

lay all your love on me

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by [defcontwo](#)

Summary

He will never tire of this, Ilya realizes. However the world may shape and change around them, for Ilya, there will always be this: Shane Hollander, open and kind, sweet and yet impossibly filthy, and giving himself over with so much ease.

So of course this is the moment when Hayden Pike ruins everything.

Or: Hayden walks in on them at the cottage and absolutely no one's happy about it. Good thing Ilya brought weed.

Notes

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

It still feels impossible that they're here at all. That *he's* here, at the cottage, with Shane, and they are finally being honest with each other. Ilya's lived for so long with this hook dug deep inside his chest, always pulling him towards Shane Hollander. It's a relief, at least, to know that it goes both ways.

He's learning new things about Shane, these days. Like how the freckles across his nose glow in the early morning sunshine, the blinds always left up just enough to let dawn peek through. Like how the books on his bookshelf are organized in strict alphabetical order, then broken down by genre. Sports biographies make up the biggest chunk; there's a thick tome on the history of Sumo that Ilya's already planning to pull down for himself.

And right this very second, he's learning that Shane's idea of off-season indulgence is woefully, predictably, lacking. "Shane. Why are you having grilled sweet potato for breakfast? We are not stranded in wilderness."

Shane looks up from where he's about to drop a spoonful of yogurt on top of his sweet potato. *Yogurt*. Ilya cannot believe that he's so in love with this man.

"I like to eat more carbs during the off-season," Shane says, nose already scrunching up in defense.

Ilya waves an incredulous hand over the kitchen island. "And what, no waffles? No pancakes?"

"Just because you eat like a toddler doesn't mean we all have to," Shane sniffs. "Besides, who here has more Cups?"

"No one will ever believe what a dick you really are," Ilya says, feeling impossibly fond. "I can tell no one because there is no point."

"It's just self-defense, living with you," Shane says, with a very smug look on his face, like he's proud of his little early morning chirp, so of course Ilya has to reach across the kitchen island and swipe a chunk of yogurt out of the container and onto Shane's cheek, smearing the creamy substance across his chin and then smirking down at his handiwork.

"Yikes, Hollander, your breakfast came all over you," Ilya says. "Maybe time to switch it up, huh?"

"Oh, you're the worst," Shane groans, and then he's scooping up a handful of yogurt with his bare hands and reaching up to dump it on top of Ilya's head and it doesn't matter how Ilya tries to duck out of the way, because the sneaky little fucker is too fast for him anyways. The sour tang scent of Shane's unflavored 0% fat greek yogurt hits the back of his nose, the thick goopy substance streaking its way down his forehead.

Ilya speeds around the edge of the kitchen island, catching Shane by the waist with both hands and reeling him in, laughing and shaking his head hard, so that excess yogurt starts to sprinkle from Ilya's hair and all down Shane's back. "Nice try, kotik."

“I know what that one means now,” Shane complains into the crook of Ilya’s neck, where he’s buried his face anyways, tugging him closer by the pull of his shirt. “I don’t think I’m very cat-like.”

“That’s because you’ve never watched yourself fight,” Ilya says, before pressing a yogurt-stained kiss to the side of Shane’s cheek. He shucks his hands up beneath the soft cotton of Shane’s shirt, pressing cool hands to warm skin, and smirking to himself when he elicits the very shiver he was looking for. “Very cute, very adorable.”

“You’re such an asshole,” Shane breathes, right before he bites down into the hard muscle of Ilya’s shoulder, and Ilya feels heat spark up and down his spine, his cock twitching in his sweats. It takes so little to get him going when he’s with Shane. It’s always been this way, right from the very start, and not once has that started to fade.

Ilya hums, shifting one hand around the front of Shane’s shirt, reaching up to palm Shane’s right nipple. “That’s why you love me, yes?”

“Unfortunately,” Shane grumbles, but he turns up his face, letting Ilya see the bright, easy smile that goes with it, open and guileless and more full of love than Ilya thought he could ever imagine. “So, what do you think? Should we go take a shower?”

Ilya presses Shane into the hard planes of the kitchen island, swooping down into a slow, thorough kiss, the type of kiss that makes his toes curl, that makes him feel like maybe if he tried hard enough, he could crawl inside of Shane completely and make himself a home there. Finally, Ilya breaks away, breathing hard, pressing his forehead to the side of Shane’s face. “Finally. I thought you never ask.”

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Days with Shane at the cottage pass by in an easy haze and this one is no different. Ilya runs on the treadmill for an hour while Shane moves through a vinyasa flow out on the patio and if the treadmill provides Ilya with a convenient view of that very same patio, well, there are few secrets between them these days. Shane knows that he’s watching.

