

see the scene second-hand

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by [dotsayers](#)

Summary

He doesn't really know what he wants to say. He can't tell Rosanov straight up that he's sorry he won't see him; he can't say he wishes he was there. He doesn't want to know what Rosanov would say back. None of the options feel good.

(Four times Shane or Ilya were injured and couldn't see each other, and one time they could.)

Notes

I haven't watched hockey regularly since 2019 but I do remember distinctly that everyone was constantly fucking injured. I refuse to believe neither of them got hurt until the hit in episode 5, hence this fic.

EDIT: Having written up through chapter 4, I have decided (for my sanity, since term is starting tomorrow) to change the scope from 5+1 to 4+1. There's narrative reasons but also I'm time managing for my future self.

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

Chapter 1

The thing about being a professional hockey player is that, sooner or later, you're going to get injured. It's a fact of the sport, when you're on an ice rink skating full speed with ten other fully grown guys in body armour. The only thing you can do is prepare for it as much as you can, and do the work the medics set you afterwards to get back to a hundred percent.

Shane's never been injured too badly. In pee-wee, he broke a finger when one of the kids on the other team whacked him during a face-off. When he was in the Q he spent most of the time nursing a rainbow of bruises from older kids who hated him for being smaller, younger, for being different and still kicking their butts every game, skating circles around them.

It takes a season and a half in the MLH for him to break his streak - no games off for injury, illness or personal issues, a perfect record of attendance. That's the thing he thinks about first when he feels the sharp wash of pain in his ankle after some asshole on the Columbus Hornets slewfoots him as he's skating past the blue line, not even touching the puck. He doesn't even know who the guy is, really, but he knows he's a dirty fucking shithead when he hooks a foot around Shane's ankle and pushes him backwards, both hands on his chest.

He's already fallen, landing badly, when the fucker skates off and Shane tries to get up even though he knows in his heart it's going to fucking hurt.

He can't stop the sound he makes when his skate presses against the ice, the pressure against his ankle sparking a wave of agony. He hisses a breath between his teeth and tries to ignore the spots in his vision. The whistle goes just as Hayden reaches him, puts a reassuring hand on his shoulder - barely felt through the padding - and says, "Fuck, Hollzy, you okay?"

"My ankle," says Shane, through gritted teeth. He glances over at the ref, who's talking to the opposing coach about who's going to serve the five-minute major while the asshole who slewfooted him is getting sent off. Shane's just thankful it's the proper penalty; he guesses being the face of a franchise has its benefits.

Half the podcasts claim he's getting special treatment. Shane thinks he's probably getting the treatment all the players *should* be getting, and even he has cheap shots against him that get shrugged off by the refs. It's a fast-paced sport and they're expected to shrug shit off all the time.

The board says there's five minutes left in the second period. Columbus are up 2-1, both their goals scored in the first half of the first period. Shane was sort of hoping he'd manage to equalise by now. Maybe someone will do it now, as revenge, but he's got his doubts. The team's still rebuilding, after all.

Hayden helps him limp off the ice, a strong arm around his waist, and Shane appreciates the help even as the roar of the crowd lifts up and he starts feeling kind of sick.

The medics take him off Hayden while the refs signal for play to resume - Hayden's on the second shift for the power play, so he takes an extra second to clap Shane on the shoulder.

"Take care of yourself, bud," he says, before he heads over to the bench. "We need those ankles back in action for the Raiders."

Their next game against Boston is in two days, and they're on the road tomorrow. Shane can tell by the shooting pain in his leg that he's not going to be playing, unless medical science progresses to actually performing miracles in the next couple of hours.

He should text Rosanov. The thought occurs to him and he's reaching for his phone before he can process it at all. His phone is still in the locker room with his duffle bag and his post-game suit, he *can't* text Rosanov yet. And even if he did - what the fuck is he going to say? *Sorry, can't fuck tomorrow, my leg could fall off?*

"Can I have my phone?" He asks abruptly, while one of the medics is trying to untie his skate and the other is prepping an ice pack.

