

collect the moments one by one

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by [MuseRepeats](#)

Summary

Lily Hollander is a picky eater who does NOT like tuna melts. When Ilya tells her the story of the first tuna melt that he made for Shane, she is surprised to hear that her dads were once enemies. But if a sandwich can change the course of her dads' lives, maybe she should give it a try.

For Shane and Ilya, the memory of that afternoon inspires old feelings and needs from the two devoted dads.

AKA a slice of life fic where Shane and Ilya are happy parents who also make time for horniness after the kids go to sleep.

Notes

I couldn't resist my yearning for Hollanov domestic fluff. Hope this satisfies anyone else who is looking for comfy family scenarios.

At first this wasn't going to be smutty but then Ilya and Shane had some alone time and did what they always do. Horny little fuckers.

*Not spoiler-y re: TLG since it is far in the future.

*Title is from the Feist song "Mushaboom."

*Smut is not beta read but the rest is. This is my first M/M fic so hopefully it is acceptable.

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

Lily Rose Hollander is a picky eater. Always has been.

Her dads could tell from the moment they started trying solids at six months. Her little taste buds were unpredictable, so much so that her dads started keeping a spreadsheet of what she liked and what she didn't like. Shane and Ilya don't remember who came up with the idea to track her preferences via Google Sheets. They were both so sleep deprived, they abandoned any sense of competition between one another, as long as a solution worked.

Sweet potatoes were a hit, carrots were off the table. Avocado was *too* creamy, though that changed when she turned 18 months. Eggs in any form? Never. If all else failed, mashed peas did the trick.

Now, at seven years old, she eats, but there's a very short list of dishes she'll consume. She hates ice cream "from the spoon" but happily enjoys a yogurt popsicle. Tomato sauce is a no go, but pasta and butter with a few cherry tomatoes and parmesan are just fine. Breaded chicken nuggets are also off the table, though grilled chicken tenders with sweet and sour sauce will do when her five-year-old brother insists on nuggets. She likes grilled cheese and turkey sandwiches, but turns her nose up at Ilya's tuna melts.

This last aversion is, admittedly, hard for Ilya.

It's so silly. *What does it matter if my daughter likes tuna melts?* He chastises himself for caring about something so inconsequential. The sandwich served its purpose all those years ago. Perhaps the meal didn't get Ilya and Shane across the finish line, but it was a notable step in the right direction.

Ilya cooks for everyone on Tuesdays, after he records his podcast and Shane comes home a little later in the evening after picking Misha up from music lessons. He always makes sandwiches. They are intentional about spending quality one-on-one time with each kid a few nights a week. Tonight, he has time with his daughter. The evening is light on activities. Lily is very insistent on finishing her assignments before dinner, and Ilya is happy to transition from quiet company to meandering conversations. She always perches herself up on a barstool at the kitchen island as her dad plays music and preps the food.

Lily watches as he pulls cooking supplies from the kitchen drawer.

"Why do you always make tuna melts?" she asks. It's not a complaint, just a typical symptom of her endless curiosity.

"Why not? They are delicious."

Lily scrunches her nose and waves her hand in front of her face, the pencil hanging between her fingers. "Smelly."

He chuckles. "*Good* smelly. And I'm very good at making them. You can ask Daddy when he gets home."

"I will," she sighs, her eyes narrowing as she watches her dad open the can and dump the fish into a bowl.

"Daddy *loves* my tuna melts."

"But you'll make my turkey melt tonight, right?" she chirps.

"Of course," Ilya replies, pulling the deli meat from the fridge in confirmation. "It's Papa's deli. Whatever you like... it's yours."

Lily grins and turns her attention back to her spelling homework, studious as ever.

Ilya carries a secret wish that someday, his daughter's palate will change and she'll give his tuna melts a chance. But he doesn't push. Shane and Ilya agree to be careful about Lily's preferences, always giving her a few options, making sure she knows that it's safe to explore something new without pressure.

Sometimes an instinct bubbles up in Ilya to be more firm, to push the kids in the direction that he *knows* is best. But he remembers the promises he made to himself when he allowed the dream of a family to become a real consideration. With Shane, family would look different from the one he grew up with. It's not that there aren't rules and boundaries in their home. (Misha is rambunctious enough that there *have* to be rules and boundaries.) Life in this place would be joyful, free from the harsh expectations and disappointed glares and jealous resentments that dominated his own upbringing.

