

Lost Time

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Lost Time

by [Fisszpy](#)

Summary

Shane and Ilya have been together--officially-- for two years, and it's been going relatively well despite all the itty-bitty bumps on the road. Having to date in secret is never 'light and breezy'. It's definitely not light and breezy when Shane's childhood best friend visits.

It's okay at first, nudged shoulders and inside jokes Ilya didn't understand. The second the nudges got too intimate, when the jokes got too sexual is when he realized something was off.

He stays quiet, plays along, tries his fucking hardest not to punch Nathan goddamn Hales square in his annoyingly handsome face.

When Ilya does talk to Shane about it, admittedly in the worst way possible, a fight breaks out. regrettable word choices are made, and a door is shut.

And it was all Nathan fucking Hales fault.

Chapter 1: Christmas Eve

Chapter Notes

Well hello there. I hope we're all doing well after the cottage episode and having to wait till 2027 for s2. Hopefully this fic can hold you over a tad bit until then!

First time writing a HR fic, hopefully it turns out okay and is enjoyable (and heartbreaking) enough!

Enjoy.

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

Life is good. Life is really fucking good. Ilya couldn't remember the last time he was this happy. Probably not since his mother was alive.

Even if he had to be with Shane in secret, even if he had to go weeks without seeing him during the season. He'd endure. He'd wait for as long as he needed to. Till Shane was finally ready. Sure, that wouldn't be for a long time. Knowing Shane, he'd want to play hockey until he was old and wrinkly, and Ilya still had a good amount of hockey left in him. Even if the team he was playing on couldn't win a game to save their lives.

Ilya had given up Boston, given up going home. All for Shane. And he'd do it all again. Without a second thought.

So here he was, shouting at his teammates to pick up the pace. He could hear their heavy breaths and muttered complaints as they went through one of the intense drills Ilya had set up. This team had so much potential, they just needed to push harder. They needed to get faster, stronger, hone the skills they were struggling with. If they could do that, maybe they could win a few games. Hell, they could win a few cups... okay maybe not that. It would take a lot longer than two seasons to turn this zero-cup team into a multi-cup winning one. But a man can dream, maybe this year was their year.

Just then he watched Lucas Haas trip over his feet and eat shit right on the ice.

Okay, so maybe not this year.

He watched the whole team burst out into a fit of laughter, Lucas's ears turned red and he hissed out a few curses before taking Wyatt Hayes hand. Ilyas heart swelled, back in Boston Lucas would have gotten yelled at and told to: "drop and give me sixty." It was nice, seeing them all laughing and poking fun at each other. It did really feel like a family here.

But being a family didn't win games, it sure as hell didn't win cups.

Ilya clapped his hands together, the sound cracking through the rink like a whip, affectively shutting everyone up. All heads turned to Ilya and he smiled.

"Okay, okay. Everyone back at the start, do it perfectly this time, yes?" Ilya tried to sound as cheerful as possible. He didn't want to be the hard-ass captain that everyone was scared of. He wanted to be respected, sure, but he also wanted to be friendly and understanding.

Christmas was always fun with the Hollanders. Ilya got to see Shane, of course. That alone made Ilya happy. Every Christmas eve they'd all sit down for dinner. Ilya would eat whatever Yuna made, get seconds and then thirds, and then dessert. Because why wouldn't he? Shane would eat his gross diet food and shake his head whenever Ilya came back with a third plate.

After dinner everyone would squish together on the couch and watch Christmas movies. Shane always fell asleep after the first one, every year without fail. His head would slump on Ilya's shoulder, and he'd mumble something like "I'm just resting my eyes" or "Your shoulder is just comfy."

On Christmas day everyone woke up at eight thirty on the dot because of fucking course they did. Shane would practically have to drag Ilya into the car, into the living room and to couch so they could all open presents. Shane would give Ilya the best gift he's ever received, somehow, he one upped himself every year. Ilya would always give Shane something stupid but meaningful. One year his gift to Shane was the loon tattoo on his arm. Shane did not like the gift at first.

This Christmas eve was no different. Ilya was helping set up for dinner. As in he was putting all the plates and silverware down because Yuna didn't trust him to help cook. Which was crazy, he was an amazing cook! Ever since that one time he forgot the oven was on and nearly burnt down the house- at least he didn't *fully* burn it down.

Shane was tidying near the front door. So, when the doorbell rung Shane was the one to open it. From where he was standing, he couldn't tell who it was. Hayden maybe? God, he hoped not. He didn't get to spend that much time with Shane as it was. Alone time that is. Well hopefully he was just here to drop off a present and leave.

"Oh my god." He heard Shane's voices shout through the house, reverberating throughout Ilya's body. Ilya's mind immediately went to the worse, someone was dead. Or it was a burglar, oh *fuck* Ilya really hoped they weren't about to get robbed.

He put down one of the plates he was holding, much rougher than he should have. His steps were fast and brisk, bordering on a run. He stopped mid step when he watched a man he didn't know sweep Shane into his arms. For a moment Ilya got ready to pounce on the other man, save Shane from this monster's unyielding grasp. That was until he saw Shane's face. Eyes closed, a smile spread wide against his freckled face. Who the hell was this?

Yuna and David followed close behind, stopping in their tracks just as Ilya did. Ilya looked over at Yuna who looked shocked, but not in a panicked way. not in a way you'd be looking if some random man had just brought your son into a bear hug. Ilya didn't like that, not really. He was the one who should be giving Shane bear hugs.

"Holy-- holy shit." Shane's voice broke through Ilyas thoughts. Ilya watched intently as the man let go of Shane, a large charismatic smile spread across his lips.

Shane's head snapped to Ilya, their eyes meeting. He could almost see the exact moment Shane realized that "Oh shit. Somone's here. And so is Ilya" The other man's eyes followed, looking at Yuna, David, and then finally Ilya.

"Nathan?" Yuna spoke up. Yuna knew this man? It did make some sense, if Shane was so friendly with him.

Nathan was tall and fit. He had scruffy brown hair that stopped about mid-neck. He had what looked to be chocolate brown eyes and the second they hit the light they turned into a glittery hazel.

Ilya had a very unwanted thought. What if Shane had a secret boyfriend-- well a secret boyfriend that wasn't him. If Shane and this... Nathan was so close, close enough that Yuna knew him. Close enough that Shane was comfortable enough to be squeezed nearly half to death by this annoyingly attractive individual. Why had Ilya never heard of him? Not once has Shance brought up a Nathan or had he meant a Nathan. and he's known Shane for a decade now. So, what is this if not romantic relationship? He knew Shane, knew he wouldn't cheat. But that did little to quell the shit show going on in Ilyas brain.

Ilyas stomach twisted and turned in a way that made him want to vomit right there onto the freshly vacuumed carpet. Shane seemed to notice the shift in Ilyas expression and started to panic, given the look on his face. That made Ilya feel even worse.

"Ilya Rozanov?" He finally heard Nathan speak. Even his voice was attractive. *Oh god.*
"Shane, why is Ilya Rozanov here?"

"They're friends." Yuna spoke up, putting a hand on Ilyas shoulder. That touch calmed him down a bit, but his shoulder stayed stiff and his stomach continued to twist in an uncomfortable way.

"Yes, friends." Ilya nodded, he watched Nathan raise an eyebrow. Ilyas jaw clenched but he forced himself to smile. "And you and Shane are...?"

"Also, friends. Best friends." Ah, the best friend Shane has never brought up. Made a whole lot of *fucking* sense.

"*Childhood* best friends." Shane corrected. Ilya could hear the slight tenseness in his voice. "We haven't spoken since what... high school?" Shane looked over at Nathan and Nathan smiled down at him.

"Mhm. High school." Nathan confirmed

The silence stretched on for an uncomfortably long time. Ilya wanted to curl up in a ball and hide. He didn't like this, not at all. Thank God David noticed the silent tension cracking through the air between the three of them.

"Nathan, let me get you a drink, come on." David gestured towards the kitchen and Nathan nodded, following him.

Once they were out of earshot Shane grabbed Ilyas wrist and pulled him closer. Oh god here it comes. "Ilya I'm so sorry." "I don't love you anymore." with the added "I never did." Instead came:

"That was close. You should-- God damn it, I want you to... but he's here and--"

"Shane." Yuna stopped Shane from spiraling any further. "I'm sure it'll be fine. Ilya can be a *close friend* for tonight and once Nathan leaves he can go back to being your *boyfriend*." Shane nodded slowly, taking in a deep breath.

Ilya was beyond confused and Shane seemed to pick up on it.

"Right, Nathan is an old friend of mine. We lost touch after I got drafted." Shane explained, finally letting go of Ilyas wrist. Oh. Oh, that made sense. Relief filled Ilya as his body relaxed a bit. "I had no idea he was coming over-- did you?"

Yuna shook her head and looked apologetically at Shane and Ilya. Nathan had just fucked up their whole Christmas Eve night. Well maybe not, maybe Nathan just stopped by to hug *his* boyfriend, say hi, and leave.

Ilya needed to talk to Shane, because despite the whole "childhood best friend" thing. He couldn't get rid of the aching feeling in his gut. Yuna, God bless her, seemed to pick up on that immediately and joined David and Mr. Perfect Teeth in the kitchen.

They just stood there for a few, long and uncomfortable, beats until Ilya finally decided to speak up.

"You have never brought him up." His throat felt tight

"It's not like we were close now-- sure we used to be but that was a long time ago." Shane sighed, rubbing the back of his neck. "This is insane. I don't talk to the guy for like twelve years, and he shows up all of a sudden?"

"Maybe he is here to rob us?" That comment made Shane snort out a laugh. Hearing and seeing Shane relax a bit made him relax.

"Or he's like, an alien sent here to kidnap us?"

"And do what? Probe us?" Shane punched Ilyas shoulder playfully

"Ew, gross."

Dinner was awkward at first. David attempted to make small talk with Nathan but each time it ended with an awkward fake chuckle and someone nervously clearing their throat. Ilya wanted Nathan to leave, he wanted to tell him to get out because he was ruining one of the best nights of the year. But, unfortunately, he couldn't. So instead, he looked down at his plate of food and stuffed a spoon full of mashed potatoes in his mouth.

"Nathan, so uhm... why are you here?" Ilya hadn't expected Shane to be the one to pop the question. Ilya looked over at Shane who was pushing around whatever the hell he made for himself with his fork.

Nathan's head perked up, his mouth full of food. He chewed for a second, swallowed, downed half his water before he finally spoke.

"I know it sudden, and I probably should have called--" *Oh yeah, you probably fucking should have.* "--but it was kind of a last-minute decision. I was in town and thought: 'wouldn't it be crazy if I stopped by and said hi to my old best friend, who just so happens to be a hockey star now.'"

"Why are you back in town?" Yuna asked cheerfully, trying to keep the conversation going and avoid another long stretch of awkward silence.

"The band I'm in is doing a whole bunch of shows here. Honestly, I forgot you all lived here until I stepped off the plane." Nathan explained. Of course he was in a band. Ilya looked back at Shane who seemed much more interested in the conversation now, even though he's the one who started it.

"You still play?"

"Of course, that's like me asking if you still play hockey." That earned a small snort of laughter from Shane. *It wasn't even funny.*

"I remember when you were just starting, god you were horrible." Now they were reminiscing, awesome.

"What!? You used to say I was amazing!"

"I was obviously lying, you were... it was bad." Shane smiled, looking down at his plate and taking a bite of... whatever that was.

"What is uhm-- band name?" Ilya was sure he sounded stupid. Shane had plenty of friends and Ilya wasn't jealous of them. Shane had Hayden and J.J. and Rose-- okay Ilya was a little jealous of Rose from time to time. But this was Shane's long lost best friend. What kind of boyfriend would Ilya be if he didn't let them make up for lost time. So, he squashed the emotion down into the floor. Down into hell.

Ilya could sit here and not be jealous. He could eat his Christmas Eve dinner and pretend to be *just a friend* until Nathan left. Because that's what a good boyfriend would do. This was totally okay and awesome, and Ilya definitely didn't feel self-conscious whenever Shane

would smile at Nathan. Because they were old friends, of course they have little inside jokes, of course they know how to make each other laugh.

It became painfully obvious Ilya had struck some nerve by asking about the band name. Because Nathan didn't answer. He didn't look like he wanted to. He looked down at his food and his ears turned pink. Flushed against his pale skin.

"The Key." Nathan hesitated, his voice quiet and cautious like he had just insulted Shane's whole family with the words "The" and "Key".

