Deep Tissue Tension

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Deep Tissue Tension

by AlicefromtheNightmareland

Summary

Shane Hollander discovers that new massage therapist Ilya Rozanov can bring relief to more than just his back. Even though Ilya's foul mouth, his smug smile, and his constant teasing drive Shane to the absolute limits of endurance, he can't stop himself from coming back for more.

Notes

What can I say? :D Like everyone else, I'm addicted to this show, so I wrote this stupid, idiotic AU smut. I hope you like it! Comments are welcome, and thanks to my lovely beta reader, Inky, for convincing me to join this fandom. Now I'm also addicted to another M/M pairing. :D

"My back... I can finally walk without pain!" Hayden Pike announced to Shane Hollander in the locker room.

"Yeah? I feel like I can't straighten up at all... And I'm stretching all the time," Hollander replied gloomily.

"You have to try the new masseur they hired for our team," Hayden told him.

"Masseur?" Shane echoed, eyeing him skeptically.

"Yeah, I'm telling you," Hayden said, pulling on his shirt, "his hands work wonders. He came from Russia, and though he massages intensely, you... come out of there feeling like you're reborn."

Shane gave Hayden a doubtful look. They'd had masseurs in the past, but he hadn't felt any special relief from them. But since the team paid for it, why not give it a shot?

"Maybe I'll try," Shane said. "Is he here today?"

"Today?" Hayden chuckled. "Man, you have to book with him a few days in advance. He's that popular."

Hollander shrugged. What difference did it make? Once he was dressed, he walked over to the schedule board hanging on the locker room wall. There was one for massages, apparently. He checked columns with dates and times, with players' names written in marker next to the slots. Everything was busy. Several were already taken, but he found an open one three days from now, after practice, on Friday. He wrote his name in: "S. Hollander – 5:00 PM." He smiled to himself—maybe it really was worth a try.

Shane didn't think about it much until Friday. After all, it was just a massage, right? Yet, as his muscles were really sore, he was even quite content with the vision that somebody would help him get rid of the tension. After showering, he just put on his underwear, wrapped a towel around his hips, and headed to the room where the massages were held. He knocked on the door, and after a moment, he heard a loud "Come in" with an unmistakably Russian accent.

Shane hadn't had any particular image in his mind of what the masseur might even look like, but now, as he pressed the handle and saw the fairly spacious room with a massage table, he barely stopped himself from saying "holy shit." The guy in there was maybe around his age, with curly brown hair and a sharp jawline. He wasn't even dressed like a typical masseur—he was wearing some Adidas clothes—and when he saw Shane, he simply stood up, towering over him.

"Oh, the famous Shane Hollander," he commented.

Did he know him? Oh yes, probably almost everyone did.

"Yes, it's me."

The Russian smirked. "That much I know," he said. "Ilya Rozanov."

He extended his hand, and Shane, swallowing hard, took it. His grip was really strong.

The towel slipped slightly down Shane's hips, and he tried to adjust it.

"Get ready," Ilya said to him, his gaze landing briefly on Shane's hips. "Take off the boxers too."

"W-what?" Shane echoed.

Ilya gave a small shrug. "How am I supposed to work on the glutes, hips, and lower back when you're wearing that thing?"

Glutes? Did he mean his... ass? Yeah, of course, they usually massage those areas too, you idiot, Shane scolded himself. But the previous masseur had been like sixty years old, and he had never ordered Shane to undress fully.

"S-sure," he muttered.

"You're blushing?" *What the hell did this asshole just say to him?!* "You take showers with the guys, don't you? Besides, don't worry, I see so many asses that it doesn't make an impression on me anymore."

Let him just shut up already, Shane rolled his eyes, and on legs that were suddenly trembling for some reason he didn't understand, he walked over to the massage table. He slowly slid his boxers off and carefully lay down on his stomach, placing the towel over his hips.

"I'm ready," he muttered.

"I can see," Ilya almost purred.

Shane only heard the sound of hands rubbing together, and soon he felt a pair of very large hands on his back, pressing him firmly into the table. He let out a quiet "ouch" under his breath as the hands carefully worked his shoulders and shoulder blades.

"You're so tense," Ilya clicked his tongue. "You should come for a massage every day."

Was he really that tense? Shane wasn't sure. "Who has time for that?" he muttered.

"It's only an hour—unless you're such a Mr. Busy? What do you do after practice? Sign autographs?"

What was this guy's problem? *Just shut up and massage*, Shane thought, realizing that feeling those huge hands on his back was actually really… pleasant.