So far, he thinks they've done a pretty good job. They are raising happy kids. Good kids. Kids who seem to feel safe playing and discovering their talents.

Ilya finishes chopping the pickles, celery, red onion, and pulls a fresh loaf of bread from the grocery bag.

"Why does Daddy *love* your tuna melts so much?" his daughter asks.

"Hmmm, was the first meal I made for him," Ilya replies. "Back when Daddy thought he didn't like me so much."

Her eyes grow wide. "Daddy didn't *like* you?"

Ilya shakes his head. "I didn't like him so much either. At least not as hockey players. In the beginning we were always against each other. You know... when we watch hockey sometimes, the teams are rivals? Daddy and I were on teams like that. Boston, and Montreal. And everyone made a *big deal* about it."

"Well, I *know* those teams don't like each other." Suddenly, a fearful look spreads across her face. "Did you ever fight each other?"

"No, was normal hockey stuff," he replies with an assuring shrug. "We *never* hurt each other on purpose. But, it can happen. Nothing serious, thankfully."

“Did you ever punch each other in the face?” She asks, her tone sharp with concern. Lily likes hockey, has even expressed interest in playing in a youth league someday, but sometimes the roughness of the sport scares her.

He pouts lightly and shakes his head, tossing the last of the chopped onions into the bowl.

“That’s good,” Lily sighs.

Ilya leans across the kitchen island as if he’s about to tell a secret. His daughter’s eyes light up as she leans in ever so slightly. Lily loves to hear a secret, something special just for her ears.

“Can I tell you something, *Dochén'ka*? ” His voice drops an octave as he speaks. “Back then, everybody made it seem like we hated each other because we were on opposite teams, but really, I *always* liked Daddy.”

Lily's eyes sparkle at this revelation.

Ilya sets out the bread and tuna salad and deli meats like a station and continues telling her the story. “One day I decided to invite him over to my house before a game. And I made him lunch, so that we could become better... so that we could get to know each other better. Not as enemies.”

A bright smile spreads across her face. “So, you made him a tuna melt to tell him? To tell him that you liked him?”

Ilya considers his answer. Technically, yes, he did make the tuna melt to show Shane that he liked him, that there could be something more for them. Afternoons on a couch watching hockey games, talking about their work, their lives, their future. Ilya’s memory is fuzzy on the exact location of his emotional state that day when he made the sandwiches. It’s just another thread in their story, one of a million different threads weaving it all together, leading to this conversation at the kitchen island with their daughter.

Lily doesn’t need to learn about the whole net spun between him and Shane, not quite yet. So Ilya keeps the answer simple.

“Yes,” he nods. “I made Daddy a tuna melt, and it was the best food he ever had, and then we got married. And now *you* are here, making us so happy that we liked each other.”

His daughter nods and offers a crooked grin.

Ilya tips his head in the direction of the bowl filled with tuna salad, follows her eyes as she glances down at the food. “Maybe someday you will try it?”

“Maybe,” she says. “Someday.”

He indulges in a chance to study her face. Lily Rose is a mashup of all the best parts of Ilya’s life so far: his husband’s freckles and dark eyes, Yuna’s strongly held opinions delivered with the softest edge, David’s steadiness punctuated by absurd humor, and, somehow, his own mother’s quiet, creative spirit.

Misha is equally charming, but the boy is *mostly* Ilya. The light brown curls and the mischievous grin, the endless energy and adoration for everyone around him. His need for a little space when things aren't going quite right. Ilya sees Shane in their son, too. The determination when he chooses to figure out the task in front of him, whether it's a puzzle or skating backwards on the ice or counting in another language.

And when the four of them are together, something just clicks. As if it is all meant to be. Kismet.

Shane and Misha arrive home just as the oven preheat timer dings. Tuesday is one of the longer days for everyone. Ilya has his podcast recording early, the hit hockey show that he hosts with Hayden Pike. They switch off recording locations weekly, alternating between Ottawa and Montreal. Sometime after Ilya became a dad, he finally *got* his husband's best friend, and their competitive banter and shared expertise lent itself well to the weekly league recaps and commentary.