Ilya joins him down on the patio for his wind-down, stretching out his tight, aching muscles against the sun-warmed wood, then finding himself distracted by the sun gleaming down on Shane’s hair, distracted by the thin cotton of his shirt, the tight Lycra of his yoga pants. It’s a good excuse to push Shane down into the soft foam of his yoga mat and blow him right there under the sky, anyways. He makes Shane squirm with a clever twist of the tongue, he lets Shane unwind beneath the palms of his hands, and then finally, when Shane unspools altogether, shuddering and gasping and pressing himself heel first into the earth, Ilya places a satisfied grin into the warmth of Shane’s thigh.

Then, another shower and protein shakes. A quick meeting with Yuna about the foundation, and then dinner with David *and* Yuna. This is something Ilya is still getting used to — being treated like family simply because he is there, because he loves Shane, because he showed up one day and helped their son through a panic attack. It’s nice, the way the Hollanders have welcomed him in with their easy acceptance, but it also scrapes along his skin sometimes, like an itch that starts to hurt too much after you’ve picked at it for too long.

It's a relief, letting themselves back into the cottage and walking themselves through what's now become their typical evening routine. The whole thing is so fucking domestic, it makes him a little sick, like he can't let himself get too close, still, like this all could disappear from right in front of his very eyes one day, leaving nothing but the memories behind.

It won't, though. Shane Hollander is a deeply stubborn man. Ilya simply needs to keep reminding himself of this.

So, he changes into his adidas sleep shorts and his tank top, the ones that he's already planning on leaving here full-time, and he washes his face with soap and then uses a smattering of Shane's moisturizer afterwards. He watches patiently, his tongue between his teeth, his lips curled upwards in delight, as Shane slowly and methodically completes his own five-step skincare regime. The first few days of this, Shane kept glaring at him sideways, like he expected to be made fun of.

By the end of the first week, though, he seemed to accept that for once, Ilya had no smart remarks to make. He likes being part of Shane's night-time routine. He's spent almost ten years wishing that he could be exactly where he's standing right now. He's not about to waste it.

Then, they put on a movie – lately, it's usually a movie that Shane knows well, but dubbed over in Russian, so that he can learn. Unfortunately, the only movies that Shane knows well are hockey movies and they're about halfway through *Slapshot*, which isn't exactly a feat of storytelling when dubbed over in Russian. They've spent most of these movie nights bickering about the terrible translations, with Ilya pausing to explain, in great detail, exactly why the language used in the dubbed version was wrong but then eventually, the bickering always leads to something else, something just as fun.

And just like every other night, it doesn't take them all that long until chirping turns to shoving turns to Shane's swinging one leg over Ilya's lap, bracketing Ilya on either side with those strong thighs of his and then dragging his hand up the front of Ilya's shirt.

"Some day, I'm going to fuck you like this," Ilya murmurs, scraping his teeth along the tanned column of Shane's neck. "Just you in my lap exactly like this, bouncing on my cock."

"Sounds like you're making me do all the work," Shane chirps, even as he arches into Ilya's touch, Ilya's fingernails dragging down the back of Shane's back and then Shane pulls him even closer, somehow, digging his fingers into Ilya's biceps hard enough to hurt a little, in all the best ways.

Ilya makes a small 'pfft' sound with his lips. "Glass houses, Shanya."

"Shut up," Shane says, but his voice goes high and breathy at the end from the way Ilya's hand slips beneath the waistband of his sleep shorts, his fingers circling the base of his cock. "Ilya, I swear to god, if you don't hurry up..."

He will never tire of this, Ilya realizes. However the world may shape and change around them, for Ilya, there will always be this: Shane Hollander, open and kind, sweet and yet impossibly filthy, and giving himself over with so much ease.

Ilya presses a kiss to the hollow of Shane's throat, dipping his fingers deeper into Shane's shorts, thumbing along the slit at the head of Shane's cock and relishing the shudder that he gets in return and yes, this is another good night, another part of their routine that he will never, ever take for granted.

So of course this is the moment when Hayden Pike ruins everything.

"Hey Shane, I knocked like a million times and then I just let myself in, is that – WHAT THE FUCK?"

Shane scrambles out of Ilya's lap so fast it would've set a new record had he been on skates, grabbing a pillow with one hand and holding it desperately in front of his crotch. "Hayden. What the — what the hell are you doing here?"

Ilya rolls his head to the back of the couch, looking back at where Pike is standing behind him, gazing down at them both, his dumb eyes wide open, his mouth gaping at them in shock. Ilya lets out a small sigh, then turns back towards Shane. "Perhaps it would be good idea to install alarm."