"And you came from Russia?" Shane asked suddenly, not sure why the words tumbled out.

"No, I flew in from another planet, Hollander," Ilya replied dryly, his thumbs now working deep into the muscles around Shane's shoulder blades. "Because that's probably what you all

think here, right? That Russia is its own planet?"

"Are you always such an asshole?" Shane blurted before he could stop himself, twisting his head to glance back over his shoulder. Shit, maybe that was too much... But Ilya didn't look offended at all.

"No," Ilya said, the corner of his mouth curling into a smirk. "Only for the chosen ones."

His hands didn't falter—strong, deliberate strokes gliding down the length of Shane's back again, pressing harder this time, forcing a involuntary groan from Shane's throat. The embarrassing sound hung in the air.

Ilya paused for half a second, then let out a quiet huff of laughter. "See? Already better. You hold everything in."

Shane pressed his face back into the cradle, cheeks burning. "Just... keep going."

"Da, captain," Ilya murmured. His palms spread wide, sliding over oiled skin, working the sides of Shane's waist, thumbs tracing the ridges of muscle just above the towel's edge.

"You play against my old team once," Ilya said after a long silence, hands moving to Shane's lower back again, circling slowly. "Moscow Spartak juniors. You score three goals. I remember."

Shane blinked into the darkness of the face cradle. He hadn't expected that. "You... watched that game?"

"I was on the bench. Injured." Ilya's voice was neutral, but there was something underneath it —old rivalry, maybe. "You were fast. And fucking annoying. Behaving... How to say... Like the ice belonged to you."

Shane let out a short laugh. "Sounds about right. And you... Don't play anymore?"

"No," Ilya replied, his tone turning gloomy. "Injury. I can't play... But it turns out a masseur makes pretty good money massaging hockey players' asses."

"I doubt you only massage asses..." Shane replied—and then felt the towel being completely pulled away. His face flushed crimson in an instant. Shouldn't he have warned him? Old Mr. Summers always gave them disposable underwear! What the hell was this supposed to mean?

"Oh, Hollander," Ilya said, "I have to tell you, I've massaged a lot of asses, but this one... This one is really good."

Was he just complimented? But how dare he comment on his ass like that? Shane didn't know what to say, so he forced out a strangled, "Thanks."

Soon enough, Ilya's hands moved fully onto his glutes—strong palms spreading wide, thumbs digging deep into the muscle. There was no way he wasn't seeing everything: Shane's balls, completely exposed now that the towel was gone. Oh God. Why hadn't Hayden warned him about this? Shane's face burned hotter against the cradle.

But he told him he saw a lot of asses, right? Shane didn't have to be embarrassed.

Ilya worked in firm circles, kneading the tight spots with a confidence that bordered on ruthless. Each squeeze pulled a sound from Shane's throat, muffled groans he couldn't quite swallow back. The sensation was overwhelming: pain melting into something warmer, deeper, and *dangerously* good.

"Sensitive here," Ilya observed quietly, one hand sliding lower to the crease where thigh met glute, fingers pressing in with precision. "You clench everything when you skate. Bad habit."

Shane bit his lip, trying to stay silent, but another low moan escaped when Ilya's thumbs swept inward, working the inner edges of the muscle. His whole body twitched.

Ilya let out a chuckle. "Better to let it out, Hollander. No one's listening but me."

And the fact, you're listening to it, imbecile, is the worst.

Shane's heart was still hammering against the table. He squeezed his eyes shut tighter, desperately trying to will his body not to react in ways it absolutely shouldn't during a professional massage. But those big, warm, relentless hands were making rational thinking impossible.

Then the hands moved lower—down to his calves and feet—and Shane felt an unexpected wave of disappointment. Relief, he told himself. It was relief. But Ilya still hadn't returned the towel. It lay folded somewhere out of reach, leaving him completely exposed. Why hadn't he covered him again?

Ilya lifted one of Shane's legs slightly, strong fingers digging into the tight muscles of his calf, working down to the arch of his foot with slow strokes. It felt incredible—almost too good—but the cool air on his bare skin kept reminding him how vulnerable he was.

Then, just when Shane thought the worst of the tension had passed, the hands returned to his glutes.

"Very tight," Ilya murmured, almost a purr under his breath, as his palms settled back onto Shane's ass with renewed focus. This time the touch was different. Thumbs swept inward, gently spreading the muscle as he kneaded, opening him slightly with each pass.