Shane is enjoying one of the quieter times of the year, even though days still feel so busy. It's finally off season, so the frequent gigs delivering hockey commentary on ESPN are at a pause. His days are spent, as usual, on expanding the foundation's work. In a few weeks, they will all head to the cottage for a much needed summer break.

Ilya and Shane catch up on things, boring adult stuff — tomorrow's schedule and the events of the day — interrupted by the kids' random inquiries and musings. Shane sets the table and Ilya places the hot sandwiches onto a platter.

"So, what were you two doing this afternoon?" Shane asks Lily as he takes his seat at the kitchen table.

"Papa told me about the first time he made you a tuna melt." Lily says matter of factly, and pours herself a glass of lemonade from the pitcher.

Shane freezes and glances over at his husband with serious eyes. "Rosanov..." it's somewhere between a shout and a whisper. He only uses that name when he's very upset or very... something else.

Ilya shrugs and walks the platter of melts over to the kitchen table, mouthing "*PG version*" in Shane's direction. His husband's shoulders immediately relax, but Ilya still wants to tease him.

"You think I am ridiculous?" Ilya says with a grin, gesturing dramatically as he takes his seat next to Misha.

"I think so!" Misha yelps, and both kids break into giggles. Ilya can't help but join them.

“Yes,” Shane agrees, his cheeks turning pink. “In fact, I know you are ridiculous.” Nearly two decades later, Ilya can still pull a blush out of his beloved. He savors it.

Shane shakes his head and opens a bag of Ruffle’s All Dressed to distract them.

“I wanna know about the story.” Misha bounces in his seat. Classic signal that their youngest is overtired and needs bedtime sooner rather than later. Shane passes a knowing look at Ilya. He responds with a nod, a silent agreement that someone will handle bath and story reading and pajamas just after dinner. No one likes an overtired tantrum.

“Basically, dads *hated* each other...” Lily announces as she grabs a handful of chips.

“Ah, the dramatic version,” Shane says with a chuckle, stealing another glance at his husband.

Misha takes a nibble out of his tuna melt and darts his eyes between parents, confused. “You hated each other?”

“No,” Shane quickly corrects. “We didn’t hate each other. It was like, um, we were two superheroes who compete. But they don’t ever really fight each other. Kind of like Superman and Batman. Equals, not enemies. Not usually enemies, anyway.”

“Oh, and which superhero am I?” Ilya raises his eyebrows and takes a bite from his sandwich, daring his husband to elaborate on who is Batman and who is Superman. “I’d like to hear more about this interpretation.”

Shane takes a bite of his melt and gives his husband the kind of grin that says, *you’ll find out later*. Now Ilya is the one blushing.

Misha shakes his head, frowning as the activities from the day catches up with him. “I don’t understand.”

“Okay, let me explain to you Misha,” their daughter says confidently.

Shane steadies his eyes on her. Ilya is sure his husband is half impressed that she has taken such an interest in their origins, half terrified that she’s learned too much. Ilya just listens, waiting for Lily’s version of the story he shared.

Lily takes a big sip of her lemonade before she says more. “Basically, dads were on opposite hockey teams. You know, like Ottawa and Montreal. New York and Detroit. Buffalo and..”

“Boo,” Misha yells. No one knows which team he is booing.

Lily looks over at Ilya for reassurance to keep going. He gives her a thumbs up and then grabs more potato chips. “But they didn’t beat each other up like all the other hockey players do,” she continues. Misha nods and listens as best he can. “And Papa actually *liked* Daddy, as a secret. So he made Daddy a tuna melt to convince him... to like him back.”

Shane stays quiet, his expression softening further as the reminder sinks in.

“Did it work?” Misha asks as his eyes dart to Shane. “The tuna?”

Shane and Ilya’s eyes meet across the table. If only it had been so simple. Memories of hesitation and excitement and courage and heartbreak from that afternoon in Boston flood back all at once, for just a moment. Their connection was on a knife’s edge that day, like there were thousands of little things that could go wrong. It’s nearly overwhelming to remember, forcing Ilya to stare down at the table. But then he glances around at his family. Everything went right.

“Eventually,” Ilya hears his husband say, and feels a hand grab his own across the table. He looks over to find Shane staring back at him with that spark in his eye. Just when Ilya thinks he can’t fall in love again...