They glance at each other, then shrug. "I'll grab it," says the one with the ice pack. Fuck, Shane should definitely learn their names. He knows he's tipped for the C since Pascal's announced his retirement, and he figures 'knowing everyone's name' is like, bare minimum.

While he's waiting for his phone, the skate comes off. He rolls his sock down himself - he's not totally helpless, thanks - and inhales sharply at the throb of pain and the sight of his ankle, swollen up at the heel and already turning purple.

"Fuck," he says. The medic glances up at him and makes a sympathetic face.

"Definitely a sprain," she says. "I wouldn't swear to what grade, and hitting the ice that hard could contribute to the bruising. Definitely at least a week out, though."

Shane grimaces. They're in crunch mode right now, trying to scrape enough points for a wildcard spot in the Eastern Conference, and Shane's not conceited or anything but he has to admit that the team's kind of fucked without him on the first line. He's leading the team in goals and points, and his mom keeps texting him articles about his own fancy stats like he has the ability to change his shots through percentage while on the penalty kill with his hands tied and his skates on backward.

"Oh," he says. He doesn't need to dump all that on the medic - Sarah, fuck, he did know her name - and he'd rather have his phone.

The other medic - no, Shane really doesn't have that name in his brain right now - comes back with his phone and hands it over. "How's your pain level?"

"Two." The medic raises an eyebrow. He wiggles his toes and reassesses. "Uh, four?"

"Alright," she says. "Keep the ice on it, stay on the bed. Text somebody if you want, we'll check on your ankle in half an hour."

Shane nods at her and leans backwards, phone angled close to his face. Mom's texted him a quick, *Stay off that ankle!!!* His dad always calls her a witch when she does that.

He sends her a thumbs up, she replies with a red heart. He scrolls back up the thread a bit, to where she's been sending him stuff about a new deal with Bauer. If he had his computer he'd do a little research, but as it is he has to squint at the article mom sent on his phone screen.

He's procrastinating, he knows that. The game's still going on and Boston have a game against Toronto today, so there's no reason to text Ilya yet. He doesn't need to —

His phone buzzes.

Took big dive out there this period. Too scared to face me next game?

Shane rolls his eyes.

You wish.

Ankle's fucked. Might not be travelling with the team.

He puts his phone down and reaches for the ice pack, which is starting to slip. The pain in his ankle has dulled to a low throb, so long as he keeps it still. He's really fucking hoping it's worse than it looks.

His phone buzzes again while he's fussing with the pack. His jersey is sticking to his back now that the sweat's drying off, his hips ache where he hit the ice, and he's feeling off balance with one skate on and one off. There's a fluorescent light hanging above him making a little whining noise. He can just hear the game coming to the end of the second period, the muffled roar of the crowd and the snap of the puck. The ice is making his foot numb and that's making the off balance feeling worse, the same way he has to keep his gloves balanced with the velcro in the same place or tie his laces in the right pattern every game. Before he checks his phone he tackles the laces of his other skate, and sighs in relief when he slips it off.

One problem at a time. His mum used to tell him that, when he was getting overwhelmed before a game.

Too bad.

Game against Mtl too easy without legendary Hollander.

Shane feels himself smiling. He can imagine Rosanov's smirk as he wrote it, probably in the locker room between periods, sweaty and exhausted. There might be an interview posted online later, he thinks, one of the ones where Ilya's shirtless and his curls are weighed down with sweat.

Shane's watched a couple of those in the dead of night. He figures it's fine to jerk off to it, considering the last time he saw Rosanov he'd had the guy's tongue in his asshole.

You wish, he replies. But really, Rosanov's right. The Raiders have rebuilt better than Montreal, have been working on the third and fourth lines for longer and their goalie is a cut above Montreal's, who won the Vezina six years ago and is about to run out the extension he signed off the back of it. Shane doesn't have to like that Rosanov's right, though.