Shane's breath stuttered. What the hell did that mean? He didn't know, didn't want to think about it, but he couldn't stop the hums vibrating in his throat every time Ilya pressed in.

And then—sharp, startling—Ilya's hand came down in a firm smack against one cheek. Then another on the other side. And again, again…

Shane twisted his head sharply, eyes wide with shock as he looked back over his shoulder.

"What the—?"

Ilya met his gaze calmly, one brow arched, hands still resting on his skin. "What? I have to loosen the muscle," he said, as if it were the most normal thing in the world. "Deep tissue

needs percussion sometimes. Blood flow. Relaxation. You North Americans are so... shy about it."

His fingers traced lightly over the warmed skin he'd just struck, soothing now, almost gentle. "Besides," he added, "you didn't seem to mind."

"What are you saying, asshole?!" Shane snapped, twisting his head again to glare back at him.

Ilya shrugged, a lazy roll of his shoulders, and laughed softly. Then he delivered another firm smack—this one a little sharper, making Shane's hips jerk involuntarily against the table.

"I'm saying you don't seem to mind," Ilya repeated, smirking. "Deaf?"

"This is a massage," Shane said with as much dignity as he could muster while face-down and naked. "It's supposed to feel… good."

"Sure," Ilya said, tone utterly casual. "Turn over."

"Give me… the towel."

"No."

"What do you mean no?!" Shane's voice rose, indignant. He started to push himself up on his elbows, ready to grab the damn thing himself—but froze.

Because in that instant, he felt it: his cock, hard and aching, pressed flat against the padded table beneath him. Heat flooded his face and chest. There was no way in hell he could flip over now. Not like this. Not in front of this smug Russian asshole who was already grinning like he knew exactly what was happening.

Shane dropped back down with a frustrated groan, burying his face in the cradle again. His heart pounded so loudly he was sure Ilya could hear it.

Ilya's low chuckle filled the room, warm and infuriating. "A little problem, Hollander? Though…" he stopped his gaze, "Not so little."

"Shut up," Shane muttered into the padding.

"Did you get hard?" The words were a warm whisper right against his ear—Ilya must have leaned down, close enough that Shane could feel the faint brush of breath on his skin.

Shane nearly jolted off the table. "I didn't," he ground out through clenched teeth. The humiliation burned hotter than anything else. Now this Russian asshole would never let him live it down.

"I can do something about it," Ilya continued. "To… relieve you."

Shane's entire body went rigid. His heart slammed against his ribs so hard he was sure Ilya could feel it through the table. For a long second, he couldn't breathe, couldn't think—only

feel the weight of those hands still resting lightly on his thighs, the faint scent of massage oil, and the dangerous heat pooling low in his gut.

“No,” he managed at last. “Just—just finish the massage.”

A soft hum from Ilya, not quite agreement, not quite disappointment. Then the hands moved again—slow, professional strokes down the backs of his thighs, over his calves, like nothing had happened.

“As you wish, captain,” Ilya murmured.

To the end of the massage, the Russian stayed silent and even graciously covered him with the towel again. When Shane finally rolled onto his back, he cracked his eyes open—and for a long moment they just stared at each other, neither breaking eye contact even for a second.

Ilya Rozanov had very beautiful eyes.

Now he was working Shane’s chest, broad palms gliding over pecs and ribs with the same relentless skill. Shane couldn’t stop the occasional flick of his gaze downward, taking in the stretch of Adidas fabric over Ilya’s shoulders, the curl of brown hair at his temples. The Russian didn’t say another word.

Did he offer this kind of thing to everyone? Shane couldn’t tell.

Finally, the massage ended. Ilya even turned away politely as Shane sat up and pulled his boxers back on.

“Uh… do you have any… open slots?” Shane asked.

Ilya turned back to him, smirking faintly. “Slot is yours whenever you want it. Same time next week?”

Next week? That felt impossibly far away.

“You said I should come every day,” Shane blurted before he could stop himself.

Ilya’s smirk deepened, something unreadable flashing in those sharp eyes. He stepped close enough that Shane could smell the faint trace of massage oil and whatever clean, cold scent clung to the Russian’s skin.

“I did say that,” Ilya murmured. “But every day might be… dangerous.”

Shane’s pulse kicked hard. “Why?”

Ilya only winked, that infuriating half-smirk playing at the corner of his mouth. “Tomorrow after practice?” he said. “Just decide…” His gaze dropped, lingering on the lower part of Shane’s body before flicking back up. He bit his lips, “…which part you want massaged?”

Asshole.