“Even-chally?” Misha interrupts them in an incredulous tone, quickly broken by a yawn. “Did you have to make... have to make a lot of sandwiches *before* Daddy even liked you, Papa?”

Laughter bursts through the room. *Something like that*, Ilya thinks.

“Hundreds, Misha!” Ilya exclaims. “Maybe even thousands. Thousands of sandwiches. Daddy is very stubborn, you know. But *eventually*, yes.”

Somewhere between the laughter, Lily picks up a small square of the tuna melt from the platter. Ilya and Shane notice it almost immediately. Ilya holds his breath. He’s pretty sure Shane is doing the same. *Is this happening?*

She takes the tiniest of bites, and chews cautiously. Ilya stares at her, his heart rate picking up ever so slightly as he awaits her verdict.

Lily stares down at the rest of the sandwich for a moment, and Ilya’s hope sinks just a little. *No big deal*, he lies to himself. *At least she likes the turkey.*

He nearly gasps as he watches his daughter take a big, confident bite into the sandwich. Still chewing, she turns her stare over to Shane and gulps down the food. The quick smile that follows might send Ilya over the moon.

“What do you think, love?” he asks.

She smirks, glancing between her dads until she finally lands her eyes on Ilya, and gives her Papa a thumbs up.

“I like it.”

Ilya is so happy he could burst.

An hour or so later, the kitchen is clean and kids are snug in bed. Misha is fast asleep already, and Lily is quickly dozing off when Ilya turns the night light to a softer setting. Usually, the dads head to the basement den to wind down. Sometimes it's with TV or a movie or a hockey game, sometimes they just talk. Sometimes, they make use of two floors of distance between them and the sleeping children.

When Ilya makes his way down the stairs, Shane is already settled in on the oversized couch, his iPad open as he catches up on e-mails and news articles. They've both dressed for evening lounging, Ilya in the dark grey joggers that he knows make Shane a little feral.

"Mission accomplished." Ilya announces, rubbing his hands together and making a beeline over to the bar area. "You want ginger ale? Something different?"

He pours himself just over a thumb of his second favorite vodka. It's difficult to get the best from Russia these days, but the Finnish stuff satisfies him enough.

"Um, I'll actually have a splash of that good Rye with the ginger ale."

Ilya tosses back a flirting grin and locks eyes with Shane. "Living dangerously."

Shane blushes again. "I've had a long day."

Ilya mixes a splash of the amber liquor into his husband's glass. He's exhausted and sure that Shane feels the same, but the earlier conversation has him a little amped up. He turns and walks towards the couch, a drink in each hand.

"So, you are Batman and I am Superman, or the other way around?"

"How is that even a question?" Shane asks, smirking as he grabs the cool tumbler from Ilya's hands. "Do *you* remember what your garage used to look like? Because I do..."

Ilya accedes immediately and takes a sip of his chilled vodka. His old life *did* look like he was trying to emulate a Russian Bruce Wayne. "Fair enough. I do miss the Aston Martin sometimes. Not as much as my McLaren, though."

He takes a seat next to his husband. Shane flips the cover of his iPad closed and tosses it to the side, stretching his arm out to make room for Ilya to tuck into the crook of his shoulder.

"You have tamed me." His feigned groan elicits a sighing laugh out of Shane. Ilya leans back and rests the messy head of curls against his husband's chest. "Fully domesticated now. Batman has sold all of his toys to live with Superman in the suburbs."

"Tragic," Shane replies sarcastically.

"Yes. Very. At least the kids are not boring..."

The teasing earns Ilya a kiss on the crown of his head. "Tell me about the podcast today. How's Hayden?"

Ilya catches him up on the topic of the day, and admits to some light ribbing of his podcast partner. Shane knows that the project has brought his best friend and husband closer together, genuinely as friends, and Ilya is pleased that it makes him happy. Besides the truce that the podcast provides for him and Hayden, it's wildly successful. Ilya didn't think the world wanted to hear him ramble on this much, especially with his still thick accent, but apparently they do.

Shane lifts his hand to rub Ilya's hair. "Hey, so, uh, how did the tuna melt conversation come up?"

"It came up... naturally," Ilya replies. "*Organically*. Lily asked why I always make tuna melts. I told her very brief version of the story. We were rivals, but always liked each other in secret. Then I made you a sandwich. That's all."

