of relief. His pulse fluttered as his heart climbed, lodging itself like a fist in his trachea.

Two hours ago.

You know the address. I'll be waiting.

There, at last, was the invitation he'd been waiting for. Shane closed a tight grip around his phone and smiled. He had hoped to hear from Ilya; he had not expected to hear from Ilya. It was always a probability, but never a guarantee. Shane didn't think he would ever get tired of the rush of elation that came along with receiving an invitation to Ilya's home. He tugged on a hoodie and slipped on some shoes and checked himself in the mirror. His hair had dried at odd angles, sticking up in unruly tufts over his ears and at the nape of his neck. Dark circles of exhaustion hollowed the skin beneath his eyes. He had more freckles, too, like he always did after spending a summer outside. They would fade as the season went on, when all he did was play hockey indoors beneath the unforgiving glow of bleach-bright fluorescent arena lighting.

He wrinkled his nose at the freckles, but nothing could be done about them now. When he was as satisfied as he could be with his appearance, Shane made his break for the lobby. He kept a watchful eye out for his teammates as he waited for an elevator. His hypervigilance wasn't strictly necessary, especially given the possibility that the rest of the team had already taken their leave. They were all tired of hotels. The game was tomorrow, which meant no practice in the morning. Nobody would wonder where Shane was for at least twenty-four hours. It felt like an embarrassment of riches, to have all of those minutes at his disposal. He hailed a cab at the curb, and he did his best to keep a careful rein on his patience while they whiled away at least twenty minutes idling in heavy Boston traffic.

When the cab pulled up to the end of Ilya's driveway, Shane wadded up the last of his American dollars and shoved them through the window in the plexiglass partition. The sky was threatening snow, with concrete colored clouds that seemed to brush the ground as they hung heavy on the horizon. His hoodie wasn't much protection against the frigid wind; he felt tension settle in the line of his shoulders as he shivered. He took a few deep breaths and let the cold blister his lungs as he tried to center himself. He was antsy, anxious to be inside. The promise of Ilya on the other side of the front door made him want to hurry. Despite his discomfort, Shane forced himself to walk up the driveway at a moderate speed. He took one hand out of his hoodie pocket to ring the doorbell.

The door opened. Ilya's hair was wet; his sweatpants hung low on his hips. Shane's chest felt tight.

"Forty minutes," Ilya said. "What took you so long?"

Shane didn't want to spar. He didn't want to chat. He wanted a kiss. He shoved his hands further into the pocket of his hoodie and offered Ilya an apologetic shrug.

"Sorry," he said. "Traffic."

Ilya took a step back, inviting Shane into the house. The awkward lingering was always the worst part. Shane hated the cagey waiting around while they tried to decide who would make a move first. He hoped it would be Ilya. He didn't want to call the shots. Infuriatingly, Ilya didn't try to kiss him, or push him up against a wall, or even really look at him for too long. He meandered past the enormous glass fireplace and into the living room. After a moment, Shane shook off his stupor, and followed him. To his surprise, Ilya had settled onto the sofa

with his legs spread wide and one arm draped over the back cushion. Shane didn't sit. He stood by the coffee table, with his back to the television, and stared at Ilya.

"Sooooo..." Ilya lifted a questioning hand. "Why don't you sit down? Or you are going to make a speech?"

"No," Shane said. "I don't know, I guess I thought that—How have you been?"

A smile broke out on Ilya's face, somewhat derisive but earnest, all teeth. "Good. You?"

"Fine," Shane said. "Thanks. For asking."

Ilya didn't say anything else. He clearly expected Shane to break first, since Shane often did. The moment they found themselves alone, Shane liked to close the gap between them as quickly as possible. It was a difficult yet necessary evil to hold himself back in this case. Shane pressed his thumb into his eye and lifted his gaze to the ceiling. The silence was heavy; it made him uncomfortable. He realized that he'd started to pace in a tight circle, weaving his way between the furniture. It would be the easiest thing in the world to fly across the room and climb into Ilya's lap to kiss him, but Ilya had turned this into a matter of principle. Shane would not be the one to end the charade. Shane would not be the one who decided.

"You are like caged tiger," Ilya said. "All this pacing, it's going to make a fucking hole in my rug. Stop. What is it?"

When Ilya said *stop*, Shane stopped. His reaction to that simple command embarrassed and dismayed him; he felt even more agitated than he had when he arrived. He turned to Ilya and offered him a helpless shrug, a gesture that he hoped conveyed at least some of the frustration he felt.

"What is this?" Ilya mimicked the shrug in a more exaggerated fashion, with exasperation plain on his face. "What does this mean? Hollander, you are making no sense."

"I don't know, okay? There's...a lot," Shane said. "It's mostly that I want this to be good for you. I want to be good."

Ilya quirked an eyebrow. "This is a big secret? Bad news, Hollander. I know already."

"No, asshole, not—" Shane sighed. "I don't know. That came out wrong."

"So try again," Ilya said. "Maybe use better words this time. I will give you a minute to think."

Shane didn't want a minute to think. If this went on for too much longer he wasn't sure what he might do. Maybe turn and run, or worse, freeze up completely and not say another word. Just the thought of it made a bevy of commingled emotions surge up inside of him. He was frustrated about a shut down that hadn't even happened. He was punishing himself for something he hadn't even done. Shane took several deep breaths and tried to steel himself.

He could do this. He could talk about things. He could explain how he felt to Ilya without really telling him how he felt.

The partial confession would take delicate handling. He couldn't just shoot off with *I want you to boss me around in bed, and also, I'm probably in love with you*. Even imagining himself saying those words made him feel hot all over; he knew he must be blushing all the way to the tips of his ears.

Deep breathing hadn't helped. Shane felt crazy, keyed up tight by the events of the day and the constant milling of his thoughts. In a way, he was also used to that, even though it never got any easier to carry. Shane's life required a lot of effort. Hockey, in and of itself, was hard. Being almost the best in the world at hockey was even harder. Staying healthy and in shape presented another challenge altogether. His schedule and his diet and his training regimen were precise, grueling to maintain, often expensive and always time consuming.

Some of it was beyond his control: game days, practice times, his other teammates' performance. His diet, his body, his reputation, his skill—those were things he could control, and he dedicated considerable effort to making sure he never lost his grip on them. He overcompensated, sometimes, by training to exhaustion or denying himself even the smallest of indulgences. But it worked: he was almost the best. As long as he was careful, everything could be exactly the way he wanted it to be, all the time.

This thing he had with Ilya was different. It couldn't be controlled. Ilya couldn't be controlled. It wasn't even technically supposed to be a *thing*. Briefly, Shane resented the situation he found himself in. Here he was, Shane Hollander, known for always being calm and cool and collected and in control, sweating like a teenager in Ilya Rozanov's living room. His hands were shaking. He kicked himself for his cowardice. He'd faced bigger challenges than this. Shane was at the top of his game, at what could very well be the pinnacle of his career. This was nothing. This was going to be over in a matter of seconds.