He doesn't really know what he wants to say. He can't tell Rosanov straight up that he's sorry he won't see him; he can't say he wishes he was there. He doesn't want to know what Rosanov would say back. None of the options feel good.

The medics are back in again to check on him by the time Rosanov texts him again. He's been staring at the messages the whole time. Mom's texted him a link to a WebMD article on sprains. Dad checks in with a quick call, so Shane puts him on speaker while he pulls off his jersey and folds it up to the side. He's coming down from the high of the game and the injury. His head kind of hurts.

Always next time.

Shane glances up as Sarah the medic pats him on the shin. "We're about to tape up your ankle," she says.

He nods in understanding. "Cool."

It hurts, obviously. He looks down at his phone, types, *Can't wait*, deletes it. Types, *I'll watch the game tomorrow*. Deletes it.

He shakes his head. Fuck, it shouldn't matter. Rosanov won't be doing this shit over their texts.

Last try.

You'd better make it worth the wait.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

One of the biggest drawbacks of playing like an asshole is that other players treat you like one.

Chapter Notes

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

One of the biggest drawbacks of playing like an asshole is that other players treat you like one.

Ilya thinks about this while he's splayed out on the ice next to New Jersey's blue line. He's taken some joy in riling up the other team, sure, in watching the smug grins slide off their faces when they realise that Boston is *not* tanking this year and their star center is out for blood. There's no need to tank, Ilya thinks. The team already has the best player in the league.

But pissing off New Jersey isn't without drawbacks, and tonight the drawback is some piece-of-shit defenseman blindsiding Ilya with a hard check into the boards, shoulder-first. He feels the joint jolt out of place and swears viciously as he overbalances, falling hard.

At least Marly is on his side. Ilya smiles to himself at the sight of gloves hitting the ice; Marly's got a hell of a rating on hockeyfights; Ilya knows because Marly likes to show it off at every opportunity. He got the league's three most recent Gordie Howe hatties and he's treated it like winning the cup every time.

Marly's a couple of punches into a takedown by the time the medics shuffle over. Ilya's managed to sit up by then, mostly for something to do besides grit his teeth against the pain, and he's happy to be pulled upright by his good arm and shuffled off to the bench to get looked over. The team taps their sticks for him - always a nice gesture - and Marly gets one final punch in on the defenseman before he skids backwards on one skate blade and falls over on his ass.

"Let's get this off," says the medic, tugging at the hem of his jersey.

Ilya leers comically. "Buy me a drink first," he says. "I don't put out for just anyone."

The medic rolls his eyes. "Not what I've heard, Rozanov," he replies, but he's got Ilya's jersey mostly off and Ilya can't really talk through a faceful of polyester. "Alright, let's take a look."

Ilya submits to the examination with relative grace. His shoulder fucking hurts but it doesn't feel the same way as when he dislocated it, years ago now, on a bad check on his junior team.

They said then that he should be careful about it, because it could happen again more easily. He's been lucky so far.

Another medic turns up while the first one is gently rotating Ilya's arm by the wrist at various angles.

"What d'you think?" She asks, curiously. Both medics work for New Jersey. Ilya appreciates their professionalism in treating him, but he'd rather have the Boston team prodding him in his soft tissue.

"Subluxation," says the first medic. He points at some part of Ilya's shoulder. "It looks like it'll reduce on its own, then we'll need to transport you to the hospital. Do some scans, check the ligaments, rotator cuff, all that stuff."

Ilya doesn't like being in hospital. It's fucking boring and they only ever have stupid soap operas on TV in stupid English.

"Alright," he says, because he probably shouldn't be rude to the guy next to his fucked-up shoulder. The pain is sharper now, and he can feel the joint shifting back to where it should be. Ilya's not sure if he should move with the pain or force himself to stay still.

It's fucking weird, feeling a joint relocate itself. Ilya shudders at the sensation.

The medics help him take his skates off, then they shuffle him off down the hallway to the parking lot.

