

Side Effects May Include Honesty

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Side Effects May Include Honesty

by [LeCheesie](#)

Summary

Shane takes a nasty fall on the ice during his game against Ilya. In the hospital, he talks just a little too much to his nurse who is definitely not Googling him and his "rival" during her breaks.

Notes

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

Hospitals, especially at night, feel *wrong*. Not that Shane can see much beyond the ceiling, his eyes constantly focusing and unfocusing. He hears a ringing in his ears, his eye fucking hurts, and his head is pounding. His brain feels too big for his skull and his skull feels too big for his skin and he's trying to pay attention to whatever the EMT is saying.

Stay awake? Eat cake? Shane blinks, closing his eyes for two seconds too long, and the EMT shakes his shoulder until he opens them.

"You have to stay awake, Shane."

Shane groans. "Did someone tell him I'm okay?"

"Who, Shane?"

Shane closes his eyes again. It's becoming increasingly difficult to keep them open. He knows he needs to. He can't go to sleep. He has to stay conscious. But God, it hurts, everything hurts.

"Ilya," he finally says. His words sound far away to his own ears. Like cotton balls were shoved into his ear canals. Like he's swimming underwater and his words don't quite make it out right. "Someone tell Ilya I'm okay."

"You *have* to stay awake, Shane."

Shane groans again, turning his head to the side and opening his eyes. He doesn't even remember getting to the hospital. Had he gotten here in an ambulance? He clenches his fingers, flexes his toes. He runs his tongue along the inside of his upper teeth. "Ilya doesn't like hospitals."

The lights are too bright, and Shane feels itchy. So terribly itchy. He wants to strip off all of his clothes and crawl out of his skin. He looks back up at the ceiling, his vision blurring as the ceiling tiles fly by. He hears conversation, but he only catches tidbits of it between the awful ringing in his ears.

"Any vomiting?"

"Not yet."

Shane winces as the night replays in his head.

The sickening crack of his head hitting the ice.

The rush of panic when he can't move.

The searing pain all down his side.

The thought of Ilya, terrified, watching him fall. God, he wants to tell Ilya he's okay. His head is swimming and his brain feels heavy, foggy, like he can't quite think of anything

beyond Ilya and if *he's* okay.

Suddenly, everything is still. Shane feels a wave of nausea roll over him. He closes his eyes again. "I'm awake, I promise. Did anyone tell Ilya I'm okay? Can you tell him I can move my toes? I'm not paralyzed. Please, I know he's worried about me. I don't want him to worry. I hate it when he worries."

He opens his eyes when he's shifted from the gurney onto a hospital bed. There's a nurse here. She looks young, maybe his age. Her dark hair is pulled back into a bun, and she's nodding at whatever the EMT is telling her.

Shane tugs at his jersey. It feels too tight, too hot, too restraining. White-hot pain shoots through him when he moves his arm. "Fuck, ow."

The EMT leaves, and the nurse moves towards him, holding a clipboard.

"Can you tell me your name?" She asks.

"Shane."

"Last name?"

"Hollander..?"

"Are you asking if that's your name?"

Shane furrows his brows. "Shane Hollander."

"Good. Do you know what day it is?"

"Tuesday. I think. I had a game against Ilya on Tuesday. I think that was today." He blinks, slowly, sluggishly. His eyelids feel like they're weighted down by a ton of bricks. He touches the side of his face, his fingers tracing along the side of his jaw. It all hurts. Everything hurts.

She furrows her brows and writes something down. "Do you know where you are?"

Shane clears his throat. "The hospital. In Montreal."

"Great," she says. "Okay, I need to check your blood pressure, so we need to take off some of your gear."

Shane nods, once, and then he sits up just enough for her to help him out of his jersey and his pads. He grits his teeth at the pain in his shoulder, but the nurse notices it and frowns. "I think I hurt my shoulder," Shane says. "It doesn't feel very great."

The nurse snorts, moving her hand to his shoulder, her fingers moving along his collarbone. "I think you fractured your collarbone, but we'll have to get some x-rays done to make sure."

"Nooooo," Shane says, falling back against the pillows. "I can't have a broken bone, I need to play. What am I supposed to do if I can't play? How will I see Ilya? I don't even know if

he'll be here again any time soon. I can't just go to Boston if there isn't a game. We can't just show up at each other's houses for *no reason*."

The nurse reaches for his arm, pulling it straight to rest against the bed before wrapping the blood pressure cuff around his arm. "What sport do you play?"

The cuff tightens, squeezing his arm.

"Hockey."

"Hm," the nurse says. "Sorry, I don't really know much about hockey. Or sports in general."

"Ilya is going to kill me," Shane whispers. "If I don't die here in this hospital, he's going to kill me."

"Why is he going to kill you?"

"I was distracted. I wasn't playing at my best. I let Cliff knock me out. I *never* get distracted. This is going to make Ilya break things off. I ruined everything."