Another uncomfortable silence filled the room. This time Ilya was sure it would stay like that forever. At least until Nathan left. And Ilya had caused it; he should've just kept his mouth shut. He shifted awkwardly in his chair. Then he heard a small giggle. A giggle the Quickly turned into a laugh that came from deep within Shane's body. Shane didn't laugh like that, not often. Whenever Ilya could get Shane to laugh like that, he'd feel unbelievably happy. But now that laugh made something inside Ilya's stomach churn uncomfortably. He hated this. Hated he wasn't the one to make Shane laugh like that. Hated he didn't understand what was so fucking funny about The Key. No stop it Ilya.

"Are you serious? You kept that name?" Shane asked breathlessly through his fit of laughter.

Ilya's eyebrows furrowed as he looked at Shane. He wanted to understand why it was so funny. He felt like he was sitting in a box, separated from Shane and Nathan.

"Don't laugh!" Nathan sounded hurt but he was laughing with Shane. And now that Ilya was looking around, Yuna and David were both snickering as well.

God, he needed a cigarette.

Ilya stood up, much rougher than he should have. Shane's gaze broke from Nathan's and snapped to Ilya's. Then he realized everyone's eyes were on him. He put on his best "I don't care that everyone gets this *super funny* joke. My boyfriend is having fun so I'm having fun. I just need some air." Seeing that everyone was still looking for an explanation--despite his very telling smile-- he spoke.

"Just stepping out for some air, stuffy in here." He pulled at the collar of his shirt and pushed his chair in. He could still feel Shane's eyes on him. He'd have to make sure he brushed his teeth six times before stepping anywhere near Shane. And he'd probably have to change because Shane had the nose of a fucking police dog.

Ilya didn't know how long he'd been out there, sitting on the porch in the backyard instead of the perfectly nice lawn chair that was just a few steps away. It's been long enough for him to go through three and a half cigarettes so like... five minutes. Long enough for Shane to come looking for him at least. His head snapped back when he heard the creak of the sliding door. He pressed the fourth cigarette into the ground. He could tell by the look on Shane's face he wasn't happy. Like a mother who just caught her sixteen-year-old son smoking.

"You're smoking." *Mr. Fucking Obvious.*

"Yeah, well." He shrugged, looking away from Shane and back into the starless sky.

"Nathan is leaving. He invited us to one of his shows. He's staying around for a while so I'm sure we can catch one--"

"You want me to come with? Are you sure I wouldn't ruin your time with *Nathan*?" Ilya could almost hear Shane tense up. He shouldn't have said that.

"What? Jesus Ilya." Shane scoffed, in the way he did when he was confused and angry.

"You were all having fun time, yes?" He tried to reel it back in, but it wasn't working.

"We were, so fucking what?"

Well, this was happening. On Christmas Eve. Great. Ilya stood up, standing face to face with Shane. He watched Shane's face scrunch up when Ilya got closer. In the same way it always did when Shane smelt cigarette smoke on him.

"Having fun without me, that is what." Ilya crossed his arms. Hoping to get his point across without sounding like a total dick head. He guessed it didn't work.

"How is that my fault? He's literally leaving right now."

"It is not your fault-- is not what I meant."

"Then what *did* you mean, Ilya?"

Ilya bit the inside of his cheek. Shane wasn't understanding, he didn't want to outright say he was jealous. So, he settled for a half truth.

"I just felt... left out." Ilya sighed. He watched Shane expression turn from scolding mother into... what? Caring mother? Either way his expression softened, and he cupped Ilya's face.

"Right. I'm sorry." Shane pecked Ilya on the cheek before letting him go. "Let's go inside, say bye to Nathan, and you can open a present tonight."

"An early present? Because you.. feel bad?"

"No, I was always going to give it to you tonight. I would have earlier if Nathan didn't show up."

Ilya loved the idea of an early Christmas present. A smile--a real one-- stretched across Ilya's lips and he pecked Shane back on the cheek.

"Oh, but you have to brush your teeth first... and shower." Shane nagged. Ilya snorted and kissed Shane's forehead.

"Okay, доска пола."

"Oh, I think I know this one-- hamburger, right-- no, no its like uhm... floor-?"

"Floorboard, yes. Close enough." That made Shane laugh. Tonight, could be salvaged.

Ilya sat impatiently on the couch while Shane ran to his car to grab the present. He felt a little bad for not getting Shane an early Christmas present, but he was sure Shane would enjoy what he got for him. Ilyas head perked up like a dog who just heard the mailman when Shane came in holding a box wrapped in green and red paper. It was wrapped perfectly because of course it was.

Shane handed Ilya the present and sat down next to him, one leg tucked up to his chest and the other hanging off the side of the couch.

"You did not have to." Ilya said as he started to claw his way through the paper like a five-year-old.

Ilya tore all of the perfectly wrapped red and green paper off the box and tossed it onto the ground. He looked curiously at the white box the paper was hiding. Ilya felt Shane's foot nudge at his thigh, silently encouraging him to open the box. Ilya opened it, it looked like some type of fluffy clothing. he pulled the folded fabric out of the box to get a better look at it. Pajama pants with loons on them. To match his tattoo. Ilya could feel himself smiling so hard he thought his skin might tear.

"Keep looking." Shane encouraged. Ilya looked back into the box and saw another identical pair of fluffy loon-covered pajama pants. Shane snatched the second pair out of Ilyas hands. "Come on." Shane grabbed onto Ilyas wrist and pulled him up off the couch.

He led him upstairs into the bathroom. Ilya raised a suggestive eyebrow at Shane.

"You dragged me to the bathroom to...?"

"Pervert, take off your pants."

"*I'm* the pervert?"

Shane snorted and began working on his own pants, unbuckling them. Ilya was confused but very much intrigued. So, he did what was asked of him. He finished taking his pants off before Shane did. He watched him step out of them and then fold them neatly, setting them on the sink.

"My shirt next?" Ilya hummed, Shane lifted up the pajama pants in his hands.

"No, put them on."

Ilya was a little disappointed they weren't about to have a little bathroom hook up, but he put his pants on anyways.

"they're really soft." Shane commented once the pants were full on him. Ilya stepped closer and grabbed Shane by the waist. His right hand trailed down lower, grabbing his ass. Which elicited a gasp from Shane.

"Wow, they are soft." Ilya watched Shane's freckled face flush. God, he loved when Shane's face was all red and preferably sweaty. Ilya leaned down, his mouth close enough he could feel the moment Shane's breath got caught in his throat.

The kiss was slow, deliberate. Filled with purpose. Shane responded instantly, his fingers curling into his shirt, pulling him closer until there was no space left between them. One of Ilya's hands found Shane's jaw, his thumb pressing just enough to tilt his head back to deepen the kiss. The kiss grew increasingly more intense, teeth clashing, teeth nipping, and tongues tangling.

Ilya knew he couldn't do anything too crazy, not in Shane's parents' bathroom. So, despite wanting to continue this-- he pulled away, resting his forehead on Shane's.

"I love you." Shane said breathlessly, his lips pink. Ilya ran both his hands through the back of Shane's hair.

"I love you too."

Chapter End Notes

Well, hello. This chapter ended on a good note! Are you happy? Satisfied? You'll need it for future chapters. Sorry this chapter is a bit short! I'll probably write more for the next chapter which will be much more heart breaking for our boy Ilya.

Chapter 2: The Key

Chapter Summary

Ilya and Shane don't get many days alone together. Their schedules constantly clash, making it hard to spend time together. But of course, Shane wants to spend one of their very precious days together watching Nathan Hales play at a bar. Great.

Chapter Notes

This one is pretty dialogue-heavy. I added some of the songs I like in this one, lmk if you like them too!!

Hope you enjoyyyyyy.

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

Ilya was less than happy and way more than annoyed. This is how he had to spend one of his precious nights with Shane? At a sucky bar with shitty drinks, watching Shane's shitty friend play his even shittier guitar.

Instead of thinking about the impending doom that is watching Nathan play the guitar, he'd think about the hour and a half he has alone with Shane. Simply enjoying each other's presence. Ilya brushed his knee against Shane's. Shane looked up from the book he was reading-- some autobiography about some hockey player from the nineties. He really looks amazing in his glasses. Domestic moments like these were what Ilya enjoyed the most. Making and eating breakfast together and watering the garden. Watching stupid movies, Ilya made fun of the whole time, and Shane getting mad at him for talking over an important part.

Shane raised an eyebrow at Ilya, but he only smiled back. He grabbed Shane by the shoulder and brought his head down onto his chest. Shane set his book down on the coffee table and nuzzled into Ilya.

Ilya was sure Shane could hear his heart practically beating out of his chest. They've known each other since like-- forever. But this feeling never seemed to fade. Ilya felt like a schoolgirl who had finally gotten his crush to notice him every time Shane would act all touchy and in love. It was nice.

They didn't get many nights like this. Sure, they had the summer, but a chunk of that was already disturbed thanks to the hockey camp. So, every time they did get nights like this-- it

meant a lot to Ilya. Ilya didn't want to disturb this moment. But of course, all good things come to an end.

He could tell by the way Shane looked down at his watch every few seconds that he was nervous. He always got like this when they planned to go out together. Every possible thing that could go wrong swam through Shane's mind. Ilya didn't really want to go anyway. He'd much rather stay here with Shane's head on his chest.

But Shane wanted to go. And it meant something to Ilya that he invited him to come with. If Shane thought for even a second that Nathan suspected anything, he wouldn't have asked Ilya to come with. Shane sat up and tapped his fingers on his own knees. He always did that when he was about to ask him something.

"So... tonight, may be... a little weird." Shane said hesitantly. Ilya raised an eyebrow but nodded.

Every time they went out in public together, it was weird. This wasn't anything new. Ilya didn't mind being a little touchy or flirty in public, but Shane did.

"Sure, but I can handle weird."

"Obviously, Nathan can't know-- about us. I know the bar won't be packed but..." Shane trailed off, biting the inside of his cheek, another thing he did when he was on edge. "Let's just keep touching to a minimum."

He nods, because nodding has always been easier than asking Shane for more.

Ilya knows how things are. He knows he can't be touchy no matter how much he craved it-- craved for everyone to know he and Shane were together. Ilya didn't respond with words, settling for a nod. He rested his hands in his lap, picking at his nails. he hoped the conversation would stop there. That they could go back to snuggling up on the couch.

"And no teasing or anything... you're not exactly subtle." Shane tried to joke, but it didn't land all that well. Still, Ilya laughed, too fast, a little too fake.

"Yes, yes, I know. I'll *behave*."

"Oh, and no making fun of the band, okay? Even if they suck." Shane joked again, but this time Ilya didn't laugh, just smiled.

So, Shane is worried about Ilya hurting Nathan's feelings? Like they're in fucking grade school? Why is Shane acting like Ilya can't act appropriately-- like he's some loose cannon that could go off at any moment? Shane just *assumes* Ilya will be rude. Was he not nice and polite even when Nathan ruined their Christmas Eve dinner? Could he not handle himself then?

Ilya eyes darted to his lap as he picked at his nails a little rougher. The silence is deafening. Ilya could hear every little thing in the room, and it bothered him. The rush of wind hitting the window and the clock above the TV ticked like a bomb about to detonate. And even

worse, Shane exhaled a deep breath like he was relieved. Like he had finally hooked his lasso around the unstable horse that had just bucked him off.

But it's just one night, two hours at most, and then Ilya will have Shane back in his arms again. It felt like Ilya was trying to sneak his way into a side of Shane's life he wasn't supposed to be in. Like he didn't belong. And what felt like a blink of the eye, the hour and a half Shane and Ilya had before they had to leave, was gone.

Ilya knows the rules aren't active yet, even inside the car; they were still alone, in their own little bubble. But knowing that that's temporary is almost worse than having to follow them immediately.

Ilya watches Shane's hand rest on the center console, practically begging to be held. And who is Ilya if not merciful to what Shane wants? His pinky poked Shane's, making Shane look over for a split second before returning his gaze to the road. Ilya watched Shane's lips curve into a smile as his pinky hooked around Shane's.

"Who do you play next?" Shane asked, the question coming out of the blue.

"New York." Ilya let out a dramatic sigh, slouching in his seat. Shane smiled.

"Oh, come on. You guys might squeeze out a win."

"You say that every time I play."

"I don't say that when you play Montreal."

"Yeah, because you are always so damn cocky."

"Do I not deserve to be a little cocky?"

"You do not get 'a little cocky.'" Ilya fully grabbed Shane's hand, intertwining their fingers. "I do not mind, it's cute."

"Shut up, asshole. No, it's not."

"Right," Ilya leaned in a little, giving Shane a peck on the cheek. "of course, it's not."

Shane only shook his head and squeezed Ilya's hand. This is who Shane is when he's not constantly anxious that someone might find out about them. *This is who he is with Ilya.*

Ilya half expected the car ride to be silent the rest of the way to the bar. But it wasn't-- and he kind of wishes it was.