It's only once Ilya's in the car that he realises his phone is still in the locker room.

Six hours and one sling later, he's back in the car and heading for his apartment. Marly dropped by the ER after the game finished - 3-2 win to Boston, obviously - and gave him his phone back along with his duffle bag, which is about the only thing Ilya liked about being there.

He shoved it in his pocket at the time, not in the mood for reading anything from Alexei or - God forbid - his father. Now he's in the apartment, he wrestles it out one handed and slumps back on his couch, a comfortable haze settled over him from the painkillers the hospital handed him.

Svetlana's texts, when he checks them, are a series of images of teddy bears in slings and bandages, with large text reading GET WELL SOON. Ilya takes a photo of himself pouting to send back - the angle is awkward with the phone camera faced towards him, but he makes do.

He doesn't bother reading whatever Alexei sent. His father has held off, which doesn't make Ilya feel any better. His father likes to keep a record of his failures in check, for just the right moment to tear him down.

Nasty hit tonight, Jane says. Ilya scrolls up in their messages to read the previous few - a couple of room numbers, an invitation to suck Jane's dick if Ilya thinks Montreal are going to

lose.

Ilya sucks his bottom lip between his teeth and bites down. *New Jersey think they are very tough*, he sends. *Fucking posers*.

Posers is a new word for Ilya. He suspects it is a little out of fashion to use it now, but it's very fun to say.

ESPN said it's a shoulder injury? how long are you out for?

You are reporter now? Fishing for scoop? Ilya grins as he sends it. He can imagine the irritated little frown on Hollander's face as he reads it, the firm set to his eyebrows. He takes everything so fucking seriously.

No, asshole.

Couple weeks, Ilya sends eventually. He's got a week in the sling minimum, then at least two of light activity, maybe some physical therapy. *No jerking off. Is very sad.*

He could learn to jerk off left handed, and he probably will. Hollander doesn't need to know that though.

Annoyingly, Hollander reads his mind. *Could learn to do it left handed.*

Another text comes in before Ilya can reply. *15th?*

The next game against Montreal is on the 15th. Ilya looks at his phone calendar, where his follow up appointment is booked in.

No. He's not going to be back until at least the 20th, and by then Hollander will be ahead in the scoring race and probably fucking smug about it too. Actually, no. The worst thing is that Hollander is never fucking smug about it. The guy could do with being more full of himself, not less.

Oh, Hollander sends. Then, swiftly, *Get well soon*.

Hollander doesn't text him again for the rest of the evening. Ilya watches some stupid fucking American soap opera and chews his nails off to the roots.

Chapter End Notes

You know my favourite type of miscommunication is the thing where you think your partner can read your mind and knows exactly what you're thinking and is responding to your thoughts not what you're saying. And it's even worse when you're texting your fuckbuddy who you absolutely cannot have feelings for or about.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

Thank you to [this guide](#) for helping me set up the texts here. I was getting annoyed with my own stylistic choices and thought this would be a nice change!

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

"Jesus," says Marly. "That's a nasty hit."

Ilya glances up at the hotel TV. ESPN is playing a highlight reel from the week, some NFL, some NBA, and - as always - a little touch of hockey. Ilya only catches the last half-second of the clip, sees a blue jersey on the player who's just been crushed into the boards.

"Who was it?" He asks, half-interested, scrolling Svetlana's newest Instagram story on his phone. She's just sold a car to some fat fuck on his third wife and the commission paid for her vacation, which is somewhere hot and sandy.

There's a slight stewing jealousy in Ilya's gut, but it's not like he could join her anyway. They're about to enter round two of the playoffs and the closest he's hoping to get to a vacation is the break between round two and the conference finals. Round one was easy - they were seeded against fucking Brooklyn, who last won a cup a decade ago and are still paying the guy who made it happen seven million a year to sit on the third line and rake in second assists. They swept them and won away from home, which feels good but not as good as hearing Boston scream for him, and Ilya's almost hoping the other team gets home-ice advantage for this round, so they can sweep at home.