"I have an alarm," Shane hisses. "That's what makes the little beeping sounds every time you think you're being sneaky with your cigarettes."

"Huh. I never noticed." Ilya pauses, frowning. His hearing's never been quite the same on his left side ever since he got a bad check right into the boards ear-first early during the finals against San Francisco. Perhaps he should finally get it checked out.

Shane shoots him an exasperated look, like he can guess what Ilya's thinking. "Well, anyway. We were, uh. Distracted."

"I also knocked like a million times," Pike says, breaking in. He waves his arms around, which is just moronic. He is not invisible. They both know that he's here. "Hi, what the fuck is going on here? Dude, Shane, why the fuck are you swapping spit with *Rozanov*?"

"I, uh...." Shane says, stuttering over his words, and Ilya cannot help himself, he leans forward, grabbing hold of Shane's wrist, loosely linking their hands together.

Shane stills, smiling down at him, and then he shakes himself, looking back up at Pike with determination set into his gaze. He's so brave like this.

"I'm gay," Shane says, without a single tremor in his voice.

Pike frowns. He looks like a man struggling through a math problem that's much too difficult for him. "No way, man. There's no way. I'd know."

Shane scoffs, with barely disguised hurt. "Why, because I dated Rose Landry for five minutes?"

"No, dude, because I've known you for a fucking decade," Pike says, his voice raising. "And you've been seeing that Lily chick in Boston for like, that entire fucking time!"

Shane glances down at Ilya again, raising both eyebrows. In response, Ilya pulls a face.

The journey from Lily to Ilya is not a complicated one, but he's not surprised by Pike's idiocy. He's never understood this friendship. There's nothing wrong with Hayden Pike, exactly. It's just that he's as bland and mediocre as all the other North American hockey bros. He's one in an almost identical lineup of hundreds. Unremarkable in every possible way. Plays decent enough, never rocks the boat. Boring, but not like how Shane is boring, in the way that means Ilya is a storm and Shane is the port that calls him home.

But as boring and bland and deeply annoying as he may be, Hayden Pike is still Shane's best friend.

Ilya blows out a breath, holding out his free hand in Pike's direction as if to shake. "Hello, Hayden Pike. Nice to meet you. My first name is Ilya, in case you forgot."

Now, Pike frowns even harder. Honestly, Ilya despairs. "I know your stupid first name, Rozanov. I'm not shaking the hand that you just had down my best friend's pants."

Ilya shrugs, letting the hand drop to his side. He supposes that's fair enough, but he's also not going to prolong this for much longer. "Pike, you idiot. I am Lily."

"No, you're not," Pike says, taking a quick step backwards. The pieces are starting to come together for him, though. It's a little like watching a toddler figure out a puzzle.

"Yeah, he is," Shane says tiredly. He cocks his head in Ilya's direction, shooting him a wry smile. "I was Jane, in his phone."

"Not very clever, actually," Ilya admits. "We are lucky not to get caught sooner."

"Twice in my own home, though," Shane complains, his voice dipping into a whine. "Come on. After all this time. That's just bad luck, right?"

Pike starts waving his hands around again. "Okay. Okay. Stop. Stop talking and stop looking at each other like that, for Christ's sake. Shane, could you — could please tell me what the fuck is going on here?"

Ilya opens his mouth, the sharp *we just did* already on the tip of his tongue, but Shane silences him with a single look and Ilya sighs, snapping his mouth shut.

"Ilya, uh..." Shane says, letting go of his hand and taking a few steps towards Pike. His pleading gaze begs Ilya to understand what he's asking for, and Ilya bites back a sigh, eyeing Pike resentfully.

Five minutes ago, Shane was unraveling so deliciously in his lap, and now he's standing there in the middle of the living room, his back straight, his frame tense, but his hands are starting to fidget. Ilya does not like to see Shane so uneasy in his own home.

Ilya waves a hand, pushing himself up from the couch. "Da, I'll go outside, give you a few minutes to talk."

Shane shoots him a warm glance, his smile curving upwards. “Thank you. Don’t smoke outside.”

Ilya snorts, waving a hand behind his back as he turns away. “Of course not, kotik, only inside smoking.”

He hears Shane let out an annoyed puff, but Ilya’s already turning a corner down the long hallway towards his favorite part of the back patio, where it narrows together and hangs out over the wide expanse of the green lawn that lies below. He rummages through the side pockets of his suitcase, pulling out a small metal tin and then digs through five different pockets across his two jackets before finally finding his lighter, cursing softly to himself in Russian all the while.