"You know, when Nathan and I were in high school, we used to egg this one lady's house." Shane hummed, his eyes staying locked on the road. Ilya perked his head up and raised his eyebrows.

"Seriously? You? Mr. Perfect Boy Hollander egging some poor lady's house?"

"Yup," Shane chuckled. "Every Halloween. And she wasn't some poor little lady. She was mean."

"Awe? She hurt your feelings?"

"Fuck off." But Shane was still smiling. Reminiscing.

"Oh, and another time, when I was at Nathans, we went down to the creek behind his house. It was freezing, like mid-December and the creek was like kind of frozen over but not fully. If you stepped on it, you'd fall right through. Well, *Nathan*," Shane smiled a little more. "He told me it was frozen enough for me to walk on it. So, I did, that fucker. I fell straight through. It was a whole thing. I don't even remember what we told his mom."

Ilya smiled and nodded along. It was nice hearing about Shane's youth. What wasn't nice was how outside of it all Ilya felt. It didn't feel like Shane was telling him the story-- more like Shane was telling it to himself.

Ilya slid his thumb under Shane's sleeve, leaning over the center console just to nudge the freckled face's shoulder with his own.

Shane continued his stories, each joke he didn't understand, every scene he couldn't envision made Ilya want to squeeze Shane's hand until it fell off.

Ilya eventually tore his gaze away from Shane and out his window. his eyes caught the neon sign flashing the words "*Stillwater*" in pink, fluorescent lights. He could feel Shane shift in his seat and his grip on Ilyas's hand loosening.

Ilya watched ahead as Shane found a spot he liked and parked in it. Shane leaned in and pressed his forehead against Ilya's briefly before releasing Ilya's hand fully and getting out of the car. Ilya immediately feels the absence of Shane's fingers wrapped in his own. Leaving him with a strange sense of loss. He takes a second before getting out of the car, closing the door gently because he knew Shane hated it when he closed it too hard.

Ilya and Shane stood on either side of the car. Shane straightened his jacket and cleared his throat before looking over at Ilya.

"This should be fun." Shane smiled at Ilya, and Ilya smiled back.

Maybe it will be. Maybe Nathan will fucking suck at the guitar, and he could give Shane a "would you look at that?" look followed by a playful nudge of the elbow- right. No touching.

By the time Ilya reached the door, he already knew how he had to act tonight. He'd be good, quiet. He won't touch Shane.

The bar was much more crowded than Ilya had expected. He was sure whatever bar Nathans band got a gig in would be smaller. But the scene isn't unfamiliar to Ilya, he used to go to

clubs and bars all the time. He still does-- but not as much as he used to. Not since he and Shane became serious. He'd go to bars and clubs looking to get drunk and hook up. Now the only time he'd go out like that was with his team, or on the very small occasion, Shane. Ilyas' eyes scanned the crowd, people sitting at the bar, at their own tables, a few standing up and rubbing against each other like they were the only people in the whole bar.

Ilya navigated through the bar skillfully, like he's been there before. He constantly looks behind him to make sure he didn't lose Shane in the sea of people. Soon, they made it to the bar, and Ilya ordered vodka to get the night going. Shane ordered a Ginger Ale. Boring.

"What?" Shane asked, and Ilya didn't even realize he was smiling. He looked over at Shane and shrugged.

"Nothing."

Ilya nodded at the bartender as he handed him his drink. He savored the burn of the vodka as it slid down his throat.

"Holy shit."

Ilya jumped a bit, looking around the room.

"Are you Shane Hollander-- oh my god." Ilyas' eyes landed on a girl, early twenties, it looked like. She was accompanied by one of her friends, "Lily-- Lily, look it's Ilya Rozanov."

Ilya could immediately notice the tension rising in Shane's shoulders.

"Can we get a picture with both of you?" The girl Ilya assumed to be Lily asked, already pulling out her phone. Ilya smiled back.

"Yeah, sure." He nudged Shane with his elbow. there goes the no-touching rule.

Ilya wrapped his arm around one of the girls' shoulders, and Shane did the same to the other one. Some drunk old man took the photo for them, taking multiple of himself on accident before finally flipping the camera and taking an unsteady picture of the four of them.

Shane's shoulder stayed stiff for a few moments longer. Ilya could almost hear Shane's thoughts. "This was a bad idea." "We should just go home." Ilya watched as Shane took a half step away, like standing two feet apart would make someone suspect something.

Ilya wants to comfort Shane. To tell him that just because a few people here watch hockey doesn't mean people will immediately assume they're together. Ilya wants to grab Shane's wrist and whisper reassurances in his ear. But he knows he can't; Shane would only tense up more, worry more. No touching.

Shane doesn't need comfort right now; he needs control. Control over how others preserve their relationship.

Ilya is half-aware he's staring at Shane-- but he can't tear his eyes away. His eyes follow Shane's hand as he brings his drink to his lips and sips on it. Shane's a big boy. He can soothe

his nervousness by himself. That didn't make Ilya want to comfort him any less.

"I kind of forget people recognize us like that," Shane spoke into his glass without looking at Ilya.

"I did not, people are constantly recognizing me." Ilya tried lightening the mood like Shane so obviously needed. Shane smiled, and Ilya felt an itch to kiss him right there.

Ilya stuffed his hands into his pockets; he doesn't trust himself to keep his hands off of Shane.

Shane's eyes kept snapping towards the stage, waiting. He seemed kind of excited to watch them play. Ilya couldn't help but wonder if that's how Shane looks when he's waiting for him. Impatient but giddy. Ilya quickly realizes he doesn't want that. He doesn't want to elicit the same reaction out of Shane that Nathan does. He should get a special one.

Shane and Ilya found a spot closer to the back, close to an emergency exit. Ilya half-expected Shane to say: "Just in case we have to make a quick getaway."

The vodka, thank God for it, helped loosen Ilya up a bit. Maybe tonight won't be that bad. Hell, maybe he and Shane could go home afterwards and do something *way* more interesting than watching some band play.

"What kind of band is *The Key*, anyway?"

Ilya watched Shane lean in closer, probably to hear him better. They were playing some song he couldn't put his finger on.

"I'm not-- entirely sure... Nathan kind of played all kinds of music when we were kids."

"Did he have a metal phase? Like eyeliner and stuff?"

Shane stayed silent for a second, smiling into his cup again. Ilya's eyes widened, and so did his smile.

"Seriously?"

"...He had this half-buzz cut half side part too. And back then, he didn't play the guitar, just the drums."

Ilya nearly choked on nothing

"Do you... have picture?"

"Of course not! But if I went digging, I could probably find one."

"Please dig."

Ilya watched Shane's head perk up when he heard someone tapping the mic, announcing that *The Key* would be out soon. Shane straightened up in his seat and looked intently at the stage.

Without even looking at the stage, Ilya could tell the moment Nathan and his band stepped onto it just by watching the way Shane smiled.

That's the same way he smiled at Nathan on Christmas Eve.

Ilyas gazes follows Shane's to the stage. Nathan is standing front and center, like the rest of his band mates were just the ensemble, and he was the lead. His scruffy brown hair looked slightly more brushed out while still holding its chaotic nature. He looked tanner than he was before, even though it's only been about a month, and it was still freezing out. He was wearing a white tank top that was barely covered up by a denim jacket that matched his denim pants.

Nathan stepped closer to the mic, tapping it a few times before clearing his throat.

"Hello everyone, I hope you're all having a good time." Nathan's voice boomed through the speakers. His words received a round of cheering and whoops. "I'm Nathan Hales, lead singer and guitarist of *The Key*."

"I didn't know he sings too--" Ilya flinched back a bit when Shane waved a hand in front of his face.

"Shh..." Shane shushed, and Ilya slouched a bit in his seat, bringing his vodka to his lips.

"But enough with formalities, let's get this started with a cover, yeah?" Nathan flashed the crowd with one of his perfect toothed charismatic smiles. "How about *Shark Attack* by *Joshua Slone*?"

Multiple tables erupted in cheers and claps. Ilya wasn't familiar with the song.

He was prepared for Nathan to suck-- it was almost worse that he didn't. The song wasn't something Ilya would normally listen to. He rarely listened to songs in English. He found it harder to translate all the words when instruments were playing in the background.

The crowd seemed to enjoy the song, even though Ilya was only half-listening; he found it... very mildly enjoyable. He couldn't stop himself from stealing glances at Shane, who seemed to be enjoying himself.

The band played a few more covers: *The Man Who Can't Be Moved* by *The Script*, *Earrings* by *Malcolm Todd*, *Mutt* by *Leon Thomas*, and *Bad Religion* by *Frank Ocean*. Before moving on to an original.

"This one's old, wrote it back in high school, may not be... the best. *Cut Back*. Nathan's eyes scanned the room. Ilya could only assume he was searching for Shane.

"No way." Shane nearly stood up from his seat, shock written all over his face.

"What?" Ilya watched him intently. Shane's gaze snapped from the stage to Ilya.

"I helped him write this one-- like so long ago. It sucked... really, *really bad*."

"*You* wrote a song?"

"Well, Nathan asked for help-- I said no at first, but he kept asking, so I caved. No idea why he'd trust me to help with something like that."

"Did you guys write together a lot?" Ilya asked. His hand reached for Shane's under the table, hovering for a second before pulling away

Shane just shook his head no. No verbal response.

It felt like Ilya had a snake slithering in his stomach. Shane looked back at the stage as soon as the song started.

The other songs that the band had played were much better than whatever *Cut Back* was. It was... well--it was bad. It was outdated, probably shouldn't be played in front of a crowd. But Ilya could tell that it meant something to Shane that Nathan was playing it.

Nathan wasn't playing the song for the crowd. He was playing it *for Shane*.

If Ilya didn't already feel like he didn't belong here-- in this part of Shane's world. He does now.

Ilya stopped listening to the song fully, mostly because it sucked and he didn't want to listen to the awkward lyrics and the chorus that didn't quite land. And so, he could watch Shane.

He watched as Shane winced like it hurt before a particularly bad part started, like he knew it was coming. Because he did know it was coming.

Thankfully, the song came to a close, and so did the band's performance.

Some things, he's learning, were never meant to include him.

The crowd exchanged confused and slightly annoyed looks at how awful the song was. A few politely clapped, Shane clapped harder and louder than necessary, a small laugh escaping his lips.

He looks proud. *He isn't proud of the song; he's proud of the memory.*

Ilya watched Nathan wrap his arms around Shane. Shane hesitated for a second before hugging him back. Ilya instantly feels jealous. Not entirely because Nathan is hugging Shane, but because he can. Nathan doesn't have to ask. Doesn't think about whether someone may think they're anything more than friends.

Nathan was flushed, sweaty, and energized from the performance. His guitar still hung loosely off his shoulder, and his jacket was barely hanging onto his elbows.

Ilya watches the interaction closely, noting where Shane's hands go and how easy the contact is. Why can't it be that easy for him? Why can't Ilya hug Shane without him thinking

someone may get the wrong idea-- or rather the right idea?

The rules were made specifically for Ilya. Because he specifically needed them.

He shifted his weight to his other foot, keeping his hands wrapped around his glass of vodka, which he's been nursing all night. Ilya watches the hug end. Envy settles deep in his stomach, heavy and unwelcoming. Shane looked back at Ilya, his expression shifting, smile faltering. Shane's mouth opens a bit, like he's about to say something-- but he quickly closes it. Like he's scared of what he might say.

Shane looked back at Nathan, and not for the first time tonight, he felt alone despite being in a room full of people.

"I can't believe you played that." Shane sighed, the way he did when he was trying to act annoyed but couldn't fully play the part.

"Oh, I know. The crowd hated it." Nathan grinned.

"It was so much worse than I remembered-- you seriously got your band mates to agree to that?"

"Of course, they're all laid back. They did all make fun of me, though, when I played it to them for the first time." Nathan craned his head to look behind Shane and at Ilya, lifting a hand and waving it. Ilya raised his hand back in a silent hello.

"Hey, what'd you think-- not about the last song, the rest of the performance?" Nathan asked, taking a step towards Ilya. Ilya was expecting to conversate with Nathan-- not really. So, he put on his best smile.

"I'm not too into Canadian music-- or American music." He watched Shane give him a look telling him not to be rude. but he knew that already. It was one of the rules. "But it was good. Not bad." He shrugged, watching Nathan's smile widen.

"I'm glad it was enjoyable."

"Yes, enjoyable. I--" Ilya is cut off.

"What was that one song called again? The third one you played?" Shane seemed non-the-wiser that he had just cut Ilya off mid-sentence

"Oh, right, *Earrings by Malcolm Todd*."

"It kind of reminded me of that one song you wrote after Cassie-- what was her last name?"