He knows sweeping a playoff round is impressive, but it's usually the better team that wins it. It's why it was so fucking crazy when Columbus did it to Tampa. Boston playing Brooklyn was like stepping on a bug. Easy and unsatisfying.

"Hollander." Marly hits rewind on the remote and Ilya watches as it flashes back through a decent three-pointer coming out of the net, sees Hollander ragdoll himself upright and Prout skate backwards away. "Prout's a fucking beast, huh?"

"For sure," says Ilya. The clip plays again while his thumb rests on the heart button for Svetlana's story. It's got some stupid music playing over it but he swears he can hear the thud as Hollander's helmet hits the glass. It looks like it's fucking shuddering after the impact.

Then the three-pointer happens again. Ilya looks down and hearts the story, sends a couple of palm tree emojis and a middle finger. Svetlana doesn't reply, so Ilya opens ESPN and checks the NHL tab.

It's full of playoff news. Apparently San Francisco are crashing and burning against Vegas in the third period of an away game. Some paparazzi got photos of Dallas Kent at a club dancing with another player's wife and the league put out a statement about respecting player's privacy off the ice. Million-year-old Scott Hunter is on a ten-game point streak but the Admirals are still about to lose the series to Montreal.

Finally Ilya finds a recap of the last Montreal-Admirals game, which includes a longer clip of Hollander getting bodied.

It's a nasty hit, for sure. Prout comes in at an angle while Hollander's got possession and slams him, shoulder to jaw. It's too high, Ilya thinks, but now he's watched it again he can see Hollander's helmet really did take most of the impact. It's his mouth that's the real issue.

Blood drips from Hollander's mouth when he takes out his mouthguard. The refs called the play, because Hollander is their precious baby (or because Prout iced the puck, although Boston fans would definitely say the first option). Hollander skates off to the bench, bloody, and Ilya opens his messages.

Jane

Yesterday 11:58 PM

Jesus Christ

Today 15:00 PM

32 🍌

???

Is how many teeth I have. More than you 🍌

Fuck you

All your teeth are fucking plastic

My dentist would never do this. All teeth are precious diamonds.

Ilya grins down at his phone. He last lost a tooth in a game against New Jersey, two seasons ago, and his dentist then had told him he was lucky he hadn't broken his jaw on the highsticking penalty that caused it. But he'd got the penalty, and then on the power play he scored a goal so good they played it in his highlight reel before the MVP award. He didn't win, but it was still a fucking sick goal. Worth a tooth or two, for sure.

His teeth are mostly fake though. Hollander's got him there.

Unless something goes very wrong, they'll be facing each other in round 2. Montreal has New York on the ropes, leading the series 3-1 with the potential winning game coming up tonight. Hollander's probably missed practice to go to the fucking dentist, but he'll still be a beast to play against.

They don't usually fuck during playoffs. Ilya's not religious about playoffs the way the North Americans are; he doesn't shave, sure, but he's fucked around and put his socks on whatever way he likes every season they've made them and he's got a cup to show for it. Hollander is pretty serious about it though.

It doesn't surprise Ilya. Hollander is a boy made out of routines, and he wishes it wasn't so fucking cute. The stupid boring documentary went in deep on his superstitions and Ilya can just imagine the way he must prepare for every playoff game, everything gone into turbo mode to honour the insane pressure they're all under to perform.

Montreal won the cup last year. When Ilya last checked the odds, they were 3-1 against repeating, and he knows Hollander will have taken that personally. A missing tooth or two is hardly going to matter to him.

Jane

Today 15:05 PM

All your teeth are fucking plastic

My dentist would never do this. All teeth are precious diamonds.

Today 15:20PM

It's 30, okay. I lost a fucking molar.

And my wisdom tooth got taken out by a normal dentist. Not some diamond weirdo

You have wisdom????? Where did this come from. Cannot be true

Go fuck yourself

Ilya grins again. The little spike of panic he felt when he watched the clip, when Hollander was up against the glass while it shook, settles.