Shane dropped his gaze. "You're really going to make me ask?"

"Yes," Ilya said. "You ask, maybe you get. So, ask."

"Okay," Shane said. "I want you to fuck me."

Ilya started to laugh.

"Don't—this isn't a fucking joke, alright?" Shane snapped. "Shut up. I want it to be different. Or, no—the same, but more. I want you to just make me fucking take it. Shit. I don't know how to ask you for this."

"No, no, is good start so far," Ilya said. "Go back to the part where I get to make you fucking take it. That is good. Tell me more."

"You asshole. Fuck," Shane dragged a hand through his hair. He couldn't look at Ilya. He had the right words at his disposal, he just had no idea how to string them together coherently. "I hate that I'm even—I don't want to have to—this isn't me. I know how to keep all of my shit together. Fuck. I don't know what's wrong with me. Sometimes I think I try too hard. And

there's some stuff I can give up. Some of it's fine. I pay someone to tell me what to wear. I paid someone else to decorate my house. Someone tells me what to eat and how often to exercise and someone else tells me what products I'm going to endorse. And then I get scared that I'm losing it, and I think, why do I need a whole team of people to tell me what to do? I can handle myself. I'm a grown man. I should know what to do. I shouldn't need—I should know. I can take care of it myself. I can handle it. I can. Fuck.”

Ilya was silent.

“That’s it,” Shane said. “I think. Yeah, that’s—that’s it. Let me know if any of that didn’t make sense.”

Ilya sat with that for a moment, and then he said, “Okay. Is it my turn? I have a question.”

“Jesus Christ,” Shane said. It wasn’t the response he had expected. Tears of frustration pricked, threatening to fall. He dug his thumbs into his eyes and willed himself not to cry. “Don’t screw me around. I can’t take any more bullshit right now.”

“No bullshit,” Ilya said. “Serious question. When I tell you what to do. It makes you hard, yes?”

“Oh, seriously, fuck off,” Shane scoffed. “I’m baring my soul to you, and all you can think about is your dick? Holy shit, Rozanov.”

“Hollander,” Ilya said. “Shut up. Listen. If I told you, right now, to get on your knees and open your mouth so I can stick my cock in it, you would do it. And you would get hard.”

White-hot shame gnarled itself into a knot inside the wall of Shane’s ribs. With a defensive edge to his voice, he demanded, “Maybe I would. So fucking what?”

“So...then who gives a fucking shit?” Ilya asked. “Who is asking for explanation?”

“I don’t know.” Shane briefly pressed the heels of his hands to his eyes. “Nobody, I guess. Maybe I just want to understand why I feel like this.”

“Okay,” Ilya said. “I have a plan. What is it you say in English when something is true, but only a guess? When it needs to be tested.”

“Hypothesis,” Shane said.

“Yes, that,” Ilya said. “We will test. Take off your clothes.”

That command was always delivered abruptly, whenever the mood struck; Shane was used to receiving it. Almost automatically, he peeled off his hoodie and folded it. His hands were still shaking badly enough to negatively impact the speed and quality of his folding. He set his pants on top of his folded hoodie, and frowned. Something about the kilter of his small pile bothered him. With his face still hot, he picked them up and re-folded them. Ilya sat quietly and watched him do it. When he’d taken off and neatly folded everything but his socks, Shane turned to face him.

“Better?” Ilya asked.

“A little,” Shane mumbled.

“Good.” Ilya waved him over. “Come here.”

Shane went. He reached for Ilya’s open hand, and let himself be guided to sit on his lap with his legs spread astride Ilya’s thighs. He waited, with his head low. Ilya had dark hair on his lower belly, the kind of distinct trail that led attention downwards. Shane let his gaze drag from the glint of Ilya’s crucifix to the drawstring of his sweatpants. He wished he hadn’t said anything. If he’d just gone to his knees in front of the sofa and tugged down Ilya’s sweats, then they could’ve gotten right down to business.

Ilya took Shane’s wrist in a loose grip. It wasn’t commanding, or firm—if Shane wanted to shake him off, he could. Ilya lifted Shane’s hand to his mouth and pressed a kiss to his knuckles.

“This upsets you,” Ilya said. “Why?”

“I wish I knew,” Shane said. “I hate feeling like I don’t want what I’m supposed to want.”

“Supposed to?” Ilya echoed, his eyebrows raised. “Who decides these rules about wanting? You are making this up. I don’t know these rules.”

“No,” Shane said. “It’s not just me, it’s—“

“Here is what I think,” Ilya interrupted. “I think you hold back, always like someone is watching. Nobody here is watching. Just me. If you want, I want. If you like, I like.”

Shane let his attention rest heavily on Ilya’s face, looking for any indicator he might be disgusted or annoyed. He didn’t find any. The intensity of Ilya’s earnestness was difficult to weather in regular conversation—now, it was almost unbearable. Shane looked away again, unable to maintain eye contact for a second longer. He felt shy, too painfully aware of just how vulnerable he’d made himself.

“You promise?” Shane asked.

“Promise,” Ilya said. “Better now?”

He hadn’t been ready for another question. Shane thought he’d already done the hard part by admitting it. It was not a big secret. He was starving for it, and he knew that Ilya could tell. He figured that everyone could probably tell. Everyone knew that he was empty and aching and desperate and he got so overwhelmed so easily that he hardly knew what to do with it. He would prefer that Ilya prove he could read his mind and save him the trouble. That fantasy was fleeting, a glimmer of hope available to him for only a split second. He let his weight fall forward, further into the warmth of Ilya’s body. The things he wanted were impossible. The things he wanted were extreme, and probably surprising, and it agonized him to think about giving voice to any of it.

“Hollander,” Ilya murmured. “I am starting to think you like making me wait.”

Shane's insides squirmed. With a quick, bracing breath in, he lifted his head. He couldn't explain himself; he could only state what he knew to be a fact, and hope that Ilya would understand.

He kept his eyes heavily lidded, so that their gazes barely met, and said in a hushed voice, "I could be so good for you, Ilya."

Ilya made a soft sound, a hum of quiet consideration. Shane glanced up at him. It was difficult to focus on just one point of Ilya's face; his bright eyes smoldered, and his forehead was furrowed, as though he were deep in thought. He reached up to hold Shane's face in his hand, holding him still, keeping their gazes matched. His grip tightened, not at all gently. A gasp hitched in Shane's throat.

"Yes," Ilya said. "I know you will be."

That minor acknowledgement was enough to dispel some of Shane's anxiety. He was worn out by the amount of effort he'd had to put into not shutting down. That certainly would've been easier, but the margin for error was larger when he did. On top of that, deep down, he'd wanted to try; Ilya deserved an explanation, at least. In the quiet, Ilya had begun skating the palm of his unoccupied hand along the top of Shane's thigh. It was a soothing gesture, just tender enough to make Shane relax, curving his spine inward. He couldn't do much else with Ilya holding him still, though he longed to fully collapse into him, even if only to bury his blush in the curve of Ilya's throat.

