

sweeter from your mouth

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/76378866) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/76378866>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV) , Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Pet Names , i understand ilya because i also want to tease shane until he cries , what who said that...
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-25 Words: 6,275 Chapters: 1/1

sweeter from your mouth

by [luminvies](#)

Summary

“Don’t blink, dorogoy,” says Ilya.

Shane feels his body tense, bracing in response to the unexpected Russian. “I don’t even know what that means!” he says, irritated.

Ilya smirks. “That’s what makes it fun.” The puck drops.

Ilya wins the face-off.

Five times Ilya calls Shane pet names in Russian, and one time he finally understands them.

Notes

we are so, as you might call it, "back." merry christmas

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

Shane Hollander doesn't like Ilya Rozanov because he's an asshole.

Shane doesn't like Ilya at all, actually. He'll swear on it! In fact, he doesn't have any feelings for the guy other than pure irritation, and it's not as if Shane hasn't given him a chance. He has given him many chances, actually. There have been more opportunities than he can count, and more than a few of those opportunities have been in Ilya's own bed.

Which is annoying, but not as annoying as the man himself.

Perhaps Shane would like Ilya more if he didn't emphatically try to be a dick all of the fucking time. It's a huge *maybe* because if he knows anything about him, it's that he thinks with his dick 24/7, in more ways than one.

And if only Ilya Rozanov would stop calling him names in Russian.

He doesn't even know how it started. Yes, Ilya will go on about the limits of the English language, how he thinks it and Shane are equally boring, all in that thick accent of his, but Shane doesn't think any of that necessarily warrants being cursed out in Ilya's mother tongue. At least, that's what he thinks is happening. Ilya is rude to begin with, so it only makes sense that he is even worse when he really means it.

Shane has heard Ilya speak in Russian before. It's... nice. Shane doesn't really have any thoughts on the matter, actually. He's overheard a few phone calls—which Ilya took in front of him, since he can't understand anyway—a few of which were to his family, characterized by the strange twist to his voice whenever he speaks to them, and the others to one of his close friends whose name Shane has only gleaned by eavesdropping, Svetlana.

Ilya also has a habit of swearing in his native tongue when he's on the ice and something has gone out of his favor, like when Shane steals the puck from beneath his nose. The mannerism also carries over to when they're alone in one of their hotel rooms, and Ilya is inside of him, driving himself so deep into Shane that he feels he'll never be able to claw him out, and he's telling Shane that he's good, so good, and he's kissing him sloppily on the mouth, licking away the salt of his tears, hands feverish and sick around his hips, and he slips into another language as if by accident, the heat melting the soft of his English into thick, hard Russian.

But that's besides the point. The point is, Shane only hears Ilya speak like that unintentionally, but everything about the way Ilya says it now, those dark eyes so narrowed they appear almost cruel in his jest, makes him feel as though he needs to translate it. That Ilya would love nothing more than to catch Shane poring over a Russian dictionary to match sounds to letters, trying in vain to figure out a man who prides himself on twisting out of other people's grasps.

He's not going to do it. That would be losing. And Shane Hollander? He doesn't lose, especially not to the likes of Ilya Rozanov. Even if he always ends up in his bed.

"I'll see you... around," Shane says awkwardly. It's always a little embarrassing once the heat dies down and they're left with the remainder of what occurred between them, always in

some locked hotel room. It's not much better to be caught, literally, with his pants down. Shane is still trying to do the buttons to his jeans so he can sneak his way back to his own room, but the orgasm that Ilya fucked out of him is still trembling through his hands, which is making things difficult.

"I always do whether I want to or not, don't I?" comes Ilya's unimpressed reply from where he's still sprawled out on the king-size bed. He looks like a dream, or maybe some kind of exquisite nightmare, all laid out like that. The dim lights do nothing to hide the shape of his body, nor his nakedness, even if he has the sheet half-heartedly thrown over his crotch. If they both didn't have flights to catch the next day, Shane would have mounted him again right there, just for a chance to feel the warm heat of Ilya's bare skin before it cools in the post-humorous comedown.

"Don't act like you don't want this, too," Shane snaps, snatching his shirt off the floor before his chest can flush in embarrassment. He doesn't like how Ilya always has to exert some form of dominance over him, even when he loves it. It's just that he's such an asshole. "You came onto me first."