Chapter End Notes

(The Tampa-Columbus reference (and one other ref for the real CBJheads) is a treat for me the UK's biggest 2015-2019 CBJ fan but is obviously not in line with the canon timeline. Given this is the MLH let's imagine the Tampa Thunder and Columbus Hornets had a first round match-up in, like, 2014.)

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

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

"I'm getting another beer," says Hayden, pushing himself up from his recliner one handed. His right arm is still in a sling, keeping his shoulder immobile. Shane glances back at him over the back of the couch. "You want anything?"

Shane shakes his head. He's had three ginger ales already and his teeth feel weird.

The playoffs are over for Montreal. Shane's still nursing a rainbow of bruises from shoulder to knees, his mom made him turn off the Google alert for his own name, and he's looking down the barrel of another off-season without much enthusiasm.

It's a lot easier to be Shane Hollander when the season is on. Without hockey, he's way too conscious of the things about him that don't fit.

"Suit yourself." Hayden disappears into the kitchen. The team's planning a watch party for the cup games, but for now they're two games into the series and Shane is perfectly happy hanging on Hayden's couch while the kids entertain themselves.

Ruby and Jade are BFFs at the moment - their words - so they're curled up on the sectional with a Frozen colouring book and a lot of stuffed animals. Arthur's in his playpen playing quietly with a set of plastic dinosaurs. None of them particularly care about hockey unless the Metros playing, at which point Jackie spams Shane with photos and videos of them cheering for Daddy and Uncle Shane.

Shane keeps half an eye on them while the refs are sorting out a potential offside penalty. It gets called off while he's handing Arthur a stegosaurus he knocked out of the playpen, and then Arthur has to tell him the names of every dinosaur, so he misses whatever causes the next whistle.

Any series between Boston and LA ends up swimming in penalty minutes. Shane once ended up in a rabbit hole on Hockey Reference and spent four hours reading through all the Boston playoff series from the last thirty years, so he knows that the teams bring out the worst in each other.

Play hasn't resumed by the time he's back in his seat, easing himself into it so he doesn't press too hard on the bruise on his side that he's fairly sure is down to the bone. Hayden comes back in with a beer and a bag of chips that he throws at Shane's chest.

"I'm not gonna eat this shit," Shane grumbles.

Hayden rolls his eyes. "Buddy, we've got a whole offseason ahead of us. Eat some fucking Doritos." But he takes the bag back when Shane offers it. "What's happening?"

Shane looks back at the screen. There's a couple of refs still convened by the bench, while half of the Raiders and Reign are being held by the penalty box.

"Fuck," says Hayden. He's got his phone out to scroll Twitter. Shane tries not to do that when he's not looking for specific news, because seeing unexpected shit makes him feel like his bones are dissolving.

Ruby, in a tone clearly inspired by her mom, shouts, "Daddy, no swearing!"

Jade echoes her, then they go back to colouring. They're used to it.

Shane leans over to look. There's a video playing, and he focuses just in time to see an LA player highstick Rozanov in the face. It's clearly been filmed from the nosebleeds so there's not that much detail, but Shane can still tell when Rozanov's bleeding.

He guesses the refs are assessing how many roughing penalties will meet the bare minimum. Whoever it was that got Rozanov in the face is already in the box, with a black eye blooming and a bloody lip. Rozanov isn't there.

Hayden backs out of the video while Shane is still attempting to have a normal emotion about his archrival getting hit in the face. It's a part of the game, obviously. Shane's lost a few teeth to highsticking penalties. He knows Rozanov has, although he hasn't seen it before.

He might be in— kind of obsessed with him, but he doesn't actually have the time to watch a full eighty-two game season for another team.

"That looked nasty," Hayden comments. He's on another tweet now. It's a two-panel thing with the highsticking penalty on the top and Marleau clocking the LA player on the bottom. The caption is #FAFO, which Shane is pretty sure he can figure out from context. Hayden retweets it and taps the star.