"So, you don't...mind?" Shane asked. "I know that we already—but we never talked about it before and I thought maybe I was just—"

"Mind?" Ilya made an incredulous sound. "Hollander. This is great news. By the time I am finished, you will not remember your own name. Get up, I need you in the bed for this."

Shane sat back so that he could see the look in Ilya's face. It surprised him to see that he was grinning eagerly, a boyish and bright expression that Shane couldn't help but match with one of his own. He was equal parts relieved and excited, now that the worst was over. Still smiling, Ilya slipped his hands around the backs of Shane's thighs and made ready to carry him.

"Wait," Shane said.

He reached out and rested a hand on Ilya's bare chest. Ilya's skin was effusively warm beneath his palm. Together, they stared down at the point of contact, and then Ilya looked up at Shane's face.

"What now?" Ilya asked. "You are trying to make me crazy."

"Kiss me first," Shane said. "That's all. Please. And then I won't ask for anything else."

He knew it wouldn't be a hardship for Ilya to indulge him; it was an immense relief to finally be kissed. Ilya was still smiling when he leaned in to indulge Shane's final request. Kissing felt like a weakness, a secret that Shane should keep closely guarded. No one could ever

know that a kiss was enough to bring down his defenses, rendering him pliant and obedient. It didn't take long for him to settle into it. He laced his fingers through a handful of Ilya's curls and shifted forward. His cock brushed against the bare skin of Ilya's belly as he pressed their bodies together. A sound rose up out of him as he did, plaintive and soft. Ilya swallowed it, and then he stood up, lifting Shane into the air with minimal show of effort.

When they reached the bedroom, Ilya tossed Shane onto the bed with little fanfare. He didn't immediately climb on top, like Shane had expected; instead he stood nearby, his arms folded over his chest. Shane was accustomed to being naked, often in front of other people. With Ilya it was different. With Ilya he felt like every little thing might be noticed—every time a muscle in his thigh jumped or his eyes slipped shut or his forehead started to bead with sweat. Ilya always saw it. A shiver rippled down his spine.

Shane adopted what he hoped was a self-assured sprawl on top of the dark bedding, his legs spread wide and his weight propped up on his elbows. He matched Ilya's level stare with a challenging look of his own. Amusement pulled at the strong lines of Ilya's face as he crossed the room to lean against the wall, with his back to the windows. Ilya's house was full of glass and windows and enormous angular shapes—on occasion, Shane found all the sharp edges and harsh reflections jarring. Now, Ilya's shape seemed to soften the hard lines of glass and steel. His eyes roved over Shane's body, cataloging every detail like it was the first time he'd seen it. Shane didn't attempt to draw away from the gravity of his attention.

“Repeat after me,” Ilya said. “Да, сэр.”

Shane was taken aback. He knew what it meant—they were simple words. One of them Ilya said all the time: *da*, *yes*. The other word was what gave him pause. It was almost phonetically identical to its English counterpart. Shane's mouth had dropped open slightly; the shock had put an immediate halt on his instinct to obey.

“Is this going to be like last time?” Shane asked. “When you made me beg you, and then you said no? Because fuck that.”

“Ah, but you liked it, or you would not have come back for more.” Ilya said. “Maybe it will be like last time. I am the boss, remember? If I say beg, you beg. If I say you don't come, you don't come. Got it?”

Shane exhaled unsteadily, and said, “Da, sir.”

“Good,” Ilya said. “Then come here.”

It was a modicum of praise, the smallest thing, a word Ilya had said dozens of times. In this context, it held new weight. Shane slowly rose to his feet. He was too aware of himself and his body; he could feel the heat in his face, he could hear the gentle susurrus of bedsheets as they slipped against his skin. He lifted his chin and took a step towards Ilya.

“Stop,” Ilya said. When he had Shane's attention, he pointed to the floor. “Down, on your knees. Crawl.”

Shane dropped to his knees. He was more hesitant to roll forward onto his hands. Ilya was not standing a great distance away—it wouldn't be far to crawl. A small part of him found that disappointing. Shane didn't often hesitate when Ilya made a demand of him, but even still, he thought that he'd have more pride. He'd thought, maybe even hoped, that it would've been more of a struggle for him to slip so easily into this role. Instead, it was like flipping a switch—once Ilya had given him the permission to do it, he did it. Shane didn't want to think about it. Nobody else could see him. Nobody else would have to know that he got down on all fours and begged for it. All he had to worry about was doing everything Ilya told him to do.

Ilya didn't repeat himself. He waited, stoic and keenly observant, for Shane to obey. Shane decided that he wanted to see the look on Ilya's face when he did crawl; he wanted to see if this affected Ilya as much as he hoped it would. The bedroom rug was dense beneath his hands. Slowly, with as much grace as he could muster, Shane crawled. Something flickered in Ilya's eyes, a searing intensity that he quickly reined in, but it hadn't escaped Shane's notice. Bolstered by the rush that came along with knowing that Ilya liked this, that Ilya wanted him, that Ilya thought he looked good doing this, Shane closed the space between them and settled on his knees within arm's reach of Ilya. He could feel himself backsliding into a hazy state of bliss, divorced from the racing of his thoughts and the anxiety of his constant self awareness.

"That was pretty," Ilya said. "Open your mouth."

Shane opened his mouth. His tongue rested on his bottom lip somewhat expectantly. Ilya didn't make him wait—he extended a hand and pushed his middle two fingers past Shane's lips. Spit pooled almost immediately, dripping from the tip of his tongue and rolling in rivulets down Ilya's wrist. Shane was arrested by the weight of Ilya's stare; he had to remind himself to breathe, to not look away. Ilya let the moment stretch. He didn't move his hand further in, and he didn't order Shane to close his mouth. At last, with a predatory intensity that made the bottom of Shane's stomach drop, Ilya leaned forward. He hooked his fingers behind Shane's bottom teeth and drew him closer, craning his head up.

"Do not swallow," Ilya said.

Shane's brow knit with confusion, but he didn't have to wonder about the meaning of that order for long. Ilya crouched slightly, dug the fingers of his other hand into the bone of Shane's cheek, and spit into his mouth. Initially, Shane was so surprised that he didn't even have the impulse to swallow; he waited, already trembling slightly, for what might come next. This time Ilya did make him wait, until Shane's breathing was ragged and deep and he wasn't sure how much longer he could hold on.

"Good job," Ilya said warmly. "Now swallow."

Ilya released his hold on Shane's face so that he could close his mouth and swallow. He felt a little breathless still as he did so. He'd been worried for nothing; it was easy for him to do what Ilya wanted. He already knew it was something he could do. While he hadn't expected it to affect him so deeply, he could see little point in denying himself the act of total surrender.

"Very good," Ilya said.