"I think you might want it more than me," Ilya muses, rooting for something in the desk drawer beside the desk. Even before he sees the box, Shane knows it's a pack of cigarettes. "Is cute to see you so desperate."

"Fuck you, Rozanov," Shane says, checking his pockets to make sure he hasn't left anything behind. He'd be fucked if one of Ilya's teammates raided his room and found something incriminating like an ID.

"See?" Ilya spreads his arms wide. "You do want it. Maybe next time."

"I'm leaving now," Shane announces, staring hard into the unfeeling metal of the hotel door, his traitorous hand unwilling to turn the handle until he hears Ilya's farewell, however it may come.

"Okay, moy gazonokosilka."

Shane spins around, jaw working before he's able to get any words out. "What does that mean? It's unfair when you call me names in Russian as if I have any idea what you're saying about me behind my back. If you're going to curse me out, at least do it when I'm not around."

Ilya raises his hands lazily as if surrendering, his face morphing into mock surprise. "Relax, Hollander. I thought you were on your way out. It means only the... device that cuts grass. What, you don't like it? I can switch it out for something that means *easy lay*."

There is nobody else who manages to get under Shane's skin as effectively as Ilya. At least he isn't alone in this experience, since nobody else on his team can stand him either. So why does Shane keep finding himself beneath him?

"Don't call me anything," says Shane, even though he had just came to Ilya roughly whispering *Hollander* in his ear while he fucked him.

Ilya gives a dismissive wave. Shane doesn't understand how he can act so unaffected, if it even is an act. He feels like he can keep his secrets, but he can't manage to hide anything when he's around Ilya. "I need my beauty sleep. Is necessary for a handsome guy like me. Leave, solnyshko."

Grinding his teeth, Shane decides that such a provocation doesn't deserve a reply, so he continues with what he meant to do and finally leaves, the low sound of Ilya's muttered Russian still bouncing around his head like a puck scoring a goal for the opposite team.

Nothing pisses Shane off more than when somebody tries to fuck with his game.

As different as he and Ilya are, they have one thing in agreement, and it's that hockey comes first, no matter where they are. There's a reason they have to sneak into each other's hotel rooms before curfew, why they've never spent a night over, because it'll interfere with morning practice. It's why Shane had been so fucking pissed when Ilya sexted him before the game, even though he enjoyed it quite a bit after.

Hockey is sacred. Shane hasn't spent his entire life worshipping the sport just so he can grow up and pivot to the feet of a man, golden and gorgeous that man may be. He won't. He hates the way Ilya takes his broad hand and jerks him around by the chin, directing his attention. He hates that if his gaze isn't pinned on the puck, he's thinking of something else.

The games between Montreal and Boston always carry a different energy, the night emerging through the rink in a spray of ice, shaking off the old rivalry. It's enough that the league loves to play up the strife between him and Ilya with everything that they do. If only they knew where all that rage went.

The more seasons that Shane accumulates in his resume, however, mean the more time that he has both willingly and unwillingly spent with Ilya. All of their illicit affairs and cramped bathroom confrontations. And the longer it goes on, the more the entire thing becomes muddled in his head—he sees him wink and remembers what his eyes look like when blown out in lust, he watches him swipe a tongue across his teeth in concentration, and imagines his lips on his cock. In a way, Shane thinks he's almost ruined. Sex with anybody else, not that he's tried so far, would probably be a disappointment.

That's why it's so important to Shane that he doesn't cross the threads of sex and lust with those of hockey, though it's impossible when Ilya Rozanov is staring at him on the other side of the barriers, his face an irreplicable mixture of stoicism and arrogance. Shane wouldn't believe it if Ilya tried to convince him that he wasn't thinking about their impending affair at that moment.

He puts it out of his mind. Jerking his gaze away feels almost strenuous—the resistance is like pushing a muscle to strain, a nearly painful impulse with a mental block to boot. One of these days, he'll have to get Ilya out of his system. He just fears that giving in every time is

like injecting himself with increasing doses of an adrenaline high that he won't be able to wean himself off of.

They're about to step onto the ice anyway. Shane can feel the pressure of his boots pushing onto his toes, can smell the sharp, clean scent of the smooth ice. And, fuck, he can almost detect the faint scent of the shampoo that Ilya likes to use, the kind that he packs in his luggage with him on all his trips because he has no patience for hotel toiletries.