He hears Shane take a deep breath in, and dips his head back to meet his husband's eyes. There's not any anger or frustration in his expression, but Ilya knows when his partner's anxiety is creeping up.

Ilya slowly pulls himself off of Shane's chest, turns to face him, and raises his hand to his cheek, moving his thumb to graze the freckles. There's a look in his husband's eyes that is just the other side of bashful. "Hollander, I think they are old enough for sandwich talk, yes?"

"No, yeah," Shane replies with a lopsided grin. "I just wanted to know how much more you said."

Ilya narrows his eyes suspiciously, then throws his leg over his hips to assume the exact position that Shane took all those years ago. Shane sighs instinctively, and Ilya dips his face into his husband's neck and brushes his lips against the smooth skin just below his chin.

"You really believe I would tell her what happened immediately after?" Ilya finally asks through a wide smile, brushing his nose against Shane's cheek.

"No, God no. Not the sex part."

"Was no sex part after tuna melt. Just touching. I remember," Ilya says, pausing with each sentence to kiss Shane's chin, cheek, nose.

Shane keeps his hands flat on the couch cushion beside him, an honestly impressive commitment to making a point under such circumstances. Ilya loves that his man is both turned on and frustrated by his distracting affections. The night is going where it's meant to go, they both know it. Shane huffs but doesn't outright ask Ilya to stop.

"Well, there was another thing that happened immediately after..." His husband's voice trails off at the memory.

Ilya lifts his head again to steady his gaze into Shane's eyes. There's a glint of pain there, so familiar in their early days but now more like a relic.

With a furrowed brow, Ilya whispers a barely perceptible question. "*What is it?*"

Shane sighs, rolls his eyes a little, then speaks.

“I left you that day. And then disappeared. And then,” Shane halts and looks down with shame. “And then I got a girlfriend.”

Ilya searches across Shane’s wrecked expression. It feels silly, from his perspective, to hang on to any of those difficult emotions. It was just a part of their path to now. With all the time that’s passed, the feelings of uncertainty and missed signals are like forgotten debris, long washed away by a flood.

He takes his husband’s face between his hands. “It’s nothing... nothing that matters now. What are you afraid of?”

The space between them is suddenly thick with emotion, reminiscent of those early encounters when confessions and surrender hung at the edge of a shared glance across a crowded room or ice rink.

“You’re right, there’s nothing to be afraid of.” Shane nods, mercifully lifting his hands to rest his palms on Ilya’s thighs. “I guess, I just, I want everything to be perfect for them. Perfect for us. I don’t want them to ever have to worry about us, or anything that happened in the past. And I don’t want you to worry...”

Shane is rambling now. Ilya moves his fingers up to brush against his mouth and mimes a shushing.

“Past is past. You cannot go back.” Ilya purses his lips and shakes his head. “Perfect is not possible for anyone. But good, even great – it’s possible for us.”

They stare quietly for a few moments. Ilya knows the fear of all this falling apart isn’t something that Shane will hang on to, but he’s ready to give him the space to work through the discomfort.

“You’re right,” Shane finally says, and scratches his fingers gently against Ilya’s joggers. “Sometimes I need a reminder that it’s okay if things aren’t perfect.”

He watches as Shane draws a long breath in and exhales, releasing any lingering tensions. Shane’s relief lights something up in Ilya, like he wants to seal this agreement forever. They’ve already made so many commitments to one another – contracts, wedding vows, deeds and tax returns, kids. And yet, it’s the little devotions that stick out in his mind. He presses a firm kiss against Shane’s mouth and nearly moans when his husband surrenders to it, parting his lips to let Ilya brush his tongue inside. Ilya smiles into the taste of sweet ginger and sharp whiskey, so familiar and so exciting at the same time.

Shane slowly comes undone by the kiss, letting Ilya take the lead for a few more moments before he moves his grip from thighs to hips to pull them closer together. Ilya feels his husband’s hard cock straining against his pants and dips his head back to break them apart, giving Shane free reign to press his mouth against the column of Ilya’s throat.

Ilya pulls back again and takes Shane's face into his hands. He's thrilled to find his husband's eyes a little starry and drunk with love. "Feeling relaxed now?"

Shane grins up at him, then nods as he lets his hands trail back down Ilya's thighs. "By the way, what we did that afternoon on the couch *does* count as sex."