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The next day, Shane couldn't shake the feeling that something was seriously off. *And think which part you want massaged…* That line kept looping in his head like a bad pop song. Was this Russian flirting with everybody? Was he gay? Bi? Some kind of equal-opportunity ass-slapper?

Before practice, Shane cornered Hayden in the hallway, heart pounding like he was about to confess to a crime.

"Hey, uh… this masseur…" Shane started, then immediately ran out of words. How do you casually ask your teammate if the new guy complimented his backside, spanked it, and then offered what was basically a happy ending?

"He's awesome, right?" Hayden grinned wide, practically glowing. "Best decision the team ever made."

Shane's stomach twisted. The possibility that Hayden had also gotten the full… *treatment* didn't just disgust him—it made him weirdly, irrationally angry. Like someone had touched something that was his.

"How did he…" Shane lowered his voice to a conspiratorial whisper as they walked toward the ice, "massage you?"

"What do you mean 'how'?" Hayden asked, frowning in confusion.

"I mean… did he do your back… and then…" Shane gestured vaguely downward, "… everything else?"

Hayden stopped dead, blinking at him. "Dude. He did my back, my shoulders, my hamstrings because I pulled one last week, and my calves. Then he told me to stretch better and kicked me out. Why, what did he do to you?"

Shane froze.

"Uh… same. Totally the same," he lied, face heating up. "Just… really thorough hamstrings."

Hayden snorted. "You're weird today. Anyway, the guy's a miracle worker. My back hasn't felt this good in years. He is a very professional."

Shane forced a laugh that came out way too high-pitched. "Ha! Yeah! Professional. Super professional."

Inside, he was having a full-blown crisis.

So Ilya didn't offer Hayden the deluxe package. Didn't spank him. Didn't whisper filthy innuendos in his ear. He didn't tell him his ass was very good.

Or maybe he did, but Hayden was silent?

Anyway, as he stepped onto the ice, Shane spotted one figure hanging around nearby.

Ilya Rozanov.

He smirked and gave Shane a casual wave as Shane swallowed hard.

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"Not bad, you play," Ilya said, his hands working deep into Shane's upper back with slow pressure. "But too flashy. Too… brave, if you ask me."

The towel still rested lightly over Shane's ass, but Shane couldn't shake the mortifying realisation that he was—instinctively, embarrassingly—arching into the touch more and more, pushing his hips back like some kind of animal in heat.

"I didn't ask you," Shane muttered, face half-buried in the cradle, trying to sound annoyed instead of breathless.

"Sure, sure," Ilya replied. "Why would you…"

His palms spread wide, gliding over the towel's edge, fingers just barely brushing the bare skin at the top of Shane's glutes. Not quite crossing the line, but dancing right along it. Shane's breath hitched. He clenched his jaw, determined not to make another sound, but his traitorous body kept tilting upward, chasing the pressure.

Ilya noticed—of course, he did. A soft huff of laughter warmed the back of Shane's neck.

"See? Even your body asks for advice," he murmured. "Listens better than you do."

Shane groaned. "Shut up and massage," he managed.

"Da, captain," Ilya said, letting out a soft chuckle before his hands settled firmly again.

The towel shifted just a fraction lower. Shane didn't tell him to pull it back up.

Soon, the towel was pulled away again, and his fingers dug deeper into the flesh of Shane's glutes. How pleasant it was… Since when had Shane liked being touched on the ass this much?

"Oh, this ass today is even more… How to say? Yummy?" Ilya asked.

Oh no, that was too much!

"Excuse me," Shane snapped, "do you make these kinds of offers and comment on everyone's… asses like that?"

Ilya laughed. "What, are you jealous?"

"No, it's… unprofessional! I could file a complaint about you!"

"Because I said you have a nice ass? Sensitive boy."

“I’m not sensitive!”

“So I’ll tell them you’re the one showing me your hard dick, not me showing you,” Ilya said calmly. “And not everyone. I only offer this kind of massage to those who have tight asses on the ice. So far, I’ve seen only one person like that.”

“What did you just say, asshole?!” Shane exploded, genuinely furious now. He pushed himself up on his elbows, twisting to grab his boxers from the chair nearby. “I’m filing a complaint against you!”

“Okay,” Ilya shrugged, completely unfazed, leaning back against the counter with his arms crossed. “But before you storm out, maybe do something about it so your dick isn’t standing like that.”

“I’m never… never coming back here again!” Shane threatened, yanking on his boxers.