He’s always losing his fucking lighter, it’s ridiculous. Every day of his life, he does this same old dance, juggling pockets and pairs of pants until his fingers finally make purchase around the heavy metal edges of the lighter that he stole from his father years and years ago. He could get a new one, of course, but he likes this one – he likes the weight of it, the way it feels in his hands. He likes the swirls and curves in the etchings, the way the flowers contrast sharply with the purpose of the object. This lighter was too pretty for his father, anyways. Ilya did him a favor, stealing it out of his uniform pocket all those years ago.

He collapses into a patio chair with a groan, digging a joint out of the small metal tin and placing it between his lips. He was saving these for a special occasion, and perhaps this may not be special, but it’s certainly an occasion. Ilya flicks the lighter, lighting the tip of the joint until it burns amber all the way around the tip and he breathes in that sharp, earthy taste, the smoke hitting the back of his mouth.

It’s different from a cigarette, of course, but he is actually trying to cut back and besides, Shane keeps mentioning his time in the hospital with a strange sort of wistfulness, like he wishes he could’ve enjoyed it a little more, finally getting the opportunity to get out of his own head so completely, for all that it was embarrassing, how adorably high he was when Ilya came to visit him on that day. So perhaps this can be a little like that, if Shane wants it to be.

Ilya will certainly need it, if this talk with Hayden fucking Pike goes down about as well as he expects it to.

Ilya tosses the lighter onto the teak patio table, pulling an empty clay pot over from the middle of the table to use as a makeshift ashtray. He pulls one knee up onto the chair, resting his chin on the edge of his knee and for several minutes, he smokes in silence before he remembers, all of a sudden, that this is not the meditative experience of smoking tobacco and that if he doesn’t put out this joint, he’s going to be entirely too stoned to put up with whatever’s coming for him next. He puts out the joint and then digs his phone out of his pocket, swiping it open. He really has no idea how long he’ll be out here, so he might as well get comfortable.

Ilya settles in for a good doomscroll, and he likes that word, it really does sum the whole thing up so completely. First, he checks the MHL news sites for any major off-season news - there’s not much, besides some silly hand-wringing about Scott Hunter, then he pulls up the

app for the Moscow Times, reading through a few headlines before closing the app in disgust, and then he texts back and forth with Sveta for a little bit. She's dating someone new, a woman from London who also happens to hate hockey, so Ilya doesn't expect it to last long. The longer he sits there, the more the back of his mind starts to go a little loose, a little fuzzy, and actually, he's not entirely sure how long he's been out here. Shane hasn't called for him, so he supposes it's not time to murder Pike just yet.

Then, the sound of the sliding door getting pushed open. "You're smoking again," Shane says, his voice tight, like he's actually annoyed about the smoking, which – he probably would be, but there's something extra underneath the surface that tells Ilya that the conversation with Pike did not go as well as he had hoped.

Ilya cranes his neck around, holding up the metal tin between two fingers. "Marijuana won't give me lung cancer."

Shane melts into the side of the doorway, just a little. "Yeah, okay. As long as you promise to share."

"What's mine is yours, Shanya," Ilya says, also holding up the lighter for Shane to grab, enjoying the way his words drive a flush up the back of Shane's neck.

"Hey man, do you have any beers or what – holy shit, are you smoking weed?" Pike's voice rings out from the doorway, following Shane close behind out onto the patio, and Ilya shoulders slump. Damn. He'd been hoping Pike took off. "See, this is what I mean, man. I don't care that you're gay but shit like this, this isn't like you at all."

Ilya rolls his eyes. "Tell me, Pike. When did Shane become one of your fifteen children?"

Pike scowls at him in response, opening up his mouth to argue, but Shane beats him to it.

"Shut up, Ilya," Shane snips, and then he flicks open the lighter, struggling to strike the flame. "I'm not exactly having a normal day, Hayden. I've been hiding this for a really long time and now, somehow, we've been caught twice in my own home. By the three most important people in my life, no less. It's not exactly how I wanted this to go."

Shane struggles with the flip-strike motion on the lighter some more, before letting out an annoyed huff. His entire frame is vibrating with a poorly contained energy; he looks like how Ilya often feels, like his own thoughts could swallow him whole.

Ilya stands up from the table, crowding into Shane's space and plucking the lighter right out of his hand. He holds up the lighter with one hand, and then holds up the other so that he can cup the flame and gestures meaningfully with his chin at Shane.

Wordlessly, Shane places the joint between his lips, his deep brown eyes locking right onto Ilya's, staring straight into them right as Ilya flicks the lighter, re-lighting the cherry with ease. "Remember you must breathe it in, okay?"