The crowd is still settling in, the noise at a low murmur, though the audience hasn't bothered him for a long while. There are so many eyes on him at a time that he doesn't see the point in agonizing over the numbers anymore; either he'll excite the fans or let them down, and in every scenario, the person who will feel it the most will be himself.

But there's one set of eyes in particular that he's always had trouble escaping, and because he can't help himself, he looks once more across the way to where the Boston team is shuffling around behind the barrier. And there is Ilya, still staring, though this time he looks smug to see Shane glance back at him. It's as if he knows Shane can't help himself.

Because he's watching, Ilya parts his lips, pretends to swirl two fingers along his tongue, then presses them into his opposite hand. To anybody else, it would look like he's making a threat, smashing a fist into his open palm. Shane, on the other hand, who'd seen the quick motion of his fingers, knows instead that Ilya is demonstrating what he has done and will do to him later when he's working him open, panting onto his hotel bed.

Shane flushes so deeply he has to pivot quickly on his heel, blade digging into the ground. He tells himself it's out of rage instead of embarrassment, or worse, arousal. He cannot stand Ilya Rozanov.

Maybe that's why he's always underneath him.

These trains of thought are exactly why he needs to end things with Ilya before it goes any further, and, god forbid, it fucks up his game.

Soon enough, they're called onto the ice for the face-off. The mere seconds that they crouch in front of each other eye-to-eye are sure to be heavily photographed to accompany the headlines to break when one of them wins, and so Shane has to concentrate more than he used to when he leans down. Sometimes Ilya will throw him an insolent wink. Other times, he's snarled at him. One time, he ran his pink tongue all along his lip, and Shane had unfortunately lost the face-off.

He's not going to lose this one.

The ice feels good under his skates when he sets off into the rink—a good sign. He'd put his left skate on, and then the right, as usual. Spent a couple of minutes in the locker room clearing his mind of all thoughts of his rival, even knowing that all the effort would go to waste. Already on the ice, Ilya stands as a great hulking presence, his shadow impossible to clear.

They settle into position. Shane braces his stick, his breath clouding as he expels everything in his body in preparation to lock eyes with Ilya. If there's anything there, he knows that Ilya will drink him in, consume him. He can't give him anything to play with.

Their gazes intertwine. Ilya gives him a crooked, sardonic smile, the corner of his mouth lifting above his white, white teeth. His stare could render the entire rink into steam. Shane hates what it does to him.

"Don't blink, dorogoy," says Ilya.

Shane feels his body tense, bracing in response to the unexpected Russian. "I don't even know what that means!" he says, irritated.

Ilya smirks. "That's what makes it fun." The puck drops.

Ilya wins the face-off.

Shane must be a fucking idiot because he actually misses Ilya calling him names in Russian. Even the swearing, even the taunts made to him on the ice. All of it. Severe, red bow of his lips and how they would smolder down his bare chest. Thick weight of his arm slung across his waist. Passion and pride slung into flames whenever he wins a match. Now, he is as distant as a television screen.

He isn't going to pretend that it isn't his fault. He'd done it on purpose. The... *thing* between them had needed to end sooner rather than later. It's just stupid that he almost finds himself regretting it.

Shane can't regret it, not now when he has Rose Landry hanging off his arm, who is gorgeous and wonderful and for some reason seems to like him. He knows that he's lucky in a very distant way, as if he's one of the media spectators watching their relationship unfold through paparazzi shots and Reddit rumors. He can see it play out, but he doesn't feel like he's living it, only if it's for the fact that maybe he doesn't like her the way she wants him to. The way even he wants himself to.

That secret guilt shriveling away at the hole in his chest is part of why he even agreed to come out to the club with her tonight. He'll make an appearance and then leave when he can. It's fine; Rose knows this isn't his scene.

But standing here amid the low lighting dusting rosy across the numberless bodies on the dance floor, clutching a cold, chipped glass filled with an unsipped and unidentifiable amber liquid, he's struck with the sudden thought that maybe he can't play his part after all. The secrets he never imagined he would harbor are slowly sinking him through the sticky floor, pulling him down by the feet and the sick feeling in his stomach.

Shane doesn't like women the way he should, not even Rose, and it's as if the lights are peeling him apart at the skin. Like he is all flesh. He doesn't even like social outings the way the rest of his teammates all do, nor does he enjoy all of the social drinking and the sweetly scented smoke blown into his face. All of it, with its ostentatious revel, reminds him even more of Ilya than anything else.