Shane shuddered. “Yeah?”

“Yes. Perfect.” Ilya carded his fingers through Shane’s hair, sweeping it back off his forehead. “One day I will keep you like this, make you hold my cock until I’m ready to fuck you. You would like that, hmm? Answer me.”

“Yeah,” Shane said. “Yeah, da. Da, sir.”

Ilya hummed approvingly. The motion of his hand in Shane’s hair ceased, and his palm rested heavily on the crown of his head. It was impossible to know what he was thinking, or what he might have in mind for the remainder of the evening. Shane only knew that he was enjoying himself—the hard line of Ilya’s cock in his gray sweatpants was tantalizing, impossible to ignore. When Ilya noticed him staring, he reached down with his free hand to palm himself through the fabric of his sweats. Shane’s lips parted instinctively, without any subtlety.

“You want?” Ilya asked.

“Da, sir,” Shane said. “I want.”

With the hand still threaded through Shane’s hair, Ilya tugged him forward. Shane’s open mouth came to rest against the fabric. Ilya’s grip tightened as he started to guide Shane’s head from side to side, in a lazy rhythm. A dark smear of spit grew along the seam of Ilya’s pants. His body was hot, and he was hard; Shane wondered if he would be able to extricate Ilya’s cock from his pants with only his teeth. He started to consider the logistics of it, of sitting up on his knees to tug the drawstring loose, of guiding the thick elastic of his underwear down just far enough to grant him access.

“What is it?” Ilya asked.

Shane lifted his eyes to Ilya’s face.

“I want to suck your cock,” he said. “Please.”

Ilya fit his whole hand around the crown of Shane’s head and held him close. Shane closed his eyes and breathed in deeply.

“Not now,” Ilya said. He pulled gently on Shane’s hair again, drawing him out of his daze. “Later, probably. If you are good. Go and lie down on the bed, on your back.”

Shane sat back on his heels. The slight ache in his knees caused by kneeling on the hardwood floor had kept him mostly grounded to his body, but he could feel himself beginning to drift. He didn’t want to move; he wanted to stay close to Ilya. His hesitation earned him an expectant raised eyebrow.

“What?” Ilya asked. “Go.”

With a small nod, Shane slowly turned over his shoulder and lowered his hands to the floor. It felt like more ground to cover on the way back, with his cock hanging heavy between his thighs. The sheets were cool, almost shocking to the heat of his flushed skin. Shane lay down in the middle of the bed, on his back, and turned his head to look at Ilya. To his immense

frustration, Ilya didn't take off his pants before he climbed up onto the bed and settled himself between Shane's spread thighs.

Ilya pressed their bodies together, caging Shane in with his limbs, effectively pinning him to the mattress. He reached up with one hand and laced their fingers together. His other hand traveled further up the bed to retrieve lube from beneath one of the pillows. The tips of their noses brushed as he drew back. Shane followed Ilya's mouth with his own as best as he could with his limited range of motion. He fought the urge to apologize for being eager, but the flicker of self-conscious uncertainty disappeared the moment Ilya met his silent bid by kissing him.

The sound of the lube cap clicking open was obtrusively loud in the weighted silence. Shane's pulse picked up. His grip on Ilya's hand tightened as he kissed back with fervor; just the thought of being touched had his imagination working overtime. He was breathing hard and heavy, already anticipating Ilya touching him, sinking inside of him, flipping him over and shoving his face into the sheets. Shane pressed his lower back into the bed and spread his legs wider to accommodate the bulk of Ilya's body between them.

"Here," Ilya said. "Do this."

Shane forced himself to focus on what was being asked of him. In Ilya's right hand was the open bottle of lube. Ilya's left hand was still clutched tightly in Shane's right. They were still almost kissing, separated just enough for Ilya to get the words out. A silvery thread of spit clung to Shane's bottom lip. He reached out and took the lube. Ilya turned his first three fingers face up, and waited.

"How much?" Shane asked.

"That depends," Ilya said. "How wet do you want to be?"

A furious blush scorched Shane's cheekbones. He squeezed out what he hoped was a sufficient amount, and then snapped the cap shut. The bottle fell out of Shane's hand as Ilya leaned in to kiss him again. Things hadn't reached the point of wild abandon yet—as much as Shane liked that, he was happy to stay here, being kissed, skin to skin, with Ilya's weight on top of him. He reached up and sank his hand into Ilya's hair, closing his grip around a loose fistful of curls. Ilya's crucifix dangled free between their bodies, and occasionally brushed Shane's chin and bottom lip, an odd sharp-edged presence in the moment.

It wasn't a custom of theirs to linger, but when they were afforded the luxury of more than a few hours together, Ilya would handle Shane like something akin to an experiment. He possessed a single-minded focus that suggested he was cataloging every response for later review. This made Shane shiver, this made him teary-eyed, this made him arch his back against the bed and say *please fuck please*. All of it was new and exciting to Shane at first—all of his reactions were heightened by the fact he'd never felt anything even close to what Ilya could make him feel.

Ilya was good at sex in a way that made Shane feel out of his depth. He didn't have the same confidence or prowess; he'd been the furthest thing from experienced the first time he got down on his knees and indulged the impulse to please Ilya. While Ilya had never made him

feel bad for his lack of finesse, the need to improve lingered at the back of Shane's mind. He liked to be good at things. He liked to work as hard as he possibly could at something, often to the point of weariness, until he was good, or at least better, but always, hopefully, the best.

Now, they had time, and Ilya knew it. He didn't give Shane what he wanted right away. Instead, he ghosted two slick fingertips over Shane's hole, back and forth, never with enough pressure to give him any kind of satisfaction. He was torturously close to where Shane wanted him. Frustrated, Shane whimpered into Ilya's mouth. He wondered if it would be premature to start begging. He was just a man, after all, and he was only capable of withstanding a certain amount of need before it became desperation.

It wasn't that Shane didn't understand the art of denial. He practiced it every day, in nearly everything. The way Ilya yielded it was different. The way he used it against Shane was torturous. Every time he touched Shane, he found another way to drive him to the precipice, skirting the edge of release with a masterful hand. He got something out of bringing Shane perilously close to what might be some sort of breaking point. The anticipation was maddening. Ilya wasn't kissing him, and he wasn't fingering him, and he wasn't asking him to do anything, either. Shane wasn't sure what to make of it. Ilya liked fast, and he liked slow; Shane didn't necessarily prefer fast, but it's what he was used to.

As if Ilya could somehow sense that Shane's mind had begun to wander, he moved away, pulling his hand free from Shane's. He shifted downward on the bed, until he was close enough to rest his temple against the inside of Shane's thigh. Shane held his breath as Ilya leaned in and pressed his tongue against the underside of his cock. The effect was instantaneous—Shane's train of thought unraveled immediately. The wet heat of Ilya's mouth was mind-numbing, intimate and obscene in equal measure. It took considerable effort for Shane to keep his hips still, to not move towards the sensation or shift restlessly because of it. Ilya snapped the elastic cuff of Shane's sock against the inside of his ankle, drawing his attention.