Frequently, a statement like this is an invitation for a playful argument. It turns them both on, the banter and wrestling with words before they finally let go and give in to the physical need.

Ilya really doesn't care much for that game right now. He just needs them both naked, touching as many square inches of one another's skin as they can arrange.

He groans and leans forward into another embrace, pressing his forehead onto Shane's. His left hand snakes down to brush against his husband's cock. "Whatever you say. I agree with everything. But I want something different now..."

"No," Shane says as he gently pushes back against Ilya, flipping them over so that Shane is now straddling his thighs. "You took care of bedtime. I'm taking care of you first."

Before he can even protest, Shane is stripping Ilya of his shirt and tossing it over the couch. Coolness settles across his skin, interrupted only by the press of Shane's palms as they map their way up Ilya's arms, across the arch of his chest. He stops to thumb at a nipple, gentle at first and then with increasing focus.

Ilya's jaw goes slack as he watches Shane take control. Soon enough, his husband is exploring his neck with his mouth, kissing a trail further down with exquisite precision.

Shane swirls his tongue roughly against Ilya's nipple, then sucks hard. "Fuck, Shane," Ilya groans. His dick is so achingly erect now, he feels like he might die if Shane doesn't put his hand or mouth on him. "I need..."

Ilya can't finish his thought, just sucks in a breath as Shane gently takes his other nipple between his teeth. He's desperate now, grabbing his husband's hand and pressing it down to his cock. Shane acquiesces, finally, and presses his palm against the bulge under the grey pants. It's not *nearly* the grip that Ilya needs. He pushes his hips up slightly with a grind, and Shane pulls away in equal measure.

Whenever his mind goes wild like this, he reverts back to Russian. "*You want me to beg?*" he pants in his native language.

Shane glances up at him with a devilish look and hums an "mmhmm" against his collarbone. This drives an inaudible, satisfied gasp out of Ilya's throat. He is aware that his husband's grasp of Russian has improved, but this level of understanding is impressive.

If it's narration you want, it's narration you'll get, Ilya thinks to himself with a smirk.

He watches as Shane continues gently stroking his cock and presses his mouth, tongue, teeth across his chest and arms. Ilya palms Shane's head, tugging lightly at his hair as he begins

speaking. *"Please, more. I will do anything. I'll say anything. You want me to say what I want?"*

"Tell me," Shane grumbles in English.

Ilya seizes Shane's face between his hands and pulls him up for an urgent kiss. Shane breaks away to take in his husband's desperate stare. It seems to be the motivation he needs to finally tuck his hand into Ilya's loose joggers and stroke the length of him. His grip is almost punishing, and Ilya's hips jerk forward.

His mouth drops open, lips parting with a soft gasp that seems to catch in the air between them. Shane mirrors his expression, his own lips flushed and slightly swollen from their earlier kisses. The sight inspires Ilya to reach his hand forward, brushing the pad of his thumb across his husband's lower lip.

"I need this," Ilya says in English as he dips his thumb further into Shane's mouth, past the soft barrier of his lips. His husband closes around his thumb and sucks, but shakes his head with a disapproving glare.

Ilya chuckles, the sound rough and broken, and continues in Russian, *"I need your pretty mouth on my cock. Please. Don't you want to destroy me?"*

Shane's mouth slides off Ilya's thumb with a pop. His eyes never leave Ilya's as he inches down, breathing hot against his skin. His fingers curl into the elastic of Ilya's waistband. The joggers catch briefly on Ilya's erection before Shane tugs them down with a single fluid motion.

They both still for a moment and drink in one another's stare until Shane mercifully dips his head down between Ilya's legs. Shane lifts a hand to stroke his husband and then pushes his mouth onto the length. He circles his tongue around the length of his tip. Ilya knows Shane can stay at the pace forever, but it seems he's become impatient, too, because he takes Ilya's full length into his mouth and throat. The grip tightens, rougher than before, fingers working in tandem to the wet glide of tongue against sensitive flesh until Ilya's breath stutters.