“Mhm,” Ilya replied, utterly unconvinced, that same infuriating half-smirk playing on his face.

***

For the next few days, Shane lived in a constant state of frustration.

Everywhere he turned, his teammates wouldn’t shut up about how amazing the masseur was. “Dude, his hands are magic,” “I swear I’ve never felt this loose,” “That Russian guy is a goddamn miracle worker.” Blah blah blah.

What a load of bullshit.

Except Shane couldn’t stop thinking about those big, strong hands on his ass. The way they’d dug in, spread, slapped, confident, rough, way too good. Every time he sat down, stretched, or even just shifted in the locker room, the memory hit him.

Nonsense. Total nonsense.

That Ilya was a complete slut.

Shane told himself that at least twenty times a day. Usually, while angrily adjusting himself in his jock, or glaring at the massage schedule board.

He didn’t book another one. Absolutely not.

He just… happened to walk past the massage room a few extra times. For no reason.

And if the door was cracked open and he caught a glimpse of Ilya in those stupid Adidas tracksuits, laughing with some other player—well, that was just a coincidence.

Shane was fine.

Totally fine.

He lasted four days before he caved and scribbled his name on the board again.

Same time. Same room.

He hated himself a little for it.

But not enough to erase it.

***

“Oh, Hollander? Is it you?”

Shane hated—absolutely hated—how Ilya said his name, rolling the “r” with that thick Russian accent, making it sound like some private joke just between them. He hated the smug curve of that mouth. He hated the knowing look in those eyes.

He hated him with passion.

“My eyes are seeing well?” Ilya asked, tilting his head with fake politeness, as if he were checking a schedule.

“Shut up,” Shane muttered.

“I shut up? You shut up,” Ilya shot back, completely unfazed. “You came for service, so be a good boy.”

Shane’s jaw tightened. He took one step closer, close enough to catch the faint scent of massage oil and Ilya’s clean, crisp cologne. “What exactly are you playing at, Rozanov?”

“Me? Playing?” Ilya clicked his tongue, then reached out and patted the massage table twice. “Lie down. I can see you’re tense.”

The command in that low voice, this casual look…. Shane stood there glaring for a second, fists clenched at his sides.

Then, with a frustrated huff, he dropped the towel and his underwear and climbed onto the table face down, completely naked. Ilya’s soft, satisfied chuckle followed him the whole way.

“Good boy,” he murmured, the words warm against Shane’s ear as those big hands finally settled on his shoulders.

Shane groaned into the cradle. “I swear, Rozanov…”

But whatever threat he’d been about to make melted away the instant Ilya started digging in.

He was so, so screwed.

“Do you… treat everyone like this?” Shane asked again.

“How?” Rozanov asked, all wide-eyed innocence.

“Don’t play dumb, Rozanov. You know exactly how!”

“No,” Ilya said softly. He leaned down, his breath warm against Shane’s ear. “Only when somebody is pretty.”

A hot flush exploded across Shane’s face and down his neck. He tried to come up with some sharp comeback, but right then Ilya dug harder into his shoulders—deep, rolling pressure that pulled a helpless, throaty sound of relief out of him.

Ilya’s hands slid lower, dangerously low, past the spot where the towel should have been but wasn’t there today. Shane sucked in a sharp breath as those big palms settled possessively on his bare ass again, kneading with slow strokes.

“Ass amazing,” Rozanov repeated. “Not so flat as your teammates’.”

Shane groaned into the cradle, “You’re crazy, Rozanov.”

“Da,” Ilya agreed, thumbs sweeping inward in a way that made Shane’s hips twitch involuntarily. “But you keep coming back.”

Shane had no defense against that. Because it was true.

And because those hands felt way too good to lie about it.

He arched his ass obscenely upward, hips tilting back without shame, his hard dick already throbbing against the padded table beneath him.

“Should I massage… inside too?” Ilya asked, finger tracing a slow, teasing line down the cleft.

“Yes,” Shane answered without hesitation, the word tumbling out before he could overthink it.

“Sure about that?” Ilya murmured. He brought his hand down in another sharp slap against Shane’s left cheek—hard enough to sting, hard enough to make Shane’s breath catch.

“Yes,” Shane gasped, squeezing his eyes shut tighter, face burning against the cradle.

Ilya’s finger—slick with oil—slid slowly between his cheeks, pressing in. Shane bit down hard on his lip to stifle the moan that ripped through him anyway. God, it felt… filthy and perfect and overwhelming all at once.

“Relax,” Ilya said, almost softly now, his free hand stroking Shane’s lower back.