"Fuck you," Shane coughs out, barely holding in the smoke for a few seconds before he starts hacking it up again and Ilya steps away, smothering a smile.

He drops back into his chair and then Shane follows suit, sitting down in the chair next to him and after a few long, awkward beats, Pike sits in the last chair across from them. Shane holds his hand out across the table, passing the joint across to Pike, who takes it eagerly and inhales for much, much longer.

And then nothing. They pass the joint around a couple of times before Ilya finally puts it out, and then for several long minutes, they sit in almost complete silence.

Until at last, Pike breaks the silence. "Wait. Did you two know about Scott Hunter?"

Shane props his head up on the palm of his hand, leaning heavily onto his arm. He's gone a little soft around the shoulders, the tense lines around his face loosening into something a little more pliable. "No, but I think he knew about us."

Ilya feels his eyebrows pull together. "What, because of the fight?"

Shane's fight with Scott Hunter, well. It was so long ago now, it's funny to think about. Ilya, watching the fight and finding himself torn between lust and pure, unadulterated delight. Shane, calling him later and spilling anxieties down the phone. He didn't take it all that seriously, back then. Hunter could've meant anything by it.

Now, Ilya's not so sure.

"I knew hooking up in the hotel room next to him was a bad idea," Shane says, groaning into the palm of his hand. "I did tell you."

"Yes, you had many complaints that night," Ilya says dryly, leveling Shane with an impatient look. "Did not enjoy yourself at all."

"That's not the point, Ilya!" Shane blushes, his eyes going a little glassy. He must be picturing it. Well, as he should be. It was a very good night.

Ilya holds up two fingers like he's measuring something in the air. "I think it is a little bit the point, moya dusha."

On the other side of the table, Pike's eyebrows rise all the way up to his hairline.

"Wait. Which All Stars was this?" Pike breaks in, grabbing hold of the joint again and re-lighting it. He looks like the pre-roll in his hand is the only thing keeping him together.

"Oh, our first one," Shane says easily, waving a dismissive hand, but the act of it throws off his balance and he slumps sideways a little, catching himself at the last minute. "Heh, whoops. I'm good."

"You were hooking up with this asshole all the way back then?" Pike blurts out, jerking a thumb in Ilya's direction. "Why?"

"I was dickmatized," Shane says simply, his voice going a little floaty, and Ilya barks out a laugh, barely managing to cover his smile with his hands.

Pike just stares, his hands smacked flat on the table. “*WHAT?*”

It should probably bother him more, how little Pike likes him, but the feeling is mutual, anyways, and if they can be halfway civil for Shane, well. That has to be good enough, right?

Besides, Ilya has more pressing concerns. “Who taught you that word? Was it Rose?”

“Who else?” Shane says, letting out a little giggle that makes Ilya wish that Pike would just disappear so he can lean over and kiss Shane all over his adorable face.

Ilya sits back in his chair, folding his arms over his chest. “And what does it mean?”

Pike lets out a loud grunt of annoyance, but Ilya just lets a small curl of satisfaction cross his lips. He’s about seventy percent sure that he knows what it means, but he thinks it’d be fun if Shane spelled it out. He wants to hear him say it.

“Hypnotized by dick,” Shane explains promptly, like he was waiting for Ilya to ask, to give him the opportunity to show it off. There’s a faint blush at the apple of his cheeks but there’s something pleased and smug lingering at the edges of his lips.

Now Ilya wants to kiss him even more. “And yet you played - what’s that phrase? Hard to get? For almost two years.”

Shane purses his lips at Ilya, flapping a dismissive hand at him. He is *very* stoned after just a few hits. “It’s just because I wanted it too badly. You know that.”

Ilya did not know that but still, he can’t deny that it’s nice to hear. The urge to kiss Shane once more rises but instead, he leans across the space between them, pressing the tip of his index finger to Shane’s nose. “Careful, Shanya. You give me ideas not appropriate with your best pal Pike sitting right here.”

Shane crinkles his nose, the left corner of his lips tipping upwards, smiling up at Ilya with dreamy-eyed affection.

“And I am still sitting right here, by the way,” Pike grumbles. “You have any more joints? This one’s almost done.”

Ilya wordlessly tosses the metal tin across the table. Shane, meanwhile, holds out a hand, pulling at the armrest of Ilya’s chair.

“Ilya, you’re too far away,” Shane complains, and what else can Ilya do except stand up, shifting his chair around the table so that they’re closer together, Shane winding his ankle around Ilya’s leg, and tucking one hand into the crook of Ilya’s elbow.