"Duncan." Nathan's cheeks were now flushed a light pink.

"Right, Cassie Duncan, after she dumped you."

"Ouch, Shane. Salt in the wound much?" Nathan elbowed Shane the same way Ilya always did.

"Come on! you totally deserved it after you--"

"Shh! Shut up." Nathan pressed a finger to his lips. "That is not a story you should tell in a room full of people, including your hockey buddy."

Nathan sounded serious, but the way he chuckled a bit after every word suggested otherwise. Ilya was an observer, not a participant. Is this what it felt like to be in the cuck chair? Because it didn't feel great.

"Okay, I've got to help pack all the stuff up. Catch you later?" Nathan grabbed Shane's arm, gently. The touch is soft, innocent. Still, Ilya didn't like it.

"Maybe, we--" Shane looked over at Ilya for a split second. "I might leave soon."

Can friends not drive to bars together?

"Alright, sure, see you." Nathan looked at Ilya and smiled before disappearing into the crowd.

Ilya watched Shane take a long breath in before looking at Ilya.

"He's better than I thought he'd be-- he wasn't *bad* in high school, just... not great."

Ilya nodded in agreement. He wasn't bad. Ilya kind of wished he was. He can feel the crowd loosening up again as the speakers start playing some random pop song Ilya wasn't familiar with. Ilya was hoping the conversation would steer away from Nathan. But of course, it didn't.

"I forgot how much he loved playing live. He used to play in parks and stuff." Shane was talking slightly faster and louder than normal in a post-adrenaline way. The way people got all giggly and excited after a roller coaster.

For the first time tonight, Ilya didn't sip his vodka; he chugged the rest of it down. This was a bar. Did he not deserve to have a bit of fun?

"I'm going to get another drink." Before Shane could respond, he slithered through the crowd and approached the bartender. He ordered another vodka, a stronger one. Ilya lost Shane somewhere in the crowd-- but that was okay. Shane could go find Nathan, talk to him with Ilya standing there like an idiot.

He watched Shane make his way towards the stage, helping Nathan and his band out with the equipment. Ilya downs the first vodka. Then he orders another, and then one more for good measure. By the third expressions soften, and edges round.

Ilya enjoys bars; Drunk Ilya enjoys them even more.

"Ilya Rozanov, right?" The bartender asked, her hand worked purposefully to clean a glass. The way she asked it was casual, like it was no big deal; she was talking to a hockey star. Ilya liked that.

"Yeah, want a picture?"

"No, I was just curious." Ilya's eyes swept over her, his eyes landing on her name tag. Sofia.
"Is there a reason you're here? Big hockey party?"

"Yes, humongous." He said sarcastically, gesturing to the empty seats beside him. Sofia snickered, setting the glass down. The room felt lighter now, warmer. Probably thanks to the vodka.

"So-- another drink or-" Sofia cut herself off, watching someone beside Ilya. Ilya looked over, Shane.

Ilya half-expected to get scolded, but Shane didn't say anything. Instead, he ordered another Ginger Ale. Shane settled in the seat beside Ilya, wrapping his hand around the glass.

"How many have you had?" Shane finally asked, leaning in just enough to keep his voice low. Not close enough that anyone would suspect he wasn't mad, not annoyed. He spoke to Ilya the same way Shane always spoke to him when they were alone.

Ilya hummed "Three." Ilya shrugged, his finger tracing the design on his glass, feeling the condensation on his fingertips. "So, like, nothing at all."

"Mm." Shane snorted

"Oh, oh, Sofia." Ilya shifted in his seat. "Tell Shane."

Sofia raised an eyebrow, amused. "Tell Shane what?"

Ilya smiled loosely, unguarded and naturally, as he put his hand on Shane's shoulder, "about my huge hockey party, yes?" Ilya looked at Shane. "She is funny."

"Ilya-" Shane stiffened.

"It's big, no? Just look at all these hockey people around me." Ilya smiled, not noticing the shift in Shane's demeanor

"Hate to break it to you, but there's no one there." Sofia laughed softly.

"See?" Ilya gestured vaguely towards Sofia. "Funny."

"I'm really not, just making conversation." She gave both of them a warm smile.

"She's just doing her job." Shane exhaled through his nose.

"I am," She agreed, nodding knowingly at Shane. "And no more drinks, 'kay? you're cut off."

Ilya looked over at Shane. "Would you look at that?" Ilya put a hand over his heart. "She cares."

Shane didn't smile at that. He shifted closer slightly, just enough for his knee to brush up against Ilyas under the table. Secretive but prominent to the both of them. He did this protectively, unconsciously.

The press of Shane's knee against his was warm, almost comforting after not being able to be too close to him all night. Ilya assumes it's accidental.

Sofia moved on to the other side of the bar, but Ilya didn't care much. He wanted to grab Shane, hug him, kiss him... do something not PG-13 to him. His fingers tapped against the counter, keeping them busy.

"Hey," Ilya's head perked up when he heard Nathan's voice. Shane's knee almost immediately pulled away. "Haven't called it a night yet?"

Shane shook his head, a little too quickly. Nathan settled into the seat beside him. Ilya didn't really listen when they spoke. Their voices muffled and mushed together while Ilya watched Nathan. He noticed it a bit more than before, the touches. Nathan liked poking Shane's bicep, didn't he? And did Nathan's foot always tap Shane's when they were facing each other?

"You guys have a lot of history, huh?" Ilya blurted out. Both Shane's and Nathan's gaze snapped to his at the same time.

"Well, yeah," Nathan chuckled, looking between Shane and Ilya. "We've been friends since we were little."

"Since we were six." Shane chimed in, and Nathan looked back at him.

"No, since we were five." Nathan shook his head

"We were six!" Shane pushed playfully

Ilya wanted another drink. Just to give him something to do instead of blurting out something that made everything awkward. So, instead of trying to join the conversation, he observes it. He let the noises of their voices, and the voices around them, wash over him.

How long has it been now since the band stopped playing? An hour? Maybe an hour and a half? The bar was now getting obnoxiously loud and crowded as the night deepened. Shane checked his watch and looked back at Ilya.

"It's getting late-- I should get going." Shane explained to Nathan, who just nodded back in response. "Ilya?"

Ilya perked his head up immediately, like he was a dog and his owner called on him.

"Are you heading home soon, too? Need a ride?" Ilya looked at Shane, confused for a second before he finally understood. Nodding quickly.

"Yeah," He stretched his arms over his head dramatically. Shane rolled his eyes but smiled. "I'm beat."

That wasn't untrue. He was tired. But not in a way sleep could fix.

Shane stood up from his seat, and Nathan followed, clapping Shane on the shoulder.

"Alright, text when you're not busy. We can grab a movie or something." Nathan flashed a perfect smile and Shane, and Shane smiled back.

"Sure, probably won't be for a while though."

"That's fine, whenever is best for you." Nathan's hand slid from Shane's shoulder to his arm. "See you."

"See you." Shane walked past Nathan. Ilya followed closely behind, offering a quick goodbye before disappearing into the crowd with Shane.

The cold air hit Ilya, biting at his face and hands. He breaths out of his mouth, watching a puff of fog come out. The absence of loud music and even louder people was strange. It took Ilya a moment to re-adjust to the quiet. Ilya comes up to walk beside Shane, who looks at him briefly before looking back out into the parking lot. Their hands swing side by side, and Ilya's finger itched once again to grab Shane's.

"Did you have fun?" Shane spoke up, startling Ilya a bit. Ilya nodded quickly, almost too quickly.

"Yeah."

He wasn't lying-- he did have a goodish time. It just wasn't the full truth. He decided then he wouldn't bring anything up-- maybe he wouldn't bring anything up ever. He didn't have the energy to deal with a possible fight.

The car was still cold, somehow colder than it was outside. Ilya shivered, and Shane immediately started the engine and turned on the heater. Ilya leaned his head back, staring at the ceiling. He wants to keep his mouth shut, let the moment pass peacefully until they made it to his place-- but he was finding it increasingly difficult to stay tight-lipped.

"He really cares about you, hm?"

Ilya looked over at Shane, watched him smile and tap the steering wheel. "Yeah, he does."

Ilya looked back up at the ceiling and closed his eyes. He Allowed the sound of cars and wind to wash over him. Allowed them to relax him. Ground him.

Ilya goes inside first, slipping his jacket off his shoulders and hanging it up. Shane, like always, kicked his shoes off and set them neatly near the door. The silence between them

stretched, not awkwardly but heavily. Ilya was slowly but surely sobering up. But he wasn't full clear yet.

He missed who he was an hour ago

Shane looked over at Ilya as he took his own jacket off, hanging it up next to Ilya's.

"Do you need water-- food?" Shane asked, breaking the silence momentarily.

Ilya shook his head, throwing himself on the couch. His long legs stretched across the plush cushions, his feet dangling off the arm. He kicked his shoes off carelessly, he knew Shane hated it when he did that. But he didn't really care, not right now at least.

Shane knelt down and grabbed Ilya's shoes, placing them beside his own next to the door. Now Ilya felt bad.

"A shower then? We can take one together." Shane suggested, making his way to the couch and sitting down next to Ilya's head.

Ilya wanted to put his head on Shane's lap- but he hesitated. Why was he still waiting for permission when they were alone?

"You have to leave in two days, right?" Shane asked, keeping the conversation light. Ilya was good at that.

"Mhm." Ilya nodded, using his arm as a cushion instead of Shane's legs. "And you leave in one, yes?"

"Yeah, tomorrow night." Shane tangled his fingers in Ilya's hair.

Ilya considers bringing up the song, or the hug- but knows he shouldn't. What good would that bring? It's not like they could fix whatever was going on anyway. They had to keep each other's secret. No matter how much both of them hated it.

"You were great with Nathan-- I'm glad you came." Shane hummed as his fingers continued to play with Ilya's curly locks.

Ilya feels like flinching, like the words had just stabbed him. Shane had expected him to act out; he didn't expect him to behave like he said he would.

Shane could feel Ilya shift and his fingers stilled in his hair.

"I'm going to shower." Ilya stood up, disappearing upstairs.

Ilya's eyes lock on his own in the mirror, his hands gripping the sink like it was the only thing keeping him upwards.

He knows Shane means well-- and that's almost worse.

Chapter End Notes

I was listening to music while writing the bar scene and Pushing It Down and Praying by Lizzy McAlpine started playing. Is that a sign?

Not as much jealousy in this chapter. A lot more envy.

Here's your hurt, no comfort :p

Chapter 3: Distance

Chapter Summary

Ilya thinks a little bit of distance will be good for him and Shane. That if Shane was away from Nathan long enough-- if he was away long enough, he'd get over all of this. But when Shane sprains his ankle during practice, and his parents and Ilya can't come take care of him... guess who comes running to Shane's side?

Chapter Notes

Sorry for taking a bit longer than normal!! My classes started up again, and I've been busy!! I hope you like this chapter.

Ps. I don't know, like, anything about hockey, I did very little research bc I'm a lazy bum, so sorry if I got anything wrong!!

ILY, Stay safe <33

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

Ilya didn't know what to do with himself. Shane had left an hour ago to catch his flight. He always felt sort of... empty whenever Shane left-- or when he had to leave Shane. They've gotten better at leaving each other. That's probably a good thing.

Ilya wasn't good at goodbyes, never has been. But this goodbye--this sendoff-- it felt off. Distant. That was mostly Ilyas' fault; the words "You were great with Nathan" kept replaying in his head. Why did Shane have to say that?

It didn't help that Ilya had been craving a cigarette since the bar. He didn't really keep them around anymore-- well, not since he "quiet". He still has one from time to time, and recently he's been having one a little more than from time to time. Maybe he'd pick a pack up tomorrow morning on his way to the airport.

His schedule was packed for half a month-- his and Shane's don't line up for a full one. Not until they played together. Maybe a little distance would be good for them, though. Ilya has come close to exploding more than once, over nothing. What was wrong with him? He didn't get like this when Shane hung out with Hayden-- hell, he didn't even get like this when Shane hung out with Rose. That could be because Shane is mega super gay--, but the point still stands. He was acting like a child, and he had just ruined the last day him and Shane had before they didn't see each other for two months.

Instead of sulking all day, Ilya hopped up from his couch. A run should clear his head, right?

Famous last words.

Ilya didn't bring his earbuds with him, well, forgot them. Meaning his only source of entertainment was nature and dirt, and shit.

Without music, he could hear all the little things. The steady and rhythmic slap of shoes against pavement. The wind whistled in between the trees, and the gentle chirp of birds--okay. Ilya couldn't even pretend to be interested in the sounds of the park. Maybe he should cut his losses and go back home, maybe eat half of a tub of ice cream while watching reality TV. Now that sounds fun.