"You don't even like him," says Shane.

"Sure," says Hayden cheerfully. "Wouldn't piss on him if he was on fire. Still, you know I'm particular about sticks to the face. Nearly ruined my good looks back when I was dating Jackie."

Shane does know about this. Hayden lost both his front teeth to an enthusiastic slapshot from a linemate while he was in the juniors.

He's not really listening while Hayden recounts the whole story like Shane hasn't heard it four or five times already. Play's resumed by now, but Rozanov's not back on the bench.

He slides back down the couch towards the twins, who can only read if something's written in lower case letters with a picture next to it. His phone slides easily out of the pocket of his shorts, and he pulls up his messages before he can think better of it.

Obviously Rozanov hasn't texted him. Shane's thumbs hover over the keyboard for a couple of seconds. The last time Rozanov texted him was before the Olympics. The last text in the thread is from Shane, and he's kind of embarrassed about it now.

He doesn't know what to write. He just has the picture of Rozanov with blood on his face stuck in his head, and he thinks if he comes up with the perfect text it might get it out.

Ruby leans her head against his shoulder. Shane strokes her hair with his free hand, absent-mindedly. After about thirty seconds of that and still no text appearing magically in his brain, Jade notices that Ruby is getting marginally more attention and crawls over Shane's lap to lean on his other arm.

This makes it significantly harder to type, but that's not the twins' fault. He puts his phone back in his pocket so he can give both girls a hug. They cheer and cuddle into his sides while Hayden laughs. He's definitely going to send Jackie photos of this. Shane still can't think what to say.

By the third period Rozanov is back on the ice. He's got a butterfly bandage holding his cheek together and he scores a hell of a fucking goal, snaps it over the goalie's left shoulder from a crazy angle.

Shane wonders if texting him would've made him miss that shot.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter we will be in uncharted territory (post-season 1/TLG timeline)! I thought about writing a chapter for the concussion but ultimately I didn't feel a two-cakes urge to rewrite the canon when it is already <3 perfect <3 to <3 me <3.

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

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

"This is so fucking stupid," Shane mutters. Ilya tuts at him and doesn't let go of his wrist. The faucet is on and tepid water is running over Shane's elbow, and has been for the last ten minutes. His first aid kit is open and spilling band-aids over the counter.

"Is not as stupid as letting your skin fall off," Ilya says. He has his other hand on Shane's shoulder and is rubbing his thumb back and forth over the fabric, which is annoyingly soothing.

"My skin's not gonna *fall off*," he snipes. His arm is getting really cold, which is probably a better feeling than his skin falling off — which he's got a really vivid mental image of now, thanks Ilya — but isn't exactly comfortable. His back kind of hurts because he has to lean at a weird angle to get his elbow in the sink. "The burn isn't that bad."

Shane suspects Ilya is going to chirp him about grill discipline for the next week, but it's hardly Shane's fault his boyfriend decided to make out with him mere feet away from the still-smouldering grill. Then Shane took one step too far backwards and tripped, sending him elbow-first into the stupid thing.

"Twenty minutes," says Ilya. He takes his hand back and presses a kiss to Shane's shoulder instead, which at least distracts him a bit from the pain in his arm. He's never burned himself on the grill before and it's pretty fucking embarrassing to do it for the first time because he was being gay and distracted.

"Twenty minutes is an insanely long time," Shane replies. And it really is. Ilya set a timer on his phone and it's only just reached single digits. His arm is really cold. Ilya insisted on wrapping a blanket round him, at least, so most of him is pretty warm. It's mid-summer in Ottawa but the evenings can still get a little chilly.

Ilya rolls his eyes. "Oh, sorry, I'll just let you get infection, huh? Let my handsome boyfriend's arm fall off?"

"My arm's not gonna *fall*—" Shane stops himself. The water keeps running over his arm. The pain has dulled to a low throb. "You're distracting me on purpose."