Fuck. Shane left his own girlfriend on the dance floor, and he's thinking about another man when he shouldn't be thinking about men at all. He hasn't even drunk enough to have alcohol as an excuse. Pivoting to leave his glass on a nearby table, since he doesn't intend to drink it anyway, he scans the rest of the club to look for Rose to tell her that he'll be leaving.

At first, Shane thinks he's hallucinating. The entire club is dreamlike enough, with its haze of fog and the deep bass of the speakers trembling through his body intensely enough to shake free his hidden thoughts. Maybe by thinking about Ilya so much, Shane has somehow managed to imagine him as anybody with the same build.

But no, that's Ilya in the far end of the club with his tongue down a girl's throat. Shane would recognize those hands anywhere—he's had them on his own body, gripping his shoulders, parting his thighs. They're broad, a little veiny, the blood turning blue in the night. His fingertips are a little calloused but gentle when he grips him by the back of the neck. And those shoulders couldn't belong to anybody else; they're practically bursting out of the sheer white top he has on. The fabric bleeds the same flickering colors of the club lights. That's his hair, his jawline sharp enough that Shane is afraid that touching him will make him bleed. And somehow he's moved close enough, swimming through the relentless surge of anxious bodies around him, to stop and see the familiar arch of Ilya's cheekbones and how his face hollows around his mouth, shadows disappearing into the girl's mouth between his hands.

Shane has never felt so impossibly, viciously jealous in his life. Ilya has everything—the recognition, the handsome looks, the roguish reputation. He likes girls, he fucks girls. He does everything right. And yet Shane, in all of his ugly envy, doesn't want to become Ilya Rozanov. He wants to be the person Ilya is kissing in plain view of everybody in the club, pushing the salt of his terrible affections into his mouth.

Ilya looks up. Ilya sees him. Shane both wants to run and never wants to step foot if it means that Ilya will look away. Never in his life has he been so thoroughly ruined, and he can't even begin to admit it to himself.

When Ilya speaks, the words reach Shane as if pulled through the crowd and presented to him in all of their awful glory. "Lapochka, don't you wish it were you? If I had seen you before her, would you also be so easy in my hands? I think you would. You have so many times before."

The girl laughs and slings her arms around Ilya's neck, and Ilya smirks. Shane can't think or breathe. He doesn't know the answer to Ilya's question. Worse yet, he fears it. He could be broken apart, possessed, and he would probably go smiling.

Ilya twists to whisper something into the girl's ear, and Shane takes the brief respite of broken eye contact to finally turn away, running, like he is used to doing when it comes to him.

Even though he and Ilya have since sorted themselves out—if it can even be called that—it doesn't mean that all the names Ilya calls him don't still get under his skin. The thing that irritates Shane the most is that he has no idea what the other is saying. If he ever asks, he knows that Ilya would just laugh in his face. And it's hopeless to try to look it up after the fact, sounding out the words by memory only. The only time Ilya had translated for him was when he called Shane a lawnmower. Like, seriously? Who knows what other things the guy says about him when he's not even aware?

Ilya is seriously such a jerk. He has proved this many, many times. But he's a jerk that Shane likes against his better judgment, and that fact makes him so giddy that he almost feels high.

That, or it's the hardcore drugs being pumped into his body. It could be both. He would be happy to let it be both.

Getting into a collision on the ice sucks, but it's kind of nice that Ilya decided to stop by. It's really nice! Shane had known he'd worry because that tough act of Ilya's easily crumbles when something he cares about comes under threat—and it had taken him a ridiculous number of years for Shane to figure this out, which gives kudos to Ilya's acting skills—but it is still incredibly, awfully wonderful that Ilya is here. He might be Shane's favorite person. The drugs almost get the confession out of him, but he catches them just in time before they slip-slide out of his brain and into Ilya's hands.

Shane knows that he's smiling like a fucking idiot, but he's so happy and drugged up, and Ilya is here, and they're alone for the first time in a long while, even if someone is bound to come by soon. He likes the way that Ilya is looking at him, too, his velvet eyes dark and sweet and so soft that Shane could push through him easily, reach into his very core. It's kind of thrilling to be wanted so badly. Not just in the context of sexual favors, but for merely being alive. He's happy to be merely alive beside Ilya right now. It's a stupid thought, but it's all he has amid the haze of his medicated high and the loss of another cup. Like—*there he is*. Ilya.