Ilyas' thoughts were interrupted by the buzz in his pocket. He slowly jogged to a stop, stepping off the trail and into the grass. He smiled a bit when he realized the text was from Shane.

"Finally boarding the plane. Call you when I make it to the hotel room."

Ilya quickly texted back.

"FaceTime?"

"Yeah, sure. Why?"

"I want to show you a new pair of shorts I got."

"Can't you just send a picture?"

"I want you to see me taking them off."

"Me and Hayden are sharing a room."

"Let him watch."

"You're gross. Text you when the plane lands."

Ilya was acting like everything was normal. Because everything was normal. It was fine. Distance would be good for them. More importantly, Shane and Nathan wouldn't get to spend time together either.

Ilya was already bored. How much longer did he have until the plane landed? Two more hours? Maybe three. He might not last that long before he dies of boredom. Everyone else was asleep, so talking with someone wasn't an option. Ilya had trouble falling asleep on planes-- actually, he had trouble falling asleep anywhere that wasn't his house. Or with Shane. Shane made him feel safe, comfortable. He definitely didn't feel safe or comfortable in this uncomfortable plane seat.

He wanted to be back home, or at Shane's parents' house, eating chicken parmesan. The only thing keeping Ilya entertained was the constant hum of the plane's engine and the smell of fabric and hockey guys-- So not the best smell. Ilya let out a small, quiet sigh, looking over at Evan Dykstra, whose head was slouched against Wyatt Hayes's shoulder. Judging by the small damp spot on Wyatt's shoulder, Evan was drooling.

Maybe Ilya should've charged his phone before getting on this plane. He probably should have remembered to grab his charger, too. He'd probably just steal someone's after they landed. He could watch an in-flight movie-- although he's pretty sure he's already seen all of them. Most of them were boring or spoke too fast when Ilya was too tired to translate all of the words. A few weren't bad, though. Not like he'd ever admit it out loud, but he really liked...ah. What was it called again? Evil guy with the evil yellow little minions-- oh right, Despicable Me. It was cute! The evil guy was a surprisingly good father!

Ilya didn't want to play against New York, not to say he didn't have faith in the team, but New York was good, and Ottawa? They needed work... a lot of work if they wanted to win a game. Ilya was just sick of losing. It was embarrassing and surely disheartening for the rest of the team. But he didn't regret. Not for a second had he wished he'd stayed with Boston. He loved being closer to Shane and his parents.

Ottawa lost, as expected. Despite the obvious outcome, Ilya couldn't help but feel annoyed. His body was sore, tired-- he's always tired. He barely had the energy to take a shower.

He missed Shane

He threw himself onto the neatly made bed, stretching his long legs. His curly, damp hair pressed against the plush white pillow. He stared up at the ceiling, watching the fan spin in almost a hypnotic manner. He almost lost his battle with sleep before he heard a chime come from his phone. He groaned in annoyance as he reached over himself and grabbed his phone. His annoyance almost immediately faded when he realized it was Shane who had texted.

"Saw the game, you played good."

Ilya smiled at his phone, holding it over his face as he typed up a message back.

"Did I look good, too?"

"Always."

"When's your next game?" Ilya was asking as if he didn't already know. Tomorrow. He had a flight tonight. Wait, why wasn't Shane on the plane? Or at least at the airport?

"Tuesday." Ding, Ding, Ding. That's 200 for getting your boyfriend's hockey schedule right. Okay, maybe he's been watching a little too much reality TV.

Ilya began typing up his next message, but Shane beat him to it.

"Can I call you?"

Without typing back a response, he pressed the call button. It didn't even make it past a full buzz before Shane answered. It took a second for his face to load onto the screen-- hotel Wi-Fi must be bad. Shane's face flashed in and out of frame, little pixels scattered across the screen every time Shane moved.

"Sorry-- Wi-fi is spotty here." Shane's glitched-out face said. Despite the pixels, Ilya could still make out Shane's freckles.

"Is okay, why are you not on the plane? Did your flight get canceled?" Shane's face finally un-pixelated, his beautifully tired face filling Ilyas' screen, making him smile. Wait. Where was Shane? The room was bright and white, making Ilyas' face light up in his dimly lit hotel room. He squinted his eyes-- what was that... a heart monitor? What the hell? Ilyas' face dropped, his heart kicking up instantly.

"No, everyone else is already on their way--"

--Shane? What-- I... where are you?"

"The hospital." Ilya already knew that, well, assumed that. But hearing it come from Shane's mouth freaked him out even more than seeing it. What happened? Another concussion? No, Shane was talking normally-- what if he's sick? Like really, really sick? Like his dad, type of sick?

"Ilya," Shane's voice snapped Ilya back to reality. It was soft and comforting, calming Ilya down a bit. "I sprained my ankle during practice."

"How...? Is it-- bad?" Ilya wanted to come rushing home, be there for Shane.

"No, nothing serious, really. I barely even hurt. I'm more annoyed than anything. I would have called you sooner, but you were playing."

"I won't be back in Ottawa till Wednesday-- your parents should be home, right?" Ilya was sitting up now, and he didn't even realize. He must have sat up while he was panicking.

"They will be on Tuesday; they're off on some couple's trips. Mom freaked out, but I convinced her not to leave early."

"Then who will take care of you?"

"I don't need a babysitter. I'll be good to join the team on Tuesday, and in three weeks I'll be all good to play."

"Are you-- are you sure?" Ilya played with his ear unconsciously, nervously. The Shane trapped inside his phone nodded.

"Yeah, I'll be back home in an hour when Nathan gets here." Ilya could almost hear a record scratching sound in the background when he heard Nathan's name. It made sense, Nathan said he'd be in town for a while, and it's not like Shane can drive himself home right now. Still, Ilya hated that it wasn't him. Hated that he wouldn't be there to take care of Shane-- but it was only a drive home.

"Nathan?" The words left Ilyas' mouth before he could stop them.

"Yeah, he offered. Rose is out of town for some movie, and well, obviously I can't ask Hayden or J.J... or you."

"So, you told him before you told me?"

Shane paused for a second, his eyebrows furrowing, and his face glitched for a second as he moved the phone closer to his face. "You had a game."

"Yes, I did." Ilya shifted against the mattress. Hot, ugly jealousy simmered deep inside his gut. It was unreasonable. Shane was right, Ilya had a game. It was probably better that Shane had called him afterwards.

"I--" Shane's voice cut off. His face is pixelating again. Ilya could hear Shane talking, but it was incoherent.

"Shane?"

"--call-- home--bad."

Ilya opened his mouth to speak before the call cut off completely, leaving Ilya to stare at himself through the black screen of his phone. Ilya chewed the inside of his cheek. Shane, alone with Nathan? Even the ten-minute car ride felt like too much time for them to be alone together. Ilya trusted Shane, of course, he did. He didn't trust Nathan. It was growing painfully obvious that Nathan had a thing for Shane... Or maybe he didn't, Ilya had never really been close friends with people he didn't fuck. Like Svetlana, for example. Maybe Nathan is all touchy and subtly flirty with all his friends. That doesn't mean he wants to get into Shane's pants.

But Ilya could get this whole thing out of his head. *Nathan knew before him. Nathan is taking him home. Nathan is there when Ilya can't be.* An even worse thought dug its way deep inside Ilyas's head, curling and nesting there like it was its home.

Shane doesn't need him.

Ilya set his phone back on the nightstand. He hung halfway off the bed as he grabbed his charger and plugged his phone into it. He settled back onto the bed. He tucked one arm under his pillow while his hand rested on his stomach. His chest felt tight. Distance was supposed to be good. But now that Shane was in the same city as Nathan, distance felt more like replacement. He hated that he felt this way. It wasn't fair to Shane. It wasn't fair to himself. Every time Nathan comes along, it gets harder and harder to keep his jaw set and mouth closed. But it was okay. Because no matter what Nathan may be feeling or planning, above all else. He loved and trusted Shane.

How long has Ilya been staring at this hotel's ceiling? Long enough for Shane to make it home and to text him. He reached lazily for his phone. Shane didn't call, just texted.

"Made it home, Nathan is helping me get settled, and then I'm going to bed. Text me before your flight tomorrow."

So, it wasn't just a car ride. A muscle in Ilya's jaw twitched. He couldn't stop imagining Nathan in Shane's parents' home. Helping him up the steps by grabbing his waist, Nathan sitting in the spot on the couch where Ilya normally sat.

"Okay." Ilya texted back. Because what else was he supposed to say?

Nathan keeps getting brought up. Mostly because Ilya keeps asking about him, or rather, how Shane is. Every little thing Shane needs, Nathan gets or does for him. "Nathan dropped food off." "Nathan helped me up the stairs." "Nathan keeps," fucking "checking in."

Nathan was clawing his way into Shane's life, and Ilya wasn't even there to stop it. Ilya was becoming irrelevant. And he hated it. Shane would realize he didn't need Ilya anymore. That he didn't want him. He constantly felt outside of everything, like he was an observer. Now he wasn't even that. It should be Ilya there, taking care of Shane. Even if it was a "little sprain," Shane obviously was hurt enough that Nathan felt the need to help him. This wasn't nothing, Ilya wasn't crazy, or overbearing, or insecure, or reading too much into things.

And how did Shane not see that?

Fuck. He needed to get his head in the game. He had just lost the face-off and was severely lagging behind his opponent. He skated across the ice skillfully, shoulder-checking number fifty-six and stealing the puck back, passing it flawlessly to Zane Boodram-- who fumbled it. Ilya stomped down the quickly rising anger flaring up in his chest. He was already on edge. It didn't help that his teammates were acting like they've never been on the ice or touched a puck in their god damn lives.

Okay, that was mean.

They were trying their best, Ilya knew that-- even if he was getting slammed into the boards while his defensemen did God knows what. He shouldn't target his frustration on them; he'd much rather do it on Nathan. Smug fucking bastard. Being there when he can't, taking care of what was his. Ilya wanted to fly all the way from Florida to Ottawa and punch Nathan, or at the very least tell him off. He wouldn't, for Shane. But Ilya was sure he could take him. They were about the same height, but Ilya knew how to throw a punch. He wondered if Nathan knew how to take one.

Instead of beating the shit out of Nathan, he settled for ramming number 26 into the boards like he had just done to him. Ilya was a little petty, but who could blame him? He deserved to be a little petty once in a while. He was sick of being all mature. It was tiring, holding everything in.

Before Ilya even knew it, they were back in the locker room, slipping their gear off after losing by an embarrassing four points. He was the captain. He should say something inspirational, or at least bitch about everyone's poor performance. But he didn't feel like it.

Or, in this moment, care to. He didn't feel like doing anything but sleeping-- or maybe smoking.

He dug his hand through the top shelf of the locker, fishing out his phone. A message from Shane, it was a whole long thing. He talked about the healing and rehabilitation process, and how he doesn't know if he'll be all cleared to play against Ilya when their game comes around, but he'll be there to watch. And that they could still have a nice night together even if Shane's ankle wasn't healed.

Ilya was just happy the message didn't include a name that starts with n, ends with an n, and has the letters a, t, h, and a in the middle. He was a little disappointed, but relieved at the same time. He loved playing against Shane. They were both so competitive that- even if Ottawa was most likely going to lose- Ilya still had a good time. Shane and Ilya were competitive in a lot of things. When they went on jogs, they'd see who would last the longest; whoever got too tired and had to stop first lost. They played a similar game in bed; whoever came first lost. Shane always lost that one.

He was relieved because he was sure he'd take some of his frustration out on Shane, even without meaning to. He'd like to avoid that much-needed conversation for as long as possible. So, if Shane wouldn't be able to play-- that was probably for the better. They'd still get to see each other and spend three nights together before Shane's next game in Florida, which Ilya had just played. Ilya could take care of Shane like he craved to. Show Shane he was better than Nathan.

Ilya should be happy that he gets to see Shane. Even though Shane couldn't play, he'd still be there to watch. Plus, Ilya would love to see him be the Montreal Metros water boy. But he wasn't. He was dreading it. Why? Nathan goddamn perfect teeth shitty guitar playing Hales was coming. Shane wasn't even fucking playing, so why did he insist on coming?

Shane had texted him two nights before, telling him Nathan had told him he was going to the game. At first, Ilya thought Shane had invited him, but apparently, Nathan had invited himself. Could he leave Shane alone for like-- two seconds?

Ilya stepped out onto the ice, eyes scanning Montreal's side looking for Shane. The moment their eyes locked, Ilya's heart swelled, bit his own cheek to stop himself from smiling. God, he missed Shane so fucking much it almost hurt. He couldn't wait for this game to be over, to be cuddled up in bed with Shane-- or doing something else in bed. Shane looked like he was trying his hardest not to run out onto the ice towards Ilya, despite his ankle.