“Much better,” Shane murmurs, still with that dopey little smile of this. This was a very good idea. It’s nice, not having to worry about nurses and doctors walking in on them like this.

There’s the flick of a lighter, the long inhale of Pike breathing in deep.

Belatedly, Ilya remembers that this man supposedly has a newborn. “Who is watching fifteenth baby, Pike?”

“She’s my fourth, you dick,” Pike says, tapping the edge of the joint against the makeshift ashtray. “And Jackie’s parents came to stay with us so I could come check on Shane. Since, you know, he was holed up here all on his own and wasn’t really answering my texts.”

“There’s been a lot going on,” Shane protests, with no small amount of apology to his tone. Ilya frowns; he doesn’t think Shane should apologize for anything. “Dinner with my parents and, uh...” Shane trails off, either because he’s lost his train of thought, or he’s realized he can’t just tell Pike how much sex they’ve been having. Perhaps a mix of both. “It’s just, you know. It’s a lot.”

“Don’t tell me David and Yuna actually like this guy,” Pike says, hooking his thumb at Ilya again. It is getting only a little bit tiresome, the way Pike keeps talking about Ilya like he’s not even here.

Shane pulls away from Ilya, folding inwards with his arms across his chest and for a brief, infinitesimal moment, Ilya feels the sharp sting of rejection, but then Shane tilts his chin up, dogged and steadfast. “Hayden, come on. Try a little harder.”

Pike clenches his jaw hard enough that there’s a tick; an impressive feat, given how much weed he’s smoked. Personally, Ilya is feeling loose and limbless, happy to settle back in his chair and let Shane take the lead for once.

Shane leans forward, gaze intent, uncrossing his arms and then twisting his hands together in his lap. “Look, you have five minutes and you can ask whatever question you want. You’ll, uh. You’ll never get the truth out of me any easier than right now.” He grins lopsidedly, still aware enough for that edge of self-deprecation. Ilya may never stop being floored by how brave this man is.

“Why didn’t you tell me,” Pike grits out, after a long stretch of silence. “I’m not some homophobe, dude. You know me.”

Ilya stills, a fine ribbon of anger winding its way through his gut, but Shane stops him with a palm on his thigh.

“I couldn’t,” Shane says with a simple shrug, a tone that brooks no argument. It’s not like Shane to stand up for himself like this. Pride rises in Ilya’s chest, fierce and sudden. “I didn’t even understand it myself.”

Pike doesn’t seem to know what to do with that answer. He stares for a beat and then says, “so, uh, Rose Landry?”

Shane, surprisingly, just lets out another giggle. “A last ditch attempt at dating women. Could not have gone worse. Well, actually...” He cocks his head to the side, considering. He sinks back down against Ilya’s side, all annoyance with Pike already forgotten, even as his old London Knights tee stretches tight around his biceps and shoulders; it’s very distracting, the

way Ilya wants to trace the strong cords in those muscles, letting his fingers chart the path. “Sure, the sex was really bad, but I did get a great friend out of it.”

Ilya pinches his lips together to keep from laughing; Pike, for his part, just stares in disbelief.

“Dude,” Pike says, breaking in. “I don’t think that’s a super chill thing to say about Rose Landry.”

Shane snorts, waving a hand. “Oh no, the bad sex was all my fault. Trust me. And *she* knew it. Totally called me out on it.”

“Huh,” Pike says, his tone curiously thoughtful. “Couldn’t get it up for Rose Landry. I guess you really are gay.”

Shane just sighs, flipping him the middle finger.

“But that still doesn’t answer the question of why this guy, though,” Pike says, like a broken fucking record.

“We are...compatible,” Ilya says, placing the word down between them like their own private joke.

But instead Shane immediately blanches, his eyes widening, and he leans over to pinch Ilya on the thigh. “Shut *up*, Rozanov.”

“I am not only talking about sex, you pervert,” Ilya says, placing the abandoned joint between his lips and then lighting it deftly with one hand. He holds in the smoke for a long three beats and then exhales in a perfect circle, lips curling upwards. “Although da, yes, that too.”

Shane buries his face in both hands, letting out a groan, but he’s such a fucking liar, Ilya sees the smile that’s spreading across his face anyways, shy but pleased. “Yeah, okay. That’s, uh. That’s true.”

“Montreal is the gayest city in Canada, dude,” Pike protests. “You’re telling me there aren’t any nice, normal guys there you could’ve hooked up with? God, don’t tell me it’s only been *this* guy the whole time?”