"Shane," Ilya says again. Shane really likes the sound of his first name out of the other's mouth. Why did they spend so many years calling each other by their last names again? He kind of wants to call him Ilya in front of everybody and see how they would freak out. He wants to call him Ilya for the rest of his life, maybe. If he will have him.

He reaches up and takes Ilya's hand, his broad fingers slotting perfectly between his. It's a wonder that they haven't spent more time holding hands, too. He spends a second smiling goofily at their intertwined hands before he remembers what he was about to ask.

"Will you come to the cottage?" he asks. Immediately, Ilya's face changes, but not into anything he can read. He's so horrible at understanding Ilya sometimes. Maybe it'll take more studying to come to grasp it fully.

"I don't know."

There isn't much that's difficult to understand about the question. It's so easy to Shane. "We can have a week or two, Ilya," Shane says. "Haven't you ever wanted more time?"

Time is all they have had so far—years and years of it spent walking around in circles—and yet none of it seems like enough. A month that stretches a mile can snap back into nothing as easily as gum. If Shane pops all the bubbles floating in front of them, each of them encapsulating a precious memory of the two of them that he has never forgiven himself for keeping, then he would have so little to carry in his hands. He wants more. He wants all of it. He wants whatever Ilya will agree to.

"Of course," says Ilya. His face still hasn't changed, still slightly shadowed in a way that Shane can't decipher. His thumb moves gently against the back of Shane's hand, the most tender touch he has afforded him in a while.

"Then come to the cottage. Please. It will just be the two of us, completely alone for as long as you want to stay." Shane is used to begging, but at least the high eases some of the humiliation. It doesn't mean he wants it any less, though.

Something in Ilya's face changes again, but it opens instead of closing, something quiet washing over his previous tension. He brings Shane's hand to his lips to brush the barest kiss against the skin, eyes closing. "Maybe, lyubimiy."

Shane tries to screw his face up in protest, but he can't against the gigantic grin splitting his face. "Hey, stop calling me names. That's unfair. You can't do that to a man in the hospital."

"I will do whatever I want," Ilya says sternly. He's still holding his hand. "Is rude to dictate my actions."

"You—"

Shane doesn't get any further through his sentence before the door begins to turn, Ilya jumping away just as he releases their hands when a nurse comes through the entrance. He's sure Ilya makes some excuse or the other, putting on the practiced smile he dons when he's around people he doesn't know, but Shane doesn't process much of it. Part of him is still stuck on Ilya's concession to his invitation to the cottage, and the other part of him is already there, living two weeks in the summer, alone with the only person he'd cede the rest of his life to.

The league's obsession with setting Shane and Ilya against each other in their "fated rivalry" still hasn't let up, even so many years down the road. The rivalry still exists, of course. Neither of them likes to lose. It's just a little funny to look at it now that they're in a relationship.

It means that the interviews where they request Shane and Ilya alone, just the two of them, don't irritate Shane nearly as much as they once did. In fact, he looks forward to them, and he

knows Ilya does too, so he can see how much snark he can fit into one conversation and allude it all to what he's going to do to Shane later.

Anything is nice when he gets to spend it with Ilya.

They have the two of them seated behind an uncomfortably small plastic table that rocks to the side when Shane leans his arms against it, so he folds his hands in his lap instead. Ilya sits back in his chair, hands palm down on the table's surface and his stare streaming smooth and steady into the camera in front of them.

There are, of course, multiple cameras pointed at them. Shane knows that Ilya will be excited to see all the different perspectives come out on social media later so he can pause on the frames where Shane looks the most awful and awkward and screenshot it from every angle.

"Alright, let's begin!" the interviewer says from behind the camera, clutching a clipboard full of questions. "Would you two like to begin by introducing yourselves?"

"Ilya Rozanov, captain of the Boston Raiders," says Ilya. He gives the camera an intense grin, the kind that lands him on social media posts everywhere for looking "sexy." Then he waves a dismissive hand over Shane sitting beside him. "Is not necessary to introduce this guy."

"Thank you, Rozanov, for acknowledging that my presence announces itself," Shane says with a genial smile and a laugh. "It's kind of you to make it seem like I'm important enough that people recognize me by face alone. But for those of you who don't know, I'm Shane Hollander, captain of the Montreal Metros."