"Look at you. Shane, you are so beautiful. I want you to ruin me, do you understand?" Ilya's fingers tighten in Shane's hair, just enough to guide without hurting. His hips stutter forward involuntarily, a broken sound escaping his throat. *"I want you to see how you take me apart."*

A low hum vibrates through Shane's chest and throat, broken only by the slick noise of his mouth working faster. Ilya's words fade into breath and he can't say anything more, in any language. He can only watch, transfixed by the sight of his husband's eyes vowing to undo him completely.

With a sharp cry, Ilya's orgasm tears through him, his vision blurring at the edges as his body arches off the couch. Shane's mouth continues its rhythm until the sensation becomes too much. Ilya's palms press lightly against Shane's cheeks, easing him back. Their eyes meet, Ilya's half-lidded and dazed, Shane's dark and satisfied, before Ilya's fingers curl around his husband's biceps, tugging him upward until their chests press together.

“Fuck,” Ilya finally says, still catching his breath. “Who taught you this?”

“Fuck you,” Shane says through laughter. His eyes crinkle at the corners, grinning triumphantly as he closes the distance between their mouths. Shane's carries salt and Ilya's release, the bitterness mellowing as their lips meet. The taste of it makes Ilya hungry for reciprocation.

“Up, now,” Ilya commands as he slaps his hand against his husband's ass, which is, criminally, still covered in clothing. “I need you in the shower.”

They stumble to their feet, Ilya's joggers caught around one ankle as they half-walk, half-stagger toward the bathroom. Shane strips away his remaining clothes with hurried movements as Ilya turns the knob of the shower, steam quickly filling up the space behind the frosted glass.

They step into the shower, Shane's erection demanding quick attention. Ilya drops to his knees on the slick tile, water streaming down his shoulders and back. He has no patience for teasing now, not after Shane's performance on the couch. He needs the salty skin, desperate sounds and eager fingers tangled tight in his hair, gripping with just enough force to make Ilya moan around Shane's cock.

Release comes quickly, thick against Ilya's tongue, his husband's thighs shaky beneath his steadying hands. He swallows, then rises from his knees to embrace Shane, pressing his lips against the constellation of freckles on his cheek and nose.

Shane's palm lands with a gentle smack against Ilya's cheek. "Good work," he murmurs, voice still rough from exertion. They both dissolve into laughter, Ilya mumbling a playful insult in Russian before their mouths find each other again.

Later that evening, they make their way upstairs to get some sleep after some more time catching up on mindless TV shows about home renovations.

Shane does one quick check on the kids in bed as Ilya settles underneath the sheets. He reaches over to his husband's side of the bed and grabs the latest *New Yorker* from the neat stack on his nightstand, flipping to a worn page of the glossy magazine.

Shane limps into the bedroom, wincing as he shifts his weight onto his right foot. "Nearly killed myself stepping on a lego," he sighs, the corners of his mouth pulled down in exaggerated pain. His gaze falls on Ilya, propped against the headboard with the glossy magazine spread in his hands. "I was in the middle of reading something in that issue."

“Sorry, dear, I need something to help me go to sleep quickly. *New Yorker* is best for this.” Ilya flips the magazine page with deliberate slowness.

“That joke is very old, Ilya,” Shane says, his voice softening despite his attempt at sternness.

“Not to me.” Ilya's lips curl into a small, satisfied smile.

Shane sighs and settles under the covers on his side of the bed. The magazine slips from Ilya's fingers onto the duvet as he shifts closer, wrapping an arm around his husband's waist and pressing his lips to the curve where Shane's neck meets his shoulder. He lingers there for a moment before he passes the magazine over. "Here, you can have it."

“No, honestly, I’m too tired.” Shane says through a yawn.

Suddenly Ilya's jaw stretches wide in an involuntary yawn. “Me too. Let’s sleep.”

“Hey, by the way, I guess we can include more tuna melts on the menu from now on?” Shane asks as he shuts the lamp off on his side of the bed.

“Can you believe it?” Ilya asks with a grin. “I thought she would never even try.”

“I’m so happy she finally likes something new,” Shane says as he leans over Ilya to turn out the other bedside table lamp.

Ilya takes in the sight of his husband, feeling the now familiar warmth of gratitude just before the room goes dark.

“I’m happy too.”

End Notes

I started writing this a few days before the finale.

When I saw the closing shot of Episode 6, which was obviously so moving, I also thought, "This is the view that Lily Rose and Misha see when they drive to the cottage every summer."

Thank you for reading!

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