“*This* guy is not invisible, Pike,” Ilya says, “you should know this, because of how many times I get around you to score.”

Pike just turns to Shane with a plaintive stare, as if Ilya’s just gone and proven his point for him. Ilya manfully resists the urge to stick his tongue out.

Shane rolls his eyes, cupping the side of his face with one palm. He’s still leaning too far to the side out of his chair, but with as close as they are now, this leaves him tilting sideways into Ilya’s shoulder, his entire left side a comforting, familiar weight. “Yeah, there were...a few other guys, here and there. Just, uh. One night stands or whatever. I was scared shitless every time, so.”

Ilya straightens, turning to Shane now with raised eyebrows of his own. This is news to him and a hot brand of possessiveness runs right through him at the idea of any other man getting to see Shane the way Ilya sees him, syrup-sweet and falling apart at the seams. “Is that so?”

“Don’t,” Shane says, “it’s not like you weren’t sleeping with other people too, mister I have a girl in every port.”

“Maybe not *every* port,” Ilya allows, and he snags the still-lit joint from Pike, letting the burn hit the back of his throat with satisfaction. He shrugs his shoulders, thumbing the side of his nose impatiently, forcing himself to shake off the irrationality of his anger. It’s easier like this, with his mind feeling like it’s wrapped in cotton, the intensity of his thoughts slipping away like so much smoke in the wind. Shane is so earnest and wide-eyed, and he looks at Ilya with so much love that any bad feeling just slips away, easy as that. Shane’s right, anyways. He has no right to this jealousy. “Is slight exaggeration.”

“And that’s another thing I don’t get,” Pike says, now stabbing his finger across the table at Ilya. “You’ve slept with like, a thousand women! Everyone in the league knows that.”

For a brief moment, Ilya entertains the idea of making a show of it, like he’s really doing the math in his head, adding them all up, calculating the true number for a woman in every port, but anyways, it’s not even particularly true. Or at least it hasn’t been for years. Besides, he’s entirely too stoned for mathematics. “You never hear the word bisexual, Pike? You know, some people like apples. Some people like oranges. Some people like apples *and* oran– “

“Oh fuck you, I know what it means,” Pike snaps back.

Ilya rolls his eyes. “Then you know I can sleep with a million women and still fall in love with your best buddy Shane.”

And Pike – well, Pike freezes up completely. He drops the lighter to the table with a hard clunk and for a minute, he just stares at them both from across the table, long enough that Ilya’s eyebrows start to draw together and he plays the moment back, wondering what on earth he could’ve said to get that kind of reaction, until all of a sudden, it clicks.

Ilya drapes an arm around Shane’s shoulders, letting his palm fall to the nape of Shane’s neck, his thumb tracing nonsense shapes across the knobs along Shane’s spine. It’s such a small touch, the sort of casual affection that he’s still getting used to, and he can’t help the soft pang of satisfaction he gets at how Shane melts into his touch. “Ah, the love part is a surprise to you.”

Pike turns to Shane with another pleading stare. “Are you also - “

“In love with him?” Shane answers, with zero self-consciousness. A far cry from the man who fled Ilya’s house in Boston not so long ago. “Yeah, I am.”

“Well, fuck,” Pike says. He closes his eyes, pinching the bridge of his nose between two fingers. “Does that mean I have to start liking this guy?”

“Probably, yeah,” Shane says, at almost the exact same time that Ilya quips out, “no, don’t bother, I don’t like you much either.”

Shane lets out another long-suffering sigh before digging his elbow into Ilya’s side. “Behave.”

“If you say so, moya dusha,” Ilya says, pressing a kiss to the top of Shane’s head. “And to answer your question, Pike. David and Yuna like me very much. I’m delightful.”

“I think I need a drink,” Pike sighs forlornly, looking very much like a man who’s realized halfway through Game 7 that his team is going to lose no matter what he does. It’s deeply satisfying.

Shane just glances up at Ilya with those wide brown eyes of his; the tension that he so often holds in his frame has vanished, only to be replaced with this simple, pliant comfort. *I am not getting up from this chair right now*, this expression seems to say, and Ilya bolsters himself, pushing up from his own chair with a small huff. “Okay, fine. Pike, you want beer?”

Pike gives him a small, sarcastic salute. Once more, Ilya does not stick out his tongue. He’s being very brave tonight; he can only hope that he’ll be rewarded for it later.

“My mouth feels dry,” Shane complains, tugging lightly on Ilya’s hand, still looking up at him with that small, beatific expression, and honestly, with as much as Shane obsessively hydrates these days, he’s surprised this demand hasn’t come sooner.