Shane looked down at him. The moment their gazes met, Ilya sank the tip of his middle finger inside.

"Ah, f—" Shane's shoulders came up off the bed as he drew his abdomen tight, bearing down on it. "Fuck. Rozanov."

Mischief glimmered in Ilya's eyes as he grinned, smug and self-satisfied by the extremity of his reaction. Shane didn't care. He was so grateful that Ilya had stopped teasing him, he forgot to be embarrassed by the fact one finger had him writhing and sweaty. He surprised himself every time they did this; he forgot how much he liked it, until Ilya put his hands to work and made him wildly desperate for more. The initial surprise quickly wore off, and soon Shane was shifting against the sheets in an attempt to press himself towards Ilya's hand.

Shane did his best to be still and take what he was given, but he wanted to be fucked—he'd wanted it since he'd woken up that morning, since he'd landed at the airport, since he'd rung Ilya's doorbell. It had been ages since then, and Shane felt like he was no closer to having Ilya inside of him than he'd been in the cab on the way over. The amount of lube in play was significant, and the lack of friction prevented any real satisfaction. Ilya was strangely quiet, intensely focused on watching Shane's desperation play itself out.

When he finally felt the stretch of a second finger, Shane groaned. He fisted a handful of the sheets and let his mouth fall open around a wanton sound.

“God,” he said. “Fuck, thank you, Ilya. Oh, God.”

Something changed in Ilya’s face—a new determination, brought on by Shane’s ecstatic gratitude. Every nerve ending in his body responded to the indication that there was more to come. Without saying a word, Ilya planted his free hand on the bed near Shane’s hip and lifted his weight so that he was no longer low on the bed with his head between Shane’s legs, and instead hovered over him. He cast a dark shadow on the dark sheets, backlit by the white winter sunlight that still poured in through the windows. Shane could feel the heat rolling off of his body; he could smell his sweat.

“Hold your legs,” Ilya said.

Shane fit his hands around the backs of his thighs and lifted, drawing his knees as close to his shoulders as he could with Ilya pressing down into his space. He felt the transfer of weight that happened simultaneously with the shift of position; Ilya’s fingers were suddenly deep, deep enough that Shane could feel the ridge of his knuckles teasing at his rim. Tears welled up in his eyes. He wondered if they tried, if Ilya was patient and if Shane was good, if they might be able to get Ilya’s knuckles inside of him, maybe even the whole of his hand up to the prominent bone of his wrist. He’d probably like it; he’d definitely feel it for days. Something hot pulsed in his lower belly, excitement or shame or something new that he didn’t have the wherewithal to identify.

The new weight behind Ilya’s arm had been a warning as much as a promise—he started slowly at first, twisting his wrist to create friction, pressing as far into Shane’s body as he could get every time. Shane’s legs were shaking; his hands were sweaty. The quiver in his thighs made it nearly impossible to keep a good grip on himself. He stretched one leg out and locked it around Ilya’s waist, hooking his socked heel into the small of his back. Too much was happening for him to truly focus. If he paid attention to himself he would notice the way he matched every thrust of Ilya’s hand with a breathy, punched out moan; if he paid attention to Ilya he would notice the sweat that sheened his collarbones and the unashamedly hungry look on his face; if he paid attention to everything else he would only notice the lurid sound of Ilya fucking him.

Ilya’s bicep flexed as he picked up the pace. He bore the weight of Shane’s leg easily, but he’d started to pant, breathing shallow and heavy. Sweat dripped from his forehead onto the plane of Shane’s lower belly. A fleeting sense of pride flared up inside of Shane—he had done that, he had made Ilya look like that. He had done everything Ilya asked him to do, and now Ilya was groaning and sweating and hard. Shane looked down at the place where Ilya’s hand disappeared between his legs, and then he looked up at Ilya.

Impossibly, the intensity in Ilya’s countenance had redoubled itself since the last time Shane had really looked. He pulled back and teased the tip of a third finger against Shane’s rim. The effect was immediate. Shane couldn’t help it—he cried out, loud and guttural. It wasn’t really a word, mostly a shout, and he wished right away that he’d said *please*. He was close—he could feel it in the taut line of his abdominals as he bore down around Ilya’s hand. He wanted the third finger; he wanted to come on Ilya’s cock. The sun had started to set, and a glimmer

caught itself in the enormous mirror that hung over the dresser opposite the bed. Shane caught a glimpse of his red, sweaty face in the glass and immediately turned away; even with the sun in his eyes he could see the dewy-eyed bliss plainly in his expression. Ilya twisted his wrist, torturously slow, and reached for the lube.

“Please,” Shane gasped. “Please, please, Ilya.”

“Please...what?” Ilya asked. “You want something?”

“I’m gonna come,” Shane said. “I’m gonna—please, let me.”

“No,” Ilya said. “I am not done yet.”

Shane hid his face in the crook of his arm. It was hard to draw his focus away from coming, not when his body had already decided on an outcome. He might’ve imagined the slight change in rhythm and angle from Ilya, a small mercy, but together with Shane’s own incredible propensity for self denial, it was just enough to keep him from staying too close to the edge. It would’ve been torture, to hang there, so close to tipping over, when he knew that Ilya wasn’t going to touch his cock, and he wasn’t going to come. The danger was past, but the intensity hadn’t tempered itself. He wanted it so badly he felt like he might shake apart with the effort of reining it in. He uncovered his eyes and blinked the blurriness from his field of vision.

“Good boy,” Ilya murmured. “I knew you could do it.”

In an instant, Ilya had undone all of Shane’s hard work. He choked on another enraptured cry, and squeezed his eyes shut. In a desperate attempt to ground himself, he reached out and found Ilya’s hand atop the bedding—there was no time to lace their fingers together. Instead, he closed a tight grip around Ilya’s wrist and hung on. Shane’s other hand clutched a tight fist of sheets. He reminded himself to breathe. When he felt like he’d collected himself enough to string words together, he opened his mouth.

“Again,” he pleaded. “Tell me again.”

Ilya murmured something softly in Russian, both fond and unintelligible. It wasn’t enough; it wasn’t what Shane wanted to hear.

“Please.” Shane felt tears bead at his waterline, threatening to fall once again. “Ilya. Please.”

Ilya didn’t repeat himself. He leaned in and kissed Shane on the forehead, and then his mouth, languid and wet, heavy with breath. It was a distraction; it worked. He forgot, for a moment, to beg any more, and then he realized that he was really crying.

Shane rarely let himself cry. It was a strange sensation. Every time he felt tears coming, he would stop them, whether by closing himself off or grinding his teeth or ripping his mind from the present moment with enough force to halt the crying in its tracks. He hadn’t noticed this time, or maybe he had, but he’d been too overwhelmed by everything else to focus on putting a stop to it. Now it was too late to save the emotions for a later date. It all welled up

inside of him with such intensity that he cried—real, earnest, hot tears that blurred his vision and scorched his skin as they rolled down his face.

“Oh, that is beautiful, Shane,” Ilya murmured. “Look at you. Such a good boy for me, aren’t you? Hmm?”

It almost hurt, how much he liked hearing Ilya say it; the warm approval in his voice was heady. Shane sobbed throatily. Ilya brought his mouth to Shane’s ear and started whispering to him, his speech as rapid as his wrist. Some of it was in English, all of it sounded like praise. Ilya took Shane’s earlobe between his teeth and tugged gently. He stopped his hand, only for a moment, to stop teasing him with the third finger, and instead slip it into Shane’s body.

“Oh, fuck,” Shane cried. “Ilya. Fuck, I’m gonna—“

He felt every muscle in his body engage itself as he passed the point of no return. Static encroached upon his vision. He could hear Ilya talking him through it, wringing everything out of him while Shane gripped his wrist so tightly that it ached. He was coming apart, and Ilya hadn’t even touched him. The last time this happened was the first time they’d fucked; Shane’s memory of the event was fuzzy, but he remembered Ilya’s teasing after the fact. This was different—Shane felt fully aware of himself. He rode out the bliss as long as he could; his chest heaved as he struggled to breathe through it. Blood thundered in his temples. When it was over, the skin of his face was taut with dried tears. He opened his eyes.

At some point, Ilya had retreated and come to kneel between Shane’s legs. Probably to admire his handiwork. He didn’t look disappointed; if anything, he looked somewhat awed. It felt like the first time they’d ever touched, when Shane had been so surprised by Ilya’s mouth on him that he’d come almost right away. It felt like the first time they’d ever really fucked, when Ilya had pressed into him from the back and kept up a pace so relentless that Shane had come without even realizing it, clutching a pillow so tightly that his knuckles ached for hours afterwards. Shane wiped his eyes. He waited for Ilya to say something.

“Wow,” Ilya said. He dragged two fingers through the mess on Shane’s lower belly, and then lazily sucked them clean. “That is twice now? Either you are very easy or I am very good. Which is it, do you think?”

If he’d been in his right mind, Shane would’ve made a snappy retort to that. Probably something scathing and verbose like *fuck off* or *fuck yourself*. He didn’t say either of those things—he didn’t feel like showing his teeth. He wanted Ilya’s body back.

He said, “Please say you’re still going to fuck me.”

“Da, was planning on it,” Ilya said. “You think I’d go to all that trouble to get you ready and then not fuck you?”

Shane nodded, and let his thighs fall open in invitation. Ilya reached for him. He flipped Shane over with dizzying efficiency, tossing him facedown with a grunt. The sudden pressure against Shane’s sensitive cock made him gasp wetly against the sheets. He forgot, sometimes,

that Ilya was capable of such brute force. He forgot, sometimes, how good it felt to be subjected to it.

“Up,” Ilya said. He lightly tapped his hand against Shane’s thigh. “Let me see.”

Somehow, Shane got his legs underneath himself and rose up onto his knees. He kept his shoulders low, letting his clavicle bear his weight against the bed. His face felt hot—he kept it hidden in the sheets as he reached back with one hand to hold himself open. Ilya made a low and hungry sound. His knuckles brushed gently against the crease of Shane’s thigh, and then he was sitting up, leaning over, pressing their thighs together. Shane couldn’t stifle the excited keen that escaped him when he felt the broad plane of Ilya’s chest settle against his shoulder blades. Finally, he was going to get fucked; finally, Ilya was done playing games and was going to give Shane what he wanted.

Another moment passed in which Ilya didn’t reach for the lube, or line up his cock, or tease a slick fingertip over Shane’s hole. Instead, he let his weight rest on Shane’s hips, and he stretched out an arm to open the bedside table drawer. Shane lifted his head. He knew what Ilya was looking for. He did not want him to find it.

“Don’t,” he said.

Ilya paused. He was already holding a condom between the first two fingers on his hand, like he would a cigarette. The expression on his face was indecipherable—if Shane was forced to hazard a guess, he would call it surprise. Ilya didn’t put the condoms back in the drawer.

“Please don’t,” Shane said. “I want to feel it. I want to feel you.”

“Okay,” Ilya said, definitely surprised. “Fuck. Okay.”

He dropped the condoms and slid the drawer shut. Seconds later, a glut of cold lube dripped between Shane’s legs, startling a gasp out of him. He braced himself against the bed. The tip of Ilya’s cock was always the most difficult to adjust to; every time, Shane was reminded how long it had been since the last time, and his body needed to remember how to accept the fullness. He was panting against the sheets as he tried to acclimate to the scorching hot weight of Ilya’s bare cock inside of him.

“Give me your hands,” Ilya said.

Shane let his weight fall forward and brought his arms down on the bed, parallel to his torso. Ilya reached down and guided them, one at a time, to rest against the small of Shane’s back. He crossed them at the wrists, and then gathered them up in one hand, pinning them in place. Shane flexed his biceps almost instinctively, testing the strength of Ilya’s grip. He didn’t want to be released; he wanted to know just how trapped he was. Using Shane’s arms as leverage, Ilya pushed his weight forward, pressing him harder into the bedding before bringing him back, hard, onto his cock. He kept up like that, not short and fast, but long and deep and full-bodied. Shane was grateful for the fact he could barely breathe; if he’d been able to, he might have shouted enough to tear his throat raw. He could still feel the rumble of his voice in his own chest, somewhat stifled, as he pleaded breathlessly.

“Fuck, Hollander,” Ilya said. “You are okay?”

“Yeah, fuck, I love it,” Shane said. “Ilya, fuck, please.”

Ilya grunted a response to that, and then said, “Look at yourself.”

Shane dragged his face slowly across the sheets as he turned to look over his opposite shoulder. The wall mirror really was huge, a plate of glass almost the size of a French door. It was large enough to encompass the entirety of the shape that their bodies made together. For a moment Shane lay, transfixed, and watched the pendulum of Ilya's crucifix sway and the muscle in his own thighs undulate every time Ilya's body came into contact with his.

When Shane was where Ilya wanted him, he made sure he stayed there, by holding him down with a firm and unrelenting hand on the back of his neck. A small, but fully cognizant, part of Shane hoped that it would bruise—the thought of Ilya leaving a mark made his chest spasm, forcing a strangled sound out of him. Shane couldn't move, didn't want to move, could only lie there and feel it and watch it and beg for more of it. A bladed edge of oversensitivity slowly slid its way down his spine; he felt it ribbon away just as quickly, replaced by another impossible frisson of need. When he started to cry again it was desperate—it would be harder to come a second time, if it was even truly possible. His body wanted it as much as it fought against it.

“Such a good boy,” Ilya murmured, a little breathlessly. “Very good, the way you just lie there and take my cock. Are you going to come again all by yourself? Or do you need my help?”

“I can't,” Shane gasped. “I can't, not again.”

“I think you can,” Ilya said. “Do you want to?”

Shane did want to. He wasn't sure if it was the kind of thing Ilya could simply order him to do. He did want it, though. He wanted it badly enough to ask.

“Da, sir.” Shane furiously blinked away tears. “Please.”

“I think I would like to hear you beg,” Ilya said. “How badly do you want?”

Shane screwed his eyes shut so hard he saw stars. Impossibly, he could feel it coming again, rising up from some ravenous place deep inside of him.

“Ah, no,” Ilya said. “Open your eyes. Look at me.”

Immediately, they found each other's gaze in the glass. Shane was shaking so badly it felt like he'd just come off the ice, unsteady with adrenaline and keyed up with excitement. The bedding beneath his head was damp with sweat and tears and spit. He grit his teeth, unwilling to continue drooling onto the sheets; his open mouth had done nothing but betray him all night.

Ilya said, “Come on. Give it to me. Beg.”

The direct order came over Shane like relief; he let himself sag forward, surrendering the whole weight of his body to Ilya.

“Please,” he sobbed brokenly. “Please, Ilya, make me come. I want you to touch me, please.”

“Good boy,” Ilya said. “That was very nice. You are so good at that.”

An ugly, greedy thing reared its head inside Shane. He wanted Ilya to say it again, a dozen times, as many times as it took for him to settle into himself and believe that he couldn’t disappoint anyone, least of all Ilya. Shane watched Ilya’s reflection bend just enough to kiss his shoulder; he watched Ilya reach up and wrap a loose grip around his cock. He whined, long and plaintive, almost in warning.

“I’m gonna—can I—Ilya, please, I—”

“You can,” Ilya said. “You asked me so nicely, go ahead and come.”

The room immediately plummeted into silence. Shane’s vision tunneled as the world narrowed itself to everywhere he could feel Ilya, and nothing more. He shuddered through it, chasing the burn of sensitivity as greedily as he did the ecstasy of release. Ilya’s mouth was moving in the mirror, but Shane didn’t hear him. He was shocked back into awareness by the sensation of Ilya coming inside of him, hot and messy and obscene in a way that he hadn’t prepared himself for. His hearing was muffled; he could barely make out the sound of Ilya’s voice over the cacophony of heavy breathing and muffled sobbing that had underscored the crest of his release.

“Relax,” Ilya said. “You were good. I will take care of you.”

Shane gave in to his exhaustion and let himself melt against the bed, his arms and head still pinned. He lifted his hips slightly, assisting Ilya with pulling out as best as he could before he collapsed, spent. Something almost uncomfortably wet and warm started to track down the inside of his thighs. He groaned as understanding dawned. Ilya had come inside of him, and now the bed was going to be even more of a mess than usual.

“Hey, you asked for it,” Ilya teased. “Come on, up, come here.”

It wasn’t really an order—some of the commanding note was gone from Ilya’s voice. Shane wanted to obey him, anyway. When he tried to move, his body didn’t respond to his desires. He felt like deadweight against the sheets. He realized that he was shivering, almost violently, and unable to focus his eyes. A moment later, he felt Ilya wrap his arms around him. Gently, Ilya rolled him onto his side and brought their bodies flush.

“Ilya,” he said. “What—”

“It is okay,” Ilya soothed. “Just chemicals. You will feel better soon.”

Ilya dropped absent, lingering kisses to every inch of exposed skin he could reach: Shane’s shoulder, cheek, clavicle, throat, pec, bicep, mouth. He ran a soothing hand in a long, continuous loop over the broad muscle of Shane’s haunch. It was a soft sensation, easy to

focus on. A few minutes passed, and the shaking stopped. Shane's eyelids felt heavy, like his limbs—he let them slip shut, just for a moment, and when he opened his eyes, he was alone.

"Ilya," Shane said. "Where—Ilya?"

The emptiness of the room was unsettling. Shane felt like he was about to cry, which he thought was stupid. The odd, terrible fear that sat heavily inside of him wasn't rational. He wanted to reach out a hand and ground himself in the warmth of Ilya's body, but Ilya was nowhere to be seen. The sheets were cold. The bedroom seemed to stretch on for miles, hundreds of desolate miles.

"Ilya," Shane said.

"I am here." Ilya appeared in the doorway, silhouetted by a bright light pouring in from the hall. "Sorry. I did not think you would be awake soon. You are feeling okay?"

"What?" Shane rubbed his eyes. "I slept? How long?"

"Not long," Ilya said. "Few hours. It's only eight."

Shane frowned. The time of day didn't really matter. He wanted Ilya to hold him. He didn't want to ask for that. A soft laugh from the other side of the room made him look up. Ilya was grinning.

"What's so fucking funny?" Shane asked.

"You are glaring," Ilya said. "You get mad when you want something. Go ahead, ask. I think you know I will say yes."

"Sorry," Shane said. "I guess I just feel like this is awkward. Maybe it's me. I don't—I don't know if I can look you in the eye right now."

"What?" Ilya sounded troubled by that remark. "Why not? I did something wrong? That was not what you wanted?"

"No! No, it's nothing like that. It's just that nobody's ever seen me like that," Shane said. "I cried, for like, an hour. I was...I begged you. For things."

"Yeah, I remember," Ilya said. "It was hot. So, what? You think now I am going to laugh at you for it? Call you pervert? Kick you out?"

"I don't know," Shane said. "I guess not."

"Only person judging here is you," Ilya said. "I am a willing and happy participant. Besides, you are very pretty when you cry."

"Shut up," Shane muttered. "You can go back to whatever you were doing. Sorry. I'm going to shower."

"Okay," Ilya said, and he left the room.

Shane's legs felt like jelly as he attempted to extricate himself from the sheets. He was oddly disoriented, and stumbled slightly as he made his way towards Ilya's enormous ensuite. The bathroom was cold, enough to chill Shane to the bone as he waited for the water in the shower to get hot. It was a monstrous glass cube, transparent on all sides but one, and offered little warmth or privacy. He ducked under the showerhead and let the blistering hot water sluice over him for a few minutes. Steam curled from the tiled floor like fog off of pavement. He'd hoped the shower would ground him, but he still felt uneasy in his own body, somewhat alien and strange. Every inch of him ached deeply, worse than the moments following some of the vicious checks he'd received in scrimmage.

His eyes stung. He pressed the heels of his hands to his eyes to stop the burning. Shane was certain he was going to cry again. He was also certain that he wasn't going to be able to stop it. Maybe it would be okay, this once. Maybe the shower was loud enough that Ilya wouldn't notice. Shane wasn't really the kind of person who cried, anyway. He was just tired. He was just overwhelmed. Although the water was hot, he could still feel the tears on his face when he succumbed to the threat of tears. A ragged, horrible sob wracked his ribcage.

Just then, the bathroom door opened. Shane cursed under his breath. It was like Ilya had a sixth sense for opportunities to catch Shane at his most vulnerable. He was always turning up at the wrong time, just when Shane was most likely to reach out for comfort instead of strapping everything back down pushing it all away like he should. The bathroom door closed.

"Shane," Ilya said.

"No," Shane said.

"What is wrong?" Ilya asked.

He was crying too hard to protest Ilya's presence or to explain his distress. A chill crept into the shower when the door opened. Shane kept his face covered as he pressed himself back against the frigid tile wall. He felt horribly exposed, in a glass case like something on display. He didn't know why he was crying. He only knew that he felt inexplicably terrible—alone and confused and unmoored. It was ugly, the way he was crying, and to make matters worse, he was doing it for no real reason at all. Stifling his sobs took more physical effort than Shane would've liked. His chest hurt. He took stock of himself, and noticed that he still had his socks on. He must look stupid, probably insane, and he was definitely going to be a massive inconvenience as long as he insisted on being this weird in Ilya's house.

"Shane," Ilya said. "What is this?"

"Sorry," was all Shane could manage to say. "I'm sorry. Don't—it's fine. This happens sometimes."

"Really?" Ilya asked mildly. "What other man's big showers have you cried naked in? Do I know them?"

"Fuck off," Shane said.

“You are serious?” Ilya asked. “I will fuck off if you are serious.”

Shane couldn't answer him. It was an impossible question. He didn't want to be alone, and he didn't want Ilya to see him cry. The ruthlessly logical part of his brain knew he couldn't have it both ways. One desire won out over the other: the need to have someone close to him, to keep him from feeling so untethered. Shane stretched out a hand, asking silently for Ilya to come closer. Immediately, he found himself bundled snugly into Ilya's arms, forehead to clavicle, the entire bulk of Ilya's body present against him.

“Sorry,” he said.

“Stop,” Ilya said. “It's not a problem.”

Shane silently vowed that as soon as he figured out what the fuck was wrong with him, he would apologize. He would tell Ilya that the crying really had nothing to do with the fact that he was scared, practically terrified, all the time. He would figure out how to casually express the fact that all of this had nothing to do with the awful loneliness he'd felt when he'd woken up in an empty bed—it was a familiar feeling, one he worried might eventually make itself permanent. It was getting bigger all the time, filling every empty corner of him.

It wasn't just the sex, although he could feel embarrassment turning his stomach as he recounted the events that had transpired. He had liked it so much he was worried nothing else would ever be enough; he liked Ilya so much that he knew no one else would ever be enough. The other word, the one that Shane would not allow himself to think, nagged at the back of his mind. He shoved it away, hard, viciously enough that it wrung a guttural sob out of him.

Even in his hysterical state, he knew he couldn't say anything about any of this. Instead, he wrapped his arms around Ilya's neck and cried until the water was cold and his head felt like it was stuffed with cotton. He felt better. He felt exhausted. Ilya turned off the shower. Two towels hung from a bar at the far end of the cube; he pulled both of them free and handed one to Shane. Ilya was still wearing his boxers—he stripped them off, and dropped them to the floor in a sodden heap. He held out a hand, and held Shane's weight while he pulled off his soaking wet socks, one at a time.

“Is this still doing it for you?” Shane asked. “The crying, I mean. Am I still pretty?”

Ilya laughed lightly. “Of course.”

Shane felt himself flush. It wasn't the right time to be flirting; he didn't know why he'd said anything. He stared at the floor while he scrubbed his hair dry. They didn't talk much after that. Back in the bedroom, Ilya tossed a pair of sweatpants and some clean socks at him. Shane could hear the TV on in the other room. He wondered how Ilya had managed to hear him crying over both the chaos of a televised game and the running water.

“You want something to drink?” Ilya asked.

“Sure,” Shane said. “Thanks.”

He followed Ilya into the living room, and collapsed, boneless, onto the chaise portion of the couch. When Ilya came back, he was holding two cans. He stood on the other side of the giant couch and eyed Shane warily.

“I don’t want to talk about it,” Shane said.

Ilya handed Shane a cold can of Canada Dry Zero, and said, “Okay.”

They sat in silence, on opposite ends of the couch, for a torturously long time. Shane bit the inside of his lip until it was raw. The game went to commercial. He couldn’t remember who was playing or what the score was. He should probably know. He should definitely care. He realized that it was late, and time for him to leave. He did not want to do that. The weight of *I should go* sat heavily in the back of his mouth, a solid immovable thing that he couldn’t swallow. Shane cleared his throat, and then immediately wished he hadn’t; he forgot he wasn’t alone, and that Ilya could hear him. The tips of his ears burned.

“Yes?” Ilya asked. “What? You want to come over here?”

Shane didn’t reply. He set his can down on the coffee table and crawled across the couch, his knees deep in the dark cushions. He lay his head in Ilya’s lap and closed his eyes. It was casually intimate in a way Shane wasn’t accustomed to; now was typically the time Ilya started to pull away, to make his excuses and start putting on his pants. They didn’t cuddle, not really, especially not when it was already late at night and they both had their own beds to sleep in. It was hard to decide not to overthink it—Shane almost couldn’t believe that Ilya was allowing this to continue. He should go; he should get up, and make his exit, and not wait for Ilya to tell him that he was in the way.

“I should go,” Shane said.

“Yes,” Ilya agreed. He started to card his fingers through Shane’s hair. “Later. You feel better now?”

Ilya’s hand moved slowly over the crown of Shane’s head and back again, pressing gently at the nape of his neck before following the same path up again to his forehead.

“Yeah,” Shane said. “Da. Definitely better.”

End Notes

okay now that you made it i will say that i spent so much time trying to figure out what the correct form of address would be for the “yes sir”. like it was one of those times where i felt like i’d exhausted the internet. the russians are keeping their kink practices under lock and key. when ilya addresses his father in ep2 he says “da, otets” and it’s subtitled in English as “yes, sir” but he clearly says “otets” which is the familial formal for “father”. but as far as i could figure for sex purposes there were two options, one of which appears to be more casual (perhaps even slang, though not commonly used) and that is “ser”. and then there is the formal which is “gospodin” and that means “master” or “sir” if you are addressing someone with a higher rank than yourself. so i went with “ser”. that would also be easier for shane to pronounce and i didn’t want him to have to worry about his russian accent while he was getting drilled. if you are either 1) a russian speaker or 2) connor storrie then please know this: I DID MY BEST AND AS FAR AS I CAN TELL IT IS NOT WRONG! this is, after all, a thesehands production, and i did my research.

that said, i hope we had fun. i know shane sure did. please watch this space because there's potential for future daddy kink, pet play, and otk spanking. feel free to drop me a line on [tumblr](#) and let me know which one of those things you’d like to see first/more. no matter what comes next, trust i will i put my thing (shane) down, flip it and reverse it. okay love you bye!

Works inspired by this one

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