Shane must have heard something from the stands because his head quickly snapped to look behind him. Ilya's eyes followed Shane's gaze, already feeling his stomach clench because he was sure he already knew who it was. His jaw tensed, a muscle twitching as he clenched it. Ilya watched Shane look around for a second before making his way up the stands with his little crutches. Ilya wanted to rush over there and help him. But Nathan did that instead, wrapping his hand around Shane's waist. He could see Shane stiffen up a little. They both turned in a way so that Ilya could see their side profiles. Nathan was talking to Shane. Still too close. Shane smiled, restrained almost-- but all Ilya was focused on was how fucking

close they were-- could Nathan take his grabbing little hands off of Shane's back? It was like they were goddamn magnets.

Shane doesn't reciprocate the touch, but he didn't pull away either. Ilya watched Shane take a stumbly half step back, only for Nathan to take a full step closer. Was Shane being dense on purpose? acting like he didn't know what was going on-- for what? so save Nathan's feelings? There is no way in hell Shane hasn't picked up on the flirting-- Ilya could tell, and he couldn't even hear what they were saying. The only other reason would be that... Shane liked it. Right?

Shane's eyes finally meet Ilyas. There's relief there, a "hi" maybe, possibly even an apology. All Ilya sees is "oh, I've been caught."

Ilyas turns his head away, fast, that same hot, ugly emotion curling in his stomach, kicking and clawing at his insides. He finishes his stretches-- the ones he was doing absentmindedly while staring at Shane and Nathan. Before he knew it, the game started. Ilya needed a way to blow off steam, sorry, Hayden.

Ilya skated across the ice, shoulder-checking Hayden Pike, nearly making him lose his balance and fall. He didn't need to-- he could have easily gotten past him without nearly knocking him over. Even through his helmet, Ilya could see the confusion and frustration on Hayden's face. But he didn't care. Not right now.

He takes the puck and makes a fast turn, racing across the rink. Zane Broodram signaled to him that he was open-- and he was. It was a perfect opening, really. But Ilya didn't care; he kept skating until he was rammed into one of the boards, someone taking the puck from him. He cursed under his breath, turning around and watching J.J. score. His grip tightened around his hockey stick. Anger flared up throughout his whole body, making it burn hot and uncomfortable under his uniform. His gaze caught Zane, who looked just as pissed as he was. He tried to keep himself from looking over at Montreal's side of the rink-- but he couldn't help himself.

He immediately found Shane, sitting down with a water bottle in his hand. So, he was a water boy, cute. Shane's expression, on the other hand, was not very cute. His jaw dropped, and his eyebrows furrowed. Confusion was written all over his face. Ilya bit his tongue and looked away. He could still feel Shane's eyes on him, the others' gaze burning into his skull. Another thing he noticed when looking over at Shane was that Nathan was sitting farther down, the closest seat to Shane without actually being next to him. Nathan was smiling when the Metros scored, cheering too, probably.

The rest of the game was rough, Ilya ended up being sent to the penalty box halfway through the game and coming back when they were far too gone to get the points they needed back. He was tired-- the kind of tired that sleep couldn't cure. He was out of his uniform. Now he was wearing a t-shirt, sweatpants, and a jacket. His curls were messy and wet with sweat. No one would look at him in the locker room. He spent most of the time in there looking at the floor.

Now Shane was walking towards Ilya-- which would be fine. If Nathan wasn't following Shane like a lost puppy. Shane approached cautiously, public space, eyes everywhere.

Everyone here knew who they were. Ilya wanted to grab Shane, hug him, maybe yell at him. Mostly hug him, though. His fingers itched at his sides, so he did what he always did and stuffed his hands in his pockets. Repressed the urge, repressed his feelings.

Shane looks like he's about to say something before Nathan wraps his big arms around Shane. It caught both Shane and Ilya off guard. Shane stiffened slightly, but Ilya didn't see that. All he saw was the hug. This fucker *really* loved hugs, didn't he? Shane wiggled his way out of the hug, Nathan laughed playfully, and Shane smiled a little. Shane cleared his throat, looking at Ilya. Shane looked worried above all else. Ilya wondered if he was worried about Ilya or worried Ilya would notice something. Which he obviously did. He was sure anyone in a ten-mile radius could notice something.

Shane took a half step away from Nathan, just like he did earlier.

"Ilya-- are you.. feeling alright?" Shane asked, the crutches tucked neatly under his armpits, his foot wrapped in a cast he was sure was uncomfortable and driving Shane crazy.

"Yeah," Ilya responded blandly, looking away.

"You played well," Nathan spoke up. It was almost a nice compliment until he continued. "Too bad Shane couldn't play, though. I'd love to see him play in person."

So, Nathan watched Shane's games? that wasn't surprising.

"Thanks," Ilya grunted, his eyes still looking at something else, anything else.

"Nathan, can you wait here a second?" Shane asked. That got Ilya's attention. He watched Nathan nod.

Shane started walking--well, more like hopped--and gestured for Ilya to follow. Ilya did, walking slowly because if he walked at normal speed, he would end up walking in front of Shane. Shane found the locker room Ottawa had used. Everyone had left by now, leaving it empty and smelling like sweat and musk. Ilya's nose was used to it. Shane's scrunched a little, bunching up his freckles.

Ilya was about to be managed again. Told to smile. Shane was going to ask, "What is your problem?" and Ilya would want to scream and cry and probably punch something. Not Shane, of course not Shane.

"Are you okay? Like, seriously?" Shane asked, his eyes filled with worry-- or fear, Ilya wasn't sure.

"I already said yes." Ilya shrugged, his hands picking at the fabric inside of his sweatpants.

"Yeah but..." Shane trailed off, obviously not sure what to say. "Listen, I know Nathan can be a lot--and is a lot-- I just... " Shane's voice was small, almost a whisper. They were still in public. Anyone could walk into this locker room.

Shane ran a hand over his face, a small, tired smile playing on his face. "...You handled it really well."

Ilya's eyes narrowed, his gaze sharp. "Did I?" His voice wasn't loud. It was matching Shane's. But it was controlled, dangerous almost.

"I mean-- you know."

"No, Shane, I *don't* know. Please enlighten me."

"Come on, don't make this a big thing."

"Me not make it a big thing? It already is a big thing!" His voice rose a bit, but he quickly lowered it again. "The touching, everything. And you? You just let it happen."

"I didn't let anything happen."

"It's not just Nathan." Ilya watched Shane's eyebrows furrow as he listened. "You assume I'll just-- do something bad, that I need to be managed and supervised like a child."

"What?"

"The rules, the 'you did good with Nathan'."

"I thought you understood why I made the rules-- you are touchy, and flirty, and you a hundred percent would have made fun of his band."

"But Nathan doesn't need rules." Ilya pointed at Shane accusingly. "He gets to be flirty and touchy with you all he wants."

"That's different, you know that." Shane's voice raised a bit

"Ah, but you do know he's being flirty." Ilyas raised back.

"Ilya."

"I feel second. Nathan, he's always there, there when I should be but when I can't." Ilya couldn't help but think back to his dad.

Shane opened his mouth but shut it. Thinking. Realizing. Realizing far too late.

"But you're not-- you're not second, you know that--" Shane tried backtracking, but Ilya didn't let him.

"--That's not what it feels like."

Shane didn't respond to that, didn't know how to. And then Ilya said something he probably shouldn't have.

"You like it, don't you?"

"What--"

"The attention."

Silence filled the locker room. Ilya could hear the distant chatter of people who were still there after the game ended. Ilya watched Shane's face, his eyes darting to the floor.

"I don't-" Shane looked back up at Ilya. "I don't *like* it. I didn't want to make it a whole thing- - to make it this." Shane vaguely gestured between them.

Another stretch of silence filled the locker room. Ilya felt like it was closing in on him. Crushing him. His throat constricted, making it hard to swallow.

"Have Nathan take you home to your parents place. I'm sure he'll love that."

"Ilya-" Shane took a step forward with his crutches, and Ilya took a step back.

"I'm going to my place." Ilya watched Shane's eyes glisten with unfallen tears.

Ilya didn't let Shane speak again before he left the locker room. If he stayed in there any longer, he'd probably start crying-- he'd rather wait till he was inside his car to do that. Ilya had been holding himself together for weeks. He was sure he was about to fall apart, and he didn't want to do that in front of Shane.

Chapter End Notes

Well... yeah. This whole fic is almost over. Can you believe it? I already have a few other ideas for our boys, Shane and Ilya. The next chapter will be out... eventually. hopefully sooner than later. But I kind of want you guys to sit in suspense... is that evil?

Chapter 4: Text Me

Chapter Summary

The aftermath of their fight at the game was still burned into both of their brains. Shane thinks desperately for a way to apologize without making things worse, while Ilya waits impatiently for Shane to text him

Chapter Notes

Last chapter before the epilogue that will be ALL FLUFF and SMUT. Everyone cheers.

I already have an idea for my next Hollanov fic, so if you're interested in reading more of my stuff, stick around!!

I hope you enjoy and get a little bit a closure.
<33

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

Ilya picked up a pack of cigarettes on his way home. He didn't even smoke any, just looked at the box. As if just staring at the red cover would take away the lump in his throat. He didn't cry. He didn't feel much, actually. He was taking the whole thing pretty well. And that scared him.

He was grateful that the practice today was optional. He normally went to all practices, optional or not. As the captain, he felt like he had to. But he could barely drag himself out of bed, let alone throw himself onto a rink and pretend he wanted to be there. He groaned as he sat up. Running his hair through his tangled curls.

He kept himself from checking his phone after he left Shane with Nathan, which he immediately regretted when he got into his car. He didn't want Shane to call-- or to see that Shane had called him. He took a deep breath and grabbed his phone. He tapped the screen, bringing the device to life. No new notifications. Not a missed call, not even a fucking text. Ilya's finger tapped against the side of his phone absent-mindedly, his nail digging into the case anxiously.

Ilya felt a small sense of relief, freedom. No more being managed. A rush a hurt washed over that relief in an instant because...

Why wasn't he trying?

Shane's foot--his good one-- tapped anxiously under the dining room table. His phone was face up, like he was waiting for a text. But he wasn't. He was holding himself back. Ilya needed space; if he didn't, he wouldn't have left Shane like that yesterday.

Shane had called his parents. They had gotten back from their little vacation the night before and decided not to come to the game so they could settle back in. He didn't want Nathan to take him home-- he didn't want anything to do with him. Not right now.

He didn't realize it was flirting, not until yesterday. Nathan had always been touchy. He was like that when they were kids. Maybe he was flirting back then, too. Shane just didn't notice. He hated himself for being so goddamn oblivious--until it was already too late. The seed had been planted. The roots already did their damage.

"Shane," Shane's head perked up, watched his mom grab a water out of the fridge, and slide it to him across the table. "You should eat something."

Shane was sure he looked like shit. He felt like it at least.

Shane shook his head. Food was the last thing on his mind. He looked back down at his phone. His elbows rested on the table, and his fingers intertwined. He pressed his thumbs together. Any other day, his mom would scold him for putting his elbows on the table. Today was the exception.

"So, you're just going to keep... stare at your phone?" His dad spoke up, his back turned while he was making himself coffee. "Why not just text him?"

"I can't," Shane said quickly through gritted teeth. "I'll make things worse. I'll say the wrong thing. Just like I did last night." Shane grumbled, digging his fingers into his hair, keeping his head down and his eyes on his phone.

"But, saying nothing could make things worse, too." Shane's mom commented. leaning against the marbled counter.

"He needs space-- I think. I think space is best." Shane ran his hand over his face, feeling the rough stubble beneath his fingers. "And I need to make sure I apologize for the right things. It needs to be perfect."

His parents didn't respond to that. Shane leaned back in his seat. His eyes were still locked on his phone. Shane replayed the argument in his head, his fingers tapping at the table in time with his foot.

You just let it happen.

Shane's dad finished up his coffee, giving Shane an apologetic sigh. He patted Shane on the back lightly. "It'll be fine." His dad eyed his mom, and they both left the dining room.

that I need to be managed and supervised like a child.

The rules

Shane's stomach twisted uncomfortably. He has been managing Ilya-- treating him like a loose cannon. Ilya wasn't second. But Shane was doing a shitty job showing it. He wanted to call Ilya, tell him he's sorry, and that he loves him. But then what? "I'm sorry Nathan made you feel that way." No. Not that. "I'm sorry about managing you." Not that either. It's not enough. It was driving Shane crazy, trying to think of the perfect things to say. The last thing he wanted to do was pull another *you did good with Nathan*.

God, did he really say that? What was wrong with him?