"Yes, obviously," says Ilya. He kiss Shane's shoulder again. "Is working?"

Shane wishes it wasn't. "No," he lies. Ilya laughs and kisses him, briefly, before checking the timer.

"Few more minutes," he says. "Then my poor boyfriend will have to suffer horrible fate, plastic wrap and cuddles on the couch."

"Oh no," says Shane, monotone. "How will your poor boyfriend ever cope?"

The last minutes pass in comfortable silence. Shane cranes his neck to look at the burn, which is just below his elbow. It's about two inches wide and one deep, and doesn't look that serious. He thinks maybe they could've got away with less time shoving his arm under running water and more cuddling, but Ilya found a website and is following the instructions to the letter.

Usually Ilya teases Shane for doing that, but Shane gets it. Whenever Ilya gets hurt he has to resist the urge to memorise the WebMD page for the injury.

Ilya turns the faucet off the second the timer beeps. Shane hits the button to silence it and then, with complete patience and grace, waits while Ilya wrestles with the roll of plastic wrap. Shane hates using it, both for the little spike of anxiety he gets over single use plastics and also because it's stupid how hard it is to find the edge with his fingernails, but he has to admit it's pretty funny watching Ilya struggle.

"You need some help, Rozanov?"

That earns him a glare. Shane laughs, then Ilya laughs, then they're stood there with a roll of plastic wrap giggling hysterically. Ilya's beautiful when he laughs, even when it's this sort of laughter where you can't make yourself stop, and that makes it funnier than it has any right to be.

"This stuff is garbage," Ilya says, when they've calmed down a little. Shane's elbow is starting to throb more insistently, and he thinks a little plastic wrap and cuddles on the couch sound pretty fucking good. "Stupid plastic shit." He finds the end and half of it tears away, leaving half still on the roll as he pulls away a long, narrow rectangle.

Shane hands him the medical tape from the first aid kit, then holds his arm out so Ilya can smooth the plastic over the burn and then stick down the edges. He's gentle with it, obviously, so careful that Shane sort of wants to cry. It's crazy that he gets to see Ilya Rozanov, scourge of the MLH, acting this way.

"Good boy," mutters Ilya, mouth curved up in a smirk, as he lets go of Shane's arm. Shane flushes, like he always does, and turns his head away. "So brave."

"Fuck off," says Shane. He knows he's gone red, but he'll have to suffer through it. The couch is calling his name.

Ilya checks his phone and swears under his breath. "Painkillers," he mutters, before heading for the medicine cabinet in the bathroom. Shane moves to the couch while he waits for Ilya to come back, burrowing into the corner with a throw blanket over his legs. It's getting late and the sun is setting over the lake, a pleasant golden glow through the floor-to-ceiling windows. Shane loves the view here.

He turns when Ilya comes down the stairs, holding a glass of water and two Tylenol. "Take your medicine," Ilya instructs, mock stern, then hands them over.

Shane drains the glass and swallows the pills. The placebo effect kicks in immediately, thank fuck. Ilya slumps down next to him on the couch and drags Shane into his side, arm curled around his shoulders.

"You're a good nurse," he mumbles, muffled by Ilya's shirt. It's one of about six Raiders shirts he packed for a two week stay, and Shane thinks it's probably his favourite. It's definitely the softest to rub his face on.

Ilya snorts and rests a hand on Shane's head, cupping the base of his skull, then starts fidgeting with a flyaway strand of hair. Shane presses further into Ilya's side, feeling warm and tired, his elbow throbbing but getting better. "You are a terrible patient."

"But you love me," Shane replies.

"But I love you," Ilya agrees.

Chapter End Notes

And that's a (plastic) wrap! Yes it did hurt me to say that instead of clingfilm.

Moments after this ends Ilya announces he's going to text Yuna about it and Shane sees his whole life unfold before his eyes. And he loves it!

End Notes

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