The nurse removes the cuff from his arm, and Shane pouts. The words are coming out faster than his brain can filter them. He knows it. He's aware of the word vomit spilling from his stupid mouth and he *can't stop*. He cannot for the life of him shut his goddamned mouth.

"Who is Ilya?" The nurse asks. Shane watches her as she jots down more information on what he assumes is his chart.

She's probably just trying to keep him talking, but the words fall out before he can stop them. "My rival. Kind of. I mean, we're rivals in the sense that we've been playing against one another for almost ten years," he pauses. "Wow. Ten years."

"Are rivalries usually this.. intense?"

Shane laughs. It hurts to laugh. He says as much, and then closes his eyes. "It's only intense because I think I'm in love with him. Probably. I mean, I think about him all the time when I'm not with him. I want to kiss him. I miss him, I hope he knows I'm okay." He opens his eyes again. "Have you told him I'm okay?"

"I don't know him, but I'm sure someone will let him know."

Shane smiles, closing his eyes once more. "Good. That's good."

"You really do have to stay awake until the doctor can see you."

Shane groans again. "Should I keep talking?"

"Tell me more about this Ilya, since it seems to keep you awake well enough."

"Oh no," Shane says. His eyes slide open again. "You can't tell *anyone* anything I say."

The nurse looks up at him from his chart. "I couldn't even if I wanted to."

Shane nods, like he understands. He doesn't, really. He talks anyway. "Ilya is... loud."

"Does he like to yell?"

Shane shakes his head. "He doesn't yell. I mean, as a person. He's loud." He purses his lips, trying to find the words. "His presence is so.. huge. He takes up so much space. Have you ever met anyone who fills a room without even saying a word? He's larger than life. Or maybe just to me. He's like a magnet. Or the North Star. *My* North Star. I just.. I always find him. No matter what. No matter where we are, I know where he is."

"Is that a good thing?"

"Usually." Shane sighs. "But sometimes it makes my heart ache. Have you ever cared about something so much that it physically hurts? I want to curl into a ball and cry sometimes. I don't know how to explain it."

The nurse nods. "I think I know what you mean."

He smiles, slowly, trying to ignore the pain blooming behind his eyes. He has such a headache. He wants to sleep. He wants to close his eyes and go to sleep and dream about Ilya and a better life and better circumstances and a world where he can love Ilya and not be afraid and-

"Shane," the nurse says, softly. "Does your head hurt?"

"It's more like pressure. It feels like there's a band wrapped around my brain and it-" Shane swallows. "Do I have a concussion?"

He's had concussions before. They always felt a lot like this. But he knows last time he had a concussion he talked to his nurses about hockey for hours on end. He knows because his mother told him.

"Probably, but we won't really have solid answers until the doctor sees you."

"I'm going to die before the doctor even gets here. How long has it been? An hour?"

"About ten minutes"

Shane frowns. "Have I really only been yapping for ten minutes? That doesn't sound right."

"You have only been yapping for ten minutes."

"He doesn't like hospitals much. He said they make him uncomfortable. I wonder if he'll even want to come see me. I think it'll bring back some painful memories for him. I don't want to be the reason for that. Maybe someone should tell him not to come."

"Ilya?"

“No, actually, maybe he should come. I want him to see me. I think he’s worried. He’s definitely worried. He likes to pretend he doesn’t feel anything, you know. He acts so tough and unbothered and nonchalant.” Shane huffs. “He’s totally chalant. The most chalant.”

“I’m sure he’s worried about you. Even if you’re on different teams, I’m sure you guys have some sort of a friendship.”

“Friendship. Ha-ha. More like situationship. Borderline relationship, but he’s afraid to love and I’m afraid of the world.”

“This sounds like something you shouldn’t be talking to me about.”

“Probably not, but I don’t think my brain to mouth filter is working right now.”

The nurse snorts in amusement. There’s a knock on the door, and the doctor enters.

She pulls up a chair and introduces herself, and then the questions come. He’s so tired of answering questions.

“Any history of serious injuries, Shane?”

Shane squints as though it will help him think harder. He draws in a breath. He’s had a lot of injuries. It comes with the sport. Serious ones, though?

“I have been concussed,” Shane replies. “A couple times. At least twice. I’ve broken some fingers, toes..”

“Anything else? Any major surgeries?”

Shane puckers his lips. “No.”

The doctor nods, and then suddenly Shane has a bright light shined into his eye. “Hm,” the doctor says, and then the light is shining into his other eye.

“Fuck.” Shane says, squeezing his eyes shut when she’s done. “I can’t see now. I’m blind.”

“Your eyes are very sensitive right now, but it will pass.”

“What if I can’t ever see again? How will I see Ilya? I’ll never see his beautiful face again.”

“You have a concussion,” the doctor says, ignoring his groans. “We’ll have to get you scanned, and then some x-rays to check your shoulder and collarbone. Other than that, you just need some rest and maybe some pain medication to help you get some sleep.”

Shane watches the doctor pull the nurse out into the hallway, and his thoughts drift back to the game. They were winning, he thinks, just before he was knocked out. He remembers hearing Hayden yelling. He remembers Ilya telling him to open his eyes. He remembers mumbling something to the EMT about telling Ilya he’s okay, but he doesn’t think anyone told him.