“Okay, okay, two beers and a ginger ale. Coming right up,” Ilya says, and then he gets to enjoy the way Pike’s face twists into horrified disbelief once more.

“I’m telling you, Hayden,” Shane says, now leaning so far across the table that his chest is practically pressed all the way against it. “You don’t even know, you’re gonna like him *so* much one day. But not the way I do, okay?”

“Dude, trust me, I don’t think we’re in danger of that,” Pike says dryly, so Ilya just wiggles his eyebrows at him before taking off through the sliding glass doors, making his way towards the kitchen.

He can take his time coming back, give them another few minutes to themselves. After all that, he’s probably earned himself a break from Hayden fucking Pike.

And maybe a secret cigarette, he thinks, already pocketing the lighter as he walks away.

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Ilya wanders into the kitchen while Shane’s out on his morning run, only to find Pike standing next to Shane’s fancy, complicated coffee machine, with Pike glaring at it like it’s about to challenge him to a duel, or burst into flames.

“The machine fuck your mother, or what?”

Pike startles, whirling around with a glare and then he eases back against the kitchen counter with a scowl. “Shit, Rozanov, wear a bell.”

“I was not quiet,” Ilya points out. “You are hungover from half a joint and three beers. For a hockey player, is embarrassing.”

Ilya also has a slight headache forming at the base of his skull, but that’s probably more from Pike’s presence than anything else. Either way, he’s not going to admit it.

“Why did I think you would be less annoying in the morning?” Pike complains. “Come on, man, I haven’t even had my coffee yet because I can’t seem to figure out this stupid fucking thing.”

Ilya huffs, pushing Pike out of the way to fill the coffee maker with espresso and water in quick, effortless motions, letting this brand-new muscle memory take over as he works, and then wiping the counter clear of any espresso spillover because if there’s one thing that he’s learned about Shane, it’s that he *hates* mess. He sets it up to make two cappuccinos, pulling down two identical coffee mugs and then pressing start on the machine.

“There, is not so hard,” Ilya says, with no small amount of satisfaction.

“You know, Rozanov, you can pull this bullshit all you want, it’s not gonna change that I know the truth about you now,” Pike says, his stupid face adopting an impossibly insufferable smugness.

Ilya crosses one foot over the other, leaning back against the countertop. “Which is?”

“That you, Rozanov,” Pike says, still with that annoying smugness, “are completely and utterly *whipped*.”

Ilya remembers being confused the first time he heard this word used in the locker room. His rookie year, Marleau was always giving one of their aging veterans shit for how he doted on his wife. Ilya spent a week thinking that perhaps Bowzer and his wife got up to some really kinky shit, that somehow they had no problem telling the whole team about it. Marleau laughed his ass off when Ilya explained this to him, later, in private. English is a stupid, clumsy language, anyways, but now, he knows exactly what Pike is trying to say.

“Yeah, so?” Ilya says, lifting a shoulder in a shrug. “Your wife gives you fifteen babies, and you are not whipped?”

“We only have four kids, asshole,” Pike says, for possibly the tenth time in the past twenty-four hours. It’s a good joke; Ilya hasn’t tired of it yet and besides, it’s still getting under Pike’s skin, which is all he really needs it for.

“Maybe fifteen if you were whipped,” Ilya says smartly, right as the cappuccinos finish brewing. “Is a good thing, no? You don’t want me to be good to your best friend?”

Pike’s mouth drops open, wide enough to start catching flies in the early summer heat. “Fuck, shit. Goddamnit. You’re right.”

“Happens more than you think,” Ilya says serenely, handing a cappuccino over to Pike with a grin. If he paces this morning right, he’ll have just enough time to cook up the egg white omelets that Shane insists on after his morning run, followed by a single oat milk cappuccino. Shane refuses to even consider dairy, most days, because he is an insane man who eats the strangest fucking things on the planet, but Ilya loves him, so he’ll make the silly, disgusting cappuccino anyways. “Don’t worry, Pike, I promise. You will get used to it.”

End Notes

- I discovered that Russian fans of the show have started calling Shane “Shanya” and I’ve decided that’s wonderful and Ilya should do the same.
- Kotik = kitten, little cat
- Moya dusha = my soul, but please feel free to correct my Russian if I’ve made any mistakes, it is not a language that I’m super familiar with!
- some of the dialogue between Hayden and Ilya is borrowed from the “Dinner with Hayden” extra story at the end of Heated Rivalry, which inspired this whole thing really because I wanted to do a remix that sets them off on a slightly different tone.
- hi my name is defcontwo and I love to place my favorite characters into uncomfortable interpersonal situations.

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