Ilya was always there when Shane was freaking out or spiraling. So, what was he supposed to do now that he was spiraling about Ilya?

Shane gritted his teeth, flipping his phone so it was face down on the table. He won't reach out to Ilya. Not yet. Because when he does, it has to be right.

Shane kept himself away from his phone, which was seemingly the worst choice he could have made. Because now Nathan was standing at his doorstep.

"I texted, and I called. You didn't answer, and I got worried." Nathan rubbed the back of his neck. His keys still in his hand, balled up in his fist.

Shane didn't step to the side or invite Nathan inside. He stood his ground-- the best you can when only one of your feet is touching the ground.

"I'm fine," Shane said blandly, his brain going through all the things he could say.

"Yeah-- well, you left... like, really quickly after the game, so did Ilya, what happened--" Shane winced when he heard Ilya's name come from Nathan's mouth. Nathan reached his hand out, probably to put it on Shane's shoulder. Shane spoke, and Nathan's hand froze.

"--Listen, you should stop coming over and texting me for a while." Shane watched Nathan's expression turn from worried to hurt and confused. Nathan completely retracted his hand, stuffing it into his pocket.

"I need space." Shane clarified quickly.

"Oh-- uhm... Shane, listen-- I know I've been coming on a bit strong but--"

"--I don't want to talk about that."

"I'm sorry... if I made you uncomfortable--"

"--Nathan," Shane said sternly, finally making Nathan shut up. "Space. That's all I need." Shane watched Nathan swallow hard.

"For... for how long?"

"I don't know." Shane looked down at the ground.

Nathan bit the inside of his cheek. "I'm sorry-- I just have one question."

Shane let out a breath and looked back up at Nathan.

"There's-- someone else, right?" Nathan stared deep into Shane's eyes. So much so that Shane had to look away again. "A boyfriend?"

Shane didn't say anything. Normally, Shane would be freaking out-- Nathan has seen Ilya and Shane together constantly. Ilya was at his parents' house on Christmas Eve and was with him at the bar Nathan played with. Sure, that *could* be seen as a thing friends do. But it wouldn't be hard to put two and two together. But all he was freaking out about was how he was going to make up with Ilya. That's what caused this whole thing, Shane being so up his own ass and scared someone might find out that he made Ilya feel-- God, he was such a fucking idiot.

"Okay." Nathan broke Shane out of his thoughts, and he looked up. Nathan nodded and rubbed his hand over his mouth for a second. "Bye." Nathan gave Shane a small smile before turning on his heels and walking towards his car. Shane closed the door, not waiting to watch him drive away.

The house felt quiet-- not peaceful, but empty. Even if his parents were just a few feet away upstairs. He stood in front of the closed door longer than necessary, because moving meant going back to thinking about what to do next.

He instead focused on the gentle hum of the fridge. When did he eat last? Has he eaten today? The ache coming from his ankle was hard to ignore. He should check his phone.

He hopped his way back to the couch, grabbed his phone off the coffee table, and checked it. A text from Rose and Hayden asking how he's doing. No text from Ilya. He wasn't expecting one, but he was kind of hoping for one. Maybe it was time to draft up a text.

"I'm sorry." But then what?

"Are you okay?" Obviously fucking not.

Explaining himself feels dangerous-- like it might make things worse.

Shane put his phone down next to his leg. He took a deep breath, leaning back into the couch cushion. Shane forced himself to replay everything: Christmas Eve, the bar, yesterday. Ilya going quiet after the bar-- him stiffening and leaving to take a shower after Shane told him, "You were good with Nathan." Ilya leaving the table and going out to smoke-- Ilya had *told* him he felt left out. And even then, he continued to do it. Shane just expected Ilya to be okay-- he never asked if he was.

"Still haven't texted him yet?" Shane turned around in his seat, looking back at his mom.

"I don't know how to start it-- or end it. I need more time to think." Shane turned around. He could hear his mom walking closer, resting her arms on the back of the couch.

"Thinking is good. Waiting forever isn't," His mom pointed out. Shane shrank in his seat. She was right, of course she was.

Shane nodded. He felt his mother's hand rub gently over his head before walking away.

What's the best thing Ilya can do to pass the time? Go on a run? Maybe a dog park so he can pet all the cute little puppies? Nope. Scrolling through Instagram was much more appealing. How long has he been staring at his screen? He couldn't remember the last time he got up from his spot on the couch. He wasn't paying attention to the posts he was scrolling past, not really. He'd smile at the occasional dog video, but that was about it. Until he saw a post from Nathan. He shifted, probably for the first time in an hour. The post was full of pictures of his bandmates and the equipment. Normal enough. No pictures of him and Shane, which made Ilya feel a tad bit better. Then he read the caption.

Ending our Ottawa trip early. It was fun while it lasted. See us in LA in two weeks from now!
#TheKey #Fyp #Band

What the hell? Nathan just-- left? Why? Did-- did Shane talk to him? Ilya was more confused than anything-- with a hint of guilt for being happy. Shane had to have asked him to leave... why? Because things got too messy? Because it was getting too *awkward*? Because he wanted to remove the complication? Honestly, Ilya didn't care what the reason was. Okay, that was a lie. But he could pretend he didn't care.

No, he couldn't.

He closed Instagram and opened messages, clicking on Shane's name. *Did you ask Nathan to leave town?* He typed up. He thought about sending it-- he really did. His finger was hovering over the send button. Instead, his thumb pressed the delete button.

He slapped his phone down on the coffee table face down, harder than he should have.

Shane is fine. He's probably relieved now that the two causes of his stress were gone. That thought stung. But it was probably true.

Ilya shouldn't have said anything yesterday at the game. He was overreacting; this was nothing. He dug his fingers through his hair, resting his elbows on his knees.

Maybe he should go on a run.

The sun would set soon. Ilya didn't bring his headphones or phone. Not because he forgot, but because he didn't want to be around his phone. Waiting for Shane to text him was driving him crazy. Fresh air would be good. Maybe he'd enjoy the sounds of the park now. Nope, still annoying. He tried to focus on the sound of his heart beating and his shoes hitting the pavement. It helped keep his mind off things. The harder he pushed himself on this run, the less he'd think about Shane.

By the time he finished up his run, it was dark out. He needed to take a shower.

The water drummed against his back rhythmically. He allowed the warm water to cascade down his spine. Ilya pressed his forehead against the cool tile. His leg still ached dully; maybe he pushed himself a little too hard. But it worked, for the most part; Shane and his phone had stayed out of his head. The steam gathered fast, fogging up the glass. He let out a deep breath, lifting his head and running his hands through his hair. The water slicking it back. The warm water caused his skin to flush lightly. He tried to think of nothing, hoping the steam would fog his brain just as it did with the glass.

But Shane slipped in anyway.

Just his voice. He didn't say anything Ilya could understand-- it was more like the presence of Shane's voice than anything else. *He's probably relieved right now.* The thought pushed its way back into Ilya's brain, navigating through the fog and planting itself deep inside, making it impossible to remove. He wondered what Shane was really feeling, if he was really relieved. No more complications, no more managing, no more Ilya.

Ilya reached for his soap; he always kept an extra one. One for Shane. Even though they'd often share the same one when they took showers. He hoped doing something would keep his mind occupied enough not to think about Shane. He worked the soap over himself, scrubbing at his arm rougher than necessary. The water quickly washed away the suds, chasing them down the drain.

For a moment, Ilya imagined Shane there, sitting on the counter or standing in the shower with him. Talking about something unimportant. Just existing in the same space. The thought tightened in his chest, sharp and sudden.

He reached for the handle, turning off the shower. Goosebumps spread across his body at the absence of warm water. He stepped out of the shower and onto the mat, wrapping the towel tightly around his waist. His eyes glanced at the mirror, completely fogged up. He stepped off the mat and ran his hand over the mirror. The water from his hair drips onto the floor. Shane always hated it when he left drops of water on the floor after he showered. The only thing he could see in the mirror now was the left side of his chest.

Where his heart was.

It was harder not to think about Shane when he was alone in bed. He thought about typing up a message. Maybe a simple "how's your ankle?" But he decided against it. He was giving Shane space, giving himself space too. He didn't want to admit that he was bracing for the possibility that Shane would want space forever.

Ilya, instead, goes back to Instagram. Scrolling instead of thinking. Instead of sleeping. But the thoughts kept probing at his brain. It was annoying. He set his phone face down on his chest, feeling the cool screen pressing against warm skin. His eyes glued to the ceiling, he finally forced himself to think.

The fight wasn't about Nathan, not really. Ilya knew that. He was tired, stressed, and sure, seeing Nathan be like that with Shane pushed him over the edge. But it wasn't the only push.

It wasn't fair of him. To throw that all on Shane like that out of the blue. He should have waited-- until they were home. Because now Ilya was lying in bed *alone*.

Ilya felt his phone buzz against his chest. He sighed in annoyance, looking at the screen. A reminder. He had to be on a plane in two days. He wondered if him and Shane would talk at all before then. If Shane *wants* to talk to him, it has to be soon.

Ilya leaves *tomorrow*. He's been waiting, although impatiently, for Shane to reach out. But he hasn't. Ilya couldn't leave things as they are. He *will* see Shane before he leaves. Not to apologize, not to fight. To say goodbye properly.

So, he does something he's been avoiding for the past few days. He texted Shane. Something short and simple.

"Can I come by in a few hours?"

Ilya had to force himself to send the message. Mostly out of fear rather than anything else. Ilya knows only two things can come from this conversation. See you once I get back, or goodbye forever. He didn't want to know which Shane would choose. Anxiety gnawed on him like a piranha, taking chunks out of him. He half expected Shane to ignore the text until his phone chimed with a message.

"Yes."

Shane really should change his icepack. The one resting on his aching ankle wasn't even frozen anymore. It was just annoying to grab his crutches and haul himself up just to grab a new icepack from the freezer. Shane knew how much time he had; he always knew when and where Ilya's next games were.

He's relieved Ilya texted him. It was probably best to have this conversation in person anyway. But he was also terrified. Terrified, Ilya wanted nothing to do with him now, terrified he'd say the wrong things and make everything worse.

This conversation could save them or break them completely.

Ilya let himself into the house. He didn't want to make Shane get up and open the door for him with his ankle like that. Ilya scanned the room, landing on the couch. Shane's back was pressed against the arm, one leg hung off the side of the couch, while the other was propped up on a pillow. Shane lifted his head and looked up at Ilya. His hair was messy, strands poking up and to the side at awkward angles. There was stubble there. Shane always kept his face relatively shaven. He had his glasses on, and there was a book resting on the coffee table. Ilya watched Shane shift on the couch and reach for his crutches.

"You don't have to get up." Ilya insisted, but Shane continued anyway. Ilya wanted to go and help Shane stand. But touching him now felt like a bad idea.

Shane, with the crutches help, walked over to Ilya. "Hey, what time do you leave tomorrow? early?" Shane's voice was gentle, cautious. Like he was avoiding the conversation by talking about logistics.

"Yes," Ilya nodded slowly, taking in Shane's presence. "Eight."

Shane continued to talk about practice and game schedules. Like nothing had happened. Shane rambled on, almost nervously. Ilya interrupted him.

"You didn't text or call. Nothing." It came off as an accusation.

"I didn't want to push," Shane explained. A muscle in Ilya's jaw twitched.

Shane sounded calm, calculated. And that infuriated Ilya more than anger would have.

"Nathan left town early." Ilya watched Shane's eyes widen a bit. Probably confused how he knows. "Things must be easier for you now. No Nathan, no me. Very relaxing, yes?" Ilya knew he was pushing buttons, but he couldn't help it.

Shane hesitated, which Ilya took as confirmation.

"No, not relaxing."

"That's hard to believe."

"How?" Shane was getting frustrated now, Ilya could tell.

"Did you even think about contacting me?"

"Of course I did."

"Then why didn't you?"

"I already told you. You left. I assumed you needed space."

"Bullshit."

"Is this why you came over?"

Ilya let out a small snort. "No. I came over because my plane leaves in the morning, and apparently, unless I'm standing right in front of you, I don't exist."

"That's not fair."

"Oh, yes. There it is." Ilya's smile didn't reach his eyes. "*I'm* being unfair."

Shane shifted uncomfortably, his eyes darting to the floor for a second and then back up at Ilya. "I don't know what you want from me."

Ilya took a step forward, his smile cracking but not leaving his face. "I want you to want me there."

Tension snapped between them like a live wire. Neither of them were brave enough to grab and stop in fear of getting shocked.

"I didn't-- I thought if I texted you, or called, I would have said the wrong thing. Made things worse." Shane sounded less frustrated. "And you couldn't be here when I hurt my ankle-- "

"Right," his smile broke completely now. "But your ankle-- that's no big deal, right?" Ilya gestured to his foot.