Ilya's smirk doesn't let up. "Is not what I said, Hollander." Underneath the table, he knocks his knee against Shane's.

"Thank you," the interviewer says, barely hiding her laugh. "Alright, onto our first question! Boston and Montreal have been locked in an intense rivalry for nearly a century, and you two have come to personify that. Do you approach the game any differently with that in mind?"

It's a stupid question, which doesn't make it stand out from any of the others that will come at them, since the entire interview is sure to be frivolous. They only do these things to get soundbites and quotes out of them, anyway.

Shane answers anyway. "My team and I prepare with our full effort for every game, regardless of who our opponent is. A victory isn't satisfying if we don't know how hard we fought to get there, you know?"

Ilya side-eyes him. "Victory is presumptuous," he mutters, just loud enough that Shane can't tell if the microphones picked it up or not.

"No, it isn't," Shane hisses back, poking one finger into Ilya's thigh. His team had won the last time they went up against each other, so Ilya can't be talking.

"How about you, Mr. Rozanov?" the interviewer asks politely.

Ilya folds his hands in front of his face, glancing over at Shane with an open-mouthed smile. “Hollander’s answer is too nice. He is such a nice guy, is he not? Me, I am not so nice. Of course the game is different when I am up against this guy. A little more effort, maybe. Mostly, I want to see him underneath me so that he knows I am on top every time.” A second passes. “In the championship.”

Shane’s grin feels frozen in place. *This guy*. He hates that it’s getting to him. He feels Ilya reaching over to grab his thigh provocatively, and he smacks it away as subtly as he can. “I’m honored that you have to put in extra effort when you play against me, Rozanov.”

Ilya shrugs his shoulders, mouth going crooked. “Is not much more. Usually I am not trying, you see?”

“Thank you,” the interviewer says, flipping a page. “We know that you two are rivals on the ice and off, but are there any other times that you run into each other when you’re not playing hockey?”

If only they knew. Shane can feel Ilya’s amusement radiating off him, or maybe that’s just the warm heat of their thighs pressed against each other. He can blame the size of the table for that.

“Maybe at the club, or...” Ilya pretends to think, one hand on his chin. “Ah, no, not the club. Not this guy. He never goes out, no? Very boring.”

Shane glares at him. “I think it’s important to have my priorities straight,” he tells the camera. “So, no, I don’t go out often, but I do like to spend my evenings winding down with a book so I can get a good night’s sleep, which is especially important on game days.”

Ilya laughs loudly. “So you see, it would take some extraordinary circumstances for us to see each other off the ice.”

Circumstances like blowjobs, perhaps. Shane thinks that maybe he’ll see if he can coax one out of Ilya after this, just for the sheer insolence he’s been showing during the interview.

“Of course, and it must be difficult when your teams aren’t in the same city to begin with,” says the interviewer. “Well, it’s been so many years since you two began your rookie season. People change with time, and so do our emotions. Would you say that your feelings for each other have evolved over the years?”

Without even meaning to, Shane turns to look at Ilya, surprised to see that the other is already looking at him. Ilya is such a gigantic idiot—his face has softened, probably without him even knowing, and the roguish smile he’d donned earlier has waned into something sweet. When their eyes lock, the corner of his mouth goes up. Shane loves him.

Shane can’t say that to the camera.

Ilya saves him. Not looking away from Shane, he says, “We are not the same men we once were. We were boys, really. Of course we must have, ah, matured, is the word. To make it

clear, I do not want to beat this guy any less. I always do! It brings me great joy. But perhaps there is a natural, and perhaps strange, affection there. Would you agree, kotik?"

"You've got to stop calling me names in Russian," Shane says, flustered. He pushes Ilya away from him by the shoulder, looking away so the camera can't catch the way his cheeks flush. It's the most that Ilya can reveal about their relationship while they're in the public eye, and it will never be enough, and yet it is one of the sweetest confessions he has heard. He squeezes his eyes shut, listening to Ilya's rich laugh from beside him, and tries his best to will away the smile on his face.

"That was surprisingly sweet of you, Mr. Rozanov," the interviewer says.

"Oh!" Ilya says with a small gasp. "I will make sure to be more cruel next time. Just say the word."

Shane swings back around to face the cameras once he's sure he's controlled his face, but his heart is beating out against his chest. Anywhere but here. He wants to be anywhere but here, so he can get Ilya to himself and tell him just how much that meant to him, even if it was reckless to do so on camera, and even if he still insists on calling him by stupid, random Russian words.