He moves his arm to look for his phone in his pocket, then remembers he left it in his locker back at the arena. He can't call anyone, text anyone, or do *anything*.

The nurse returns moments later to let him know that he needs to get some x-rays. It all goes by in a blur; him being told to stay still while the machine works. Him being told that he has a fractured collarbone. The nurse setting him back up in his bed with a brace and an IV full of pain medicine.

Shane doesn't remember falling asleep, but he wakes up and immediately flicks his gaze to the window. It's dark outside. He's not sure if he's been asleep for a couple of hours or an entire day.

He groans and flexes his fingers, shifting on the bed. A bolt of pain shoots up his side and he looks down, finding a bruise forming on the side of his ribs. "God damnit."

The door opens and he looks up to see his nurse. He doesn't even know her name. Did she tell him her name?

"How long have I been asleep?" He asks. His head feels stuffy, full of pressure. It's like someone scooped out his brain and replaced it with cotton. Everything feels too sharp and too bright. He wants to cover his eyes and sleep for years.

"Only a couple of hours."

He feels sticky and itchy and he wants to take a shower and his mouth is dry and his eyes hurt. He wants to say that, but instead he blurts out: "Do you have any kids?"

The nurse pauses what she's doing with his IV bag to look at him. "No."

"I don't either. I think I want some, though. I see Hayden with his kids all the time and it makes me, I don't know.. Envious? I want kids. I can't have any, though, for obvious reasons, though Ilya definitely tries."

The nurse's eyebrows shoot up towards her hairline. "Oh."

"Did I say that part out loud?" Shane covers his mouth with his hand. "Sorry. I don't know why I can't stop talking. The words just keep falling out of my mouth and I can't stop it."

The nurse smiles at him, giving his arm a gentle pat. "It's alright. Pain medication can do that. And concussions."

"You won't tell anyone, right?"

"Your secrets are safe with me."

"Great," Shane says. "Fantastic."

"Does your head still hurt?"

"A little."

“Tell me if it gets any worse. Do you want some water?”

Shane swallows. His tongue feels like sandpaper in his mouth. “Yes, please.”

The nurse leaves again and Shane sighs. He looks around the room and then down at the needle stuck into his arm. He’s been through this before, multiple times, but it never really gets any easier. He doesn’t like hospitals much, either, but not for the same reasons that Ilya doesn’t.

He just doesn’t like the strange sterilized feel. It’s off-putting.

He looks out the window again to find the sun peeking over the buildings across the street. He wonders if anyone will come to see him today. His parents, probably. Hayden, maybe.

The door opens and Shane blinks. “Am I dreaming?”

Ilya is in the doorway with a cup in his hand. The nurse must have given it to him. “Shane.”

“Ilya!”

The door closes loudly behind him when he steps inside. He looks stern. Concerned. Angry, maybe.

“You scared me,” Ilya says. His voice is clipped. He sounds tired. He doesn’t *look* tired, though. His hair is done, off his forehead. He looks..

“I know,” Shane says. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to-”

Ilya stops next to his bed, holding out the cup for him. “You are idiot.”

“Yes.”

Ilya touches Shane’s face with the back of his fingers. Shane leans into the touch and closes his eyes. “Did anyone tell you I was okay? I asked them to. I didn’t want you to worry.”

“They did,” Ilya says. “I was worried anyway.”

Shane opens his eyes and looks at Ilya. Really looks at him. The concern laced in his features makes Shane’s heart ache. He wants to kiss him. But he can’t. Not here. Instead he turns his head and kisses the Ilya’s knuckles.

The door opens and Ilya stiffens, pulling his hand back to his side. Shane clears his throat and takes a sip of the water Ilya handed to him.

“I see Ilya found his way here,” the nurse says. “I’ve heard a lot about you.”

Ilya looks down at Shane with a puzzled, searching look. Shane smiles. “I told her everything.”

“What do you mean.. Everything?”

Shane waves a hand around. “You know.”

The nurse cuts in, “Sometimes people have the tendency to talk a lot when they’re concussed. The pain medication probably didn’t help. It’s common.”

Ilya looks at her. Shane can’t see his face, but he sees the way she nods at him. “Okay,” Ilya says.

“I was worried about you,” Shane offers.

“Mm,” Ilya says.

“He asked a lot about you,” the nurse says. “He kept saying he knew you would show up.”

“Thank you,” Ilya says. His voice is soft, quiet. Shane isn’t sure why he’s thanking the nurse, but she nods again at him before leaving.

“I think I told her too much,” Shane admits. He purses his lips. “I don’t really remember what I said, though.”

Ilya touches his face again. His expression is unreadable, but Shane knows he’s relieved. “As long as you are okay.”

“I’m okay now,” Shane replies with a smile, leaning into the touch.

End Notes

Genuinely want to be a fly on the wall in the nurse's house when she sees Ilya and Shane go public.

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