Shane blinked. "That's not--"

"You got hurt and let someone else take care of you." Ilya cut him off. "Someone who wanted to. Who wanted *you*."

"Ilya--"

"You didn't need me." He tilted his head. "But you needed Nathan, right?"

"Ilya, that's not what happened at all."

"Oh, but he's always over, bringing food, checking in. What would you have done without him, Shane?"

"I didn't ask him to!" Shane's snapped, his voice finally raising. " He was trying to be nice. I was hurt, and he was just-- there."

"Right," Ilya said, sharp and dangerous. His voice low. "Convenient."

"I didn't know how to ask him to leave without making everything worse." Shane's grip tightened around his crutch. "I didn't want to deal with it."

"So, you let it happen," Ilya said quietly, a stark contrast to Shane's voice. "You let him stay. Let him take care of you."

"That's not what that was," Shane said, his breath uneven.

"Then what was it?" Ilya demanded. "Because to me it looked like you replaced me with the first guy who offered."

"I didn't replace you." Shane spoke immediately, too fast. Too rehearsed.

Ilya let out a shaky breath despite his effort to keep it steady. "You didn't even try to call me."

Ilya knew if Shane could, he'd be pinching the bridge of his nose. "I told you why-- and I didn't want to say the wrong thing."

"So, you said nothing."

"Yes," Shane said sharply, and then he paused. Like he hadn't meant for the word to come out that way. "Yes." His voice went calmer. "Because every time I thought about texting you, I'd think about everything that could go wrong. I didn't want to push you away more."

Ilya stared at him for a long beat. "But you could still talk to Nathan. No problem."

Shane went impossibly still. "That's not fair," Shane said again because apparently, anything Ilya said wasn't fair. "Nathan doesn't-- he doesn't matter in the same way."

The words landed the wrong way the moment they left Shane's mouth. Something inside Ilya cracked.

He nodded once, looking at something else, anything else. "Because I matter in the way that has to be managed. Handled."

"You know that's not what I meant."

"But that's what you did." He looked back at Shane and pointed at him. "You decided I couldn't be trusted. I was too dangerous and volatile. That I needed rules."

Shane paused-- paused so long Ilya thought he broke him. Shane's shoulders dropped.

"I know," Shane said, his voice small. "I'm sorry."

Ilya was a bit taken aback. He hadn't expected an apology, especially not after everything he had just said to Shane.

"For the past two days, I've been trying to find the perfect thing to say," Shane continued. "But I couldn't, that's why I didn't text-- or call. And I would have, before you left. Even if it was just to say goodbye or good luck. I would have said something, I would have." Shane let out a puff of air like he's been holding it since Ilya stepped through the door.

Ilya swallowed. "I don't need perfect. I just need something."

Shane nodded slowly. "I know."

The silence that followed wasn't sharp anymore. It still hurt-- but it wasn't cutting.

"I don't want rules. I don't want to feel like I have to behave to stay."

"You don't." Shane shook his head quickly. "I don't want that either."

Ilya studied him, searching for anything other than sincerity. When he didn't find it, he spoke.

"Okay."

The words settled between them. Fragile like glass. Shane didn't move, like if he did, he'd crack it.

"I don't--" Shane clenched his jaw for a second before continuing. "--Expect this to be.. fixed." Shane paused, choosing his next words carefully. "I just don't want you to think I don't care."

"I never thought you didn't care, I thought you were relieved."

Shane's mouth opened and then closed again. Trying to think of the perfect words. "I wasn't," He sighed. "I'm just-- bad at knowing what to do when I mess up."

Ilya huffed out a quiet, tired laugh. "Yeah, I noticed."

The corner of Shane's mouth twitched-- not quite enough to be a smile, but something close. They stood there for another stretch of silence, the tension morphing into something duller and sorer.

"You can stay," Shane said eventually. And after a long beat: "If you want."

Ilya glanced towards the couch. Then back at Shane.

"Your parents?"

"Out doing something, I asked them to leave for a while."

Ilya snorted, more of a laugh than the one before.

"What?"

"You asked your parents to leave? Why didn't you just ask if we could talk at my place?"

"I thought about it-- but you asked to come over so.."

"I'll stay."

Shane smiled for real-- briefly like he wasn't sure he was allowed to yet. Ilya's eyes glanced at Shane's foot.

"So, your ankle. Is it... Really, okay?" His voice softer now.

"It looks worse than it is-- well under the cast."

"Oh, I bet it looks disgusting."

Shane nodded. "It does." That made Ilya smile. Shane took that as a sign that he could smile too.

Shane shifted towards the couch, and Ilya moved with Shane, plopping down on the couch next to him.

"Should that be elevated?" Ilya gestured towards Shane's foot.

"Yeah, but it's fine."

Ilya shook his head. He hesitated for a second before carefully grabbing Shane's leg and putting it on his lap. When Ilya looked back over at Shane, he was practically beaming. His smile so wide Ilya thought he might tear it.

"What?"

"I missed you."

Ilya blinked for a second, and then he smiled back, not quite as wide.

"I missed you too."

Chapter End Notes

Wow, that got kind of intense, right? Don't worry, Chapter five will be purely warm and fuzzy, trust me.

Chapter 5: Epilogue

Chapter Summary

Fluffy fluff fluff with smutty smut smut

Chapter Notes

Just a little heads up, I don't write smut often-- or ever. So, I'm kind of dipping my toes into it, if you will!! I think it turned out okay, but idk...

I hope you enjoy!!!!
<333

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

"So what? He just... left town?" Rose raised an eyebrow, sipping on a cup of coffee

The cafe was warm and homey, like a blanket. Shane nodded, his hands clasped together in front of him on the table. "I didn't ask him to leave town or anything."

"He was just too heartbroken." Rose put a hand over her heart and leaned back in her chair. "So sad."

"I don't think he was *that* heartbroken." Shane hummed, stretching his legs under the table. "He has a boyfriend now."

"Stalking?"

"No," Shane said sternly. "I-"

The waitress set down two plates, one in front of Rose and one in front of Shane. Rose got four fluffy pancakes stacked on top of each other, glistening with syrup. Shane looked down at his sad bowl of porridge. Rose pointed her knife at him.

"That looks gross." She lowered her weapon and used it on her pancakes instead of Shane.

"It's really not that bad." Shane grabbed his spoon and pushed the contents of the bowl around. "Anyways, Ilya showed me. Saw it on Instagram."

"*He* was stalking?" She popped a piece of pancake into her mouth. She slouched down in her chair, letting out a hum of satisfaction. "So good."

"I don't know, probably." Shane took a bite of his own food. It was bland and almost tasteless. Better than tasting horrible. "Any new projects?"

"Yeah, some new romance movie. I start filming next week."

"So, it'll be a while before we get to hang out again?"

"You going to miss me?" She smiled, cutting out another piece of pancake

"Me? Never." Shane shook his head. Rose snorted.

"What's-- you know who doing right now?"

"Probably watching TV or something, he's back at the cottage."

"He's not mad I stole you away from him?"

"He's probably pissed." Shane took another bite of his food. "But I don't get to see you often, and me and him have like a week alone together." Shane shrugged.

"Oh? A whole week?" She leaned in closer. "Doing what exactly?"

"You know, the usual. Get everything ready for the camp, making food together, stuff like that."

Rose's eyebrows raised, like she was expecting Shane to go on.

Shane scooped up another spoonful of his food, hovering it over his mouth. "Well... and... you know." His cheeks flushed a light pink as he popped his spoon into his mouth.

Rose's lips curved into a knowing smile as she settled back into her seat, crossing one leg over the other. "I expect details later."

"You're gross."

Shane threw himself onto the couch next to Ilya, who was scrolling on his phone. Ilya's eyes perked up to look at Shane, his eyes narrowing.

"How was breakfast?"

"Fun, we don't get to hang out much, so..." Shane trailed off, and Ilya looked back down at his phone with a huff.

Shane raised an eyebrow and scooted closer, his leg pressing against Ilya's. "What?"

"Is nothing." Ilya shook his head, his jaw tensed. Shane smiled and pressed his cheek against Ilya's, trying to get impossibly closer to him.

"Are you jealous?"

"No," Ilya grumbled. Shane took his phone from him and set it down on the coffee table.

Shane trailed kisses along Ilya's jaw before finally making it to his lips. Ilya immediately grabbed onto Shane's waist. Shane's fingers trailed up Ilya's shirt, his fingertips brushing against the firmness of his abs. His hands resting on his warm chest. Shane could feel his heart pounding against his hand. God, it turned him on even more.

Shane pulled away only long enough to pull his shirt over his head. He leaned in for another kiss, but Ilya pulled away. Shane's lips turned into a small pout. Ilya only smiled, gripping his waist harder. Ilya nuzzled his face in the crook of Shane's neck, sucking on the sensitive spot there. Shane wriggled in his seat.

"Ilya--"

Ilya bit down where Shane's neck connected to his shoulder, quickly soothing the spot with his tongue. It wasn't hard enough to break skin or hurt too much. Shane let out a breathless gasp. His fingers curled under Ilya's shirt, his nails digging into skin.

Ilya abandoned his neck, his kisses traveling lower until they reached Shane's chest. Ilya lapped his tongue over Shane's nipple. Shane moved his hands from Ilya's chest to his hair, his fingers threading through his curls

, arching into the touch, and the sensation shooting straight to his groin. He rocked his hips slowly, pressing his bulge into Ilya's thigh. Craving more friction. Ilya let out a satisfied hum around his nipple, which sent shockwaves throughout his body. Eventually, Ilya released his nipple with a pop, turning his attention to the other one to give it equal treatment.

Shane couldn't take it anymore. His body burned so hot he thought he might melt.

"Ilya-- Please." He pleaded

Shane watched Ilya's eyes darken, pulling back, leaving Shane's nipples glistening with saliva. Ilya pulled his own shirt over his head, tossing it to the side. Ilya grabbed onto Shane's knees, spreading them apart. Ilya pressed his own knee into Shane's crotch, moving it teasingly over the sensitive spot.

"Please, what?" Ilya singsonged, this fucker was enjoying this.

"Please-- fuck me," Shane grumbled through gritted teeth. Ilya's smile widened, his fingers working at Shane's pants.

Shane watched Ilya throw his pants behind the couch. Shane rolled his eyes in annoyance. Ilya crawled closer to Shane, his face right in front of his crotch. Ilya nuzzled his face into the bulge there, sucking and licking through the fabric of his boxers. Shane laid back. Ilya was being an ass on purpose. probably as punishment for leaving him at home to have breakfast with Rose.

Shane propped himself up on his elbows so he could look at Ilya, whose fingers were now hooked around the waistband of his boxers. Shane watched impatiently as Ilya slipped his

boxers off, his cock springing free. Ilya's hand wrapped around it, his thumb spreading the pre-cum out evenly on the head.

Ilya gave him a few lazy strokes before grabbing onto his thighs, lifting them. He let out a shaky breath as Ilya's tongue traced his entrance, his back arching when it entered him. Shane saw stars. When Ilya pulled back, Shane felt empty, leaving Shane whining.

Ilya trailed kisses up Shane's stomach all the way up to his mouth. Shane tasted himself on Ilya's tongue. Ilya nipped at his bottom lip before pulling away.

"You're so fucking perfect," Ilya murmured against Shane's lips. Ilya's words sent sparks throughout Shane's body.

Ilya pulled back farther, giving himself enough room to take his shorts and boxers off, throwing them to the side. Shane was too horny to care. Shane watched Ilya's hand dig under one of the couch cushions and return with a bottle of lube.

"Did you seriously hide a bottle of lube in the couch?" Shane raised an eyebrow. "What if my parents came over and found it?"

"They wouldn't've." Ilya hummed as he poured a generous amount on his fingers. "Plus, I assumed this would happen."

"Assumed what would happen?" Ilya smiled mischievously. leaning back in, his fingers pressing on his hole.

"You'd beg for me right here."

"Oh, fuck off-- oh fuck." Shane moaned lowly as two fingers entered him, curling perfectly to his prostate.

Shane was getting impossibly hard with each press and thrust of Ilya's fingers, making him squirm. It was almost too much and not enough at the same time. Shane reached for his own cock, but Ilya grabbed it with his free hand.

"Ah, ah, ah." Ilya shook his head, adding a third finger. Shane threw his head back against the couch, letting out a strangled whimper.

"G-gah... fuck you..." Shane cursed breathlessly as Ilya continued to mercilessly thrust his fingers into him.

"I don't want you coming yet."

"Then fuck me!" Shane growled, although it came out as more of a moan than anything. Ilya chuckled, pulling his fingers out.

Ilya let go of Shane but gave him a