A weight presses against the toe of Shane's shoe, and he knows that it's Ilya. Later. They will have later, always.

"Um, Ilya?" Shane says, his voice distracted. It's later that night, and they're in Ilya's hotel room, except this time he's lingering just a little longer, daring to steal a few precious hours before he has to end up back in his own room. He scrolls past yet another post on his phone, brows furrowed.

"Yes?" Ilya says from beside him, his arm that had been previously slung around Shane's bare shoulders shifting when he sits up slightly. "What is it?"

"People online are talking about the interview they just aired," Shane says.

Ilya raises one eyebrow. "And? Don't they usually? Is that not the point of these interviews?"

"No, but they're saying—" Shane cuts himself off, embarrassed. He hates that he's so horrible at hiding his emotions, because Ilya's lips are slowly spreading into a smile at whatever he's seeing on Shane's expression. Shane scrubs one hand over his face. "They're talking about the question she asked us about whether our feelings for each other have changed."

"I assume they haven't discovered the truth about it, or else you would be more panicked," Ilya points out. He traces one finger along the muscle on Shane's shoulder, the touch a little ticklish.

“No,” Shane says. “They’re saying that the name you called me in Russian is actually a term of endearment. Like, the kind that you would call a lover. You called me kitty.”

“Yes?” Ilya looks unsurprised. “I speak the language. I would know. And they haven’t figured out that we are actually lovers? They must be idiots.”

“No,” Shane says for the third time. He doesn’t know how Ilya is so unruffled. “You—I didn’t know you were calling me all of that!”

“Hah!” Ilya actually throws back his head and laughs, his throat long and golden in the low light. “I know. That is what made it so amusing to me, moy pomidor.”

“And what is that one supposed to mean?”

“Tomato.”

There is a stupid amount of affection welling in Shane’s chest, and he fears that if he acknowledges its existence, it’s going to flood and drown him out. He will never get used to the way that Ilya loves. He never wants to.

“You’re lucky that everyone thinks you were being a sarcastic jackass like you usually are,” Shane says with a huff. “They’ve got your character pretty well, actually.”

“Please don’t be so mean to me, moya lyubov,” Ilya says, turning his head to nose into Shane’s hair. He speaks into his skin. “It makes me sad.”

Shane squirms. “What’s that one?”

“My love,” Ilya whispers into his ear, lips dipping into the hollow underneath his jawline, where he presses a slow, hot kiss.

Shane turns to let Ilya have more access, eyes slowly drifting closed. “I think you need to teach me some Russian so I can recognize these when I hear them. What else have you called me without my knowledge? I only remember the lawnmower.”

Ilya takes the arm around his torso to haul Shane closer to him so that he’s nearly straddling him, trailing his mouth all along his bare skin. “Solnyshko, dorogoy, lapochka, lyubimiy, my sun, sweetheart, my dear.”

Shane laughs because he can’t help it, taking his hands to gently cradle Ilya’s head and drag him away from his skin and to his mouth so he can kiss him properly, slow and sweet.

“You’re surprisingly romantic,” he says between kisses. Ilya’s mouth is soft, his neck perfect beneath his fingers.

“No,” Ilya says, “I just love you,” and then he kisses him again, drawing him in so sharply that the tears that spring to Shane’s eyes don’t fall. “Radost moya, dusha moya, serdtse moyo, Shane.”

Shane isn’t good with words like Ilya is, but he loves him, he loves him, he loves him like he could live and die by it, and he thinks that’s enough. He tells him so with his mouth,

desperate for the thing that has been sitting in front of him for years, tasting every moment they have wasted and now cradle. Nestling one hand behind Ilya's head, the other rests atop his chest just above his heart, so Shane can touch him there and say *mine, mine, Ilya, mine*.

End Notes

dms with a certain friend now look like:

her: shane is so easy

me: SHANE IS SO EASY

her: shane snoopy hollander

me: he's so fucking beautiful

her: snoopy

me: "we didn't even kiss"

her: shane snoopy

me: my ideal date: we watch heated rivalry episode five together and then i show u instagram edits and cry in front of u

her: shane snoopy hollander

me: he's regular gay... i'm regular lesbian... and yet i think we could be so happy together...

her: i love shane snoopy hollander

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!