“Mmm,” Shane managed.

The finger eased deeper, then withdrew just enough to push back in, opening him up with every thrust. Shane’s hips rocked back instinctively, chasing more, his cock leaking against the table as heat coiled tighter and tighter low in his gut.

Ilya leaned closer, breath warm against Shane's skin. "Good boy," he whispered, adding just a hint of pressure, curling slightly inside.

Shane couldn't hold back the broken sound that escaped him then.

And Ilya only hummed in approval.

"Arch your back more," Ilya said.

Shane was already lost in the haze of pleasure, breath coming in shallow pants, but the words still cut through.

"What?"

"Arch more," Ilya repeated patiently. His slick finger stilled deep inside Shane, waiting. "I need to reach your… dick," he added casually.

Shane's face burned hotter than ever, but his body obeyed before his brain caught up. He pushed his hips up higher, back bowing obscenely, spreading himself open in a way that felt filthy and desperate.

The finger inside him curled again, while Ilya's other hand slid underneath Shane's body, wrapping firmly around his leaking cock.

Shane moaned outright this time—loud, broken, no hope of hiding it. Ilya's grip was confident, stroking in perfect sync with the thrust of his finger, like he'd mapped out exactly how to unravel Shane completely.

"Good," Ilya murmured. "Just like that. Let me take care of everything."

Shane couldn't have formed words if he tried. He rocked helplessly between Ilya's hands—forward into that tight, slick fist, back onto the finger now joined by a second, stretching him open with steady pressure.

Pleasure coiled tight and blinding at the base of his spine, building fast, too fast.

He was already close.

And Ilya knew it—pumping him faster, crooking his fingers just right, whispering filthy praise "Pretty boy, good boy" in that low, accented voice until Shane shattered with a choked cry, spilling hot over Ilya's hand and the table beneath him.

Ilya didn't stop until Shane was trembling, oversensitive, breath ragged against the cradle.

Only then did he ease his fingers out, wipe his hands on a nearby towel, and press a slow, surprisingly gentle kiss to the back of Shane's sweat-damp neck.

"Better?" he asked, amused.

Shane could only manage a weak, mortified laugh.

“Now maybe you’ll play better, Hollander,” Ilya said, that infuriating smirk coming back at its place. “Not like you have a stick up your ass anymore.”

No, he was impossible. “Oh, fuck you, asshole!” Shane replied.

Ilya’s eyes glinted with mischief. “Not here,” he replied smoothly, as if Shane had just asked for extra foam on his coffee.

What?!

Shane’s brain short-circuited. He stared, mouth half-open, heart pounding so hard he was sure Ilya could hear it.

Ilya turned away like nothing had happened, strolled to the small desk in the corner, and scribbled something on a scrap of paper. He folded it once and held it out.

“You’re very tense,” he said, “Sessions here aren’t enough. You need to come to my house.”

“No way in hell!” Shane shot back, but his fist clenched tighter around the crumpled paper, betraying him completely.

“Don’t be late,” Ilya said. “Tomorrow. Eight.”

“I won’t come to your house, you psycho!” Shane exclaimed.

"Sure," Ilya said. "You say that now, Hollander. But we both know you will."

Shane's jaw clenched, "You don't know shit, Rozanov."

Ilya tilted his head, eyes glinting with amusement. "I know you just come on my hand." He pushed off the frame, stepping close enough that Shane had to tip his head back to hold his glare. "So go home. Tell yourself whatever lies you need. Eight o'clock tomorrow."

Shane opened his mouth—for another denial, another threat, something—but nothing came out. Ilya's gaze dropped deliberately to Shane's mouth, then lower, lingering in a way that made Shane's skin burn all over again.

"Eight," Ilya repeated softly, reaching past him to pull the door open. The brush of his arm against Shane's chest was electric. "Don't be late, pretty boy. Or I'll have to punish that perfect ass for making me wait."

Shane stormed out without another word, pulse thundering in his ears, the address searing a hole in his pocket the whole drive home.

He lasted exactly twenty-three hours and forty-seven minutes before he was standing outside Ilya's door, fist raised to knock, hating himself and wanting it all at the same time.

When Ilya opened the door—shirtless, sweatpants riding low, that same knowing smirk in place—Shane didn't say a word. He just stepped inside, kicked the door shut behind him, and shoved Ilya back against the nearest wall.

"Told you," Ilya murmured against his mouth, right before Shane kissed him hard enough to shut him up finally.

At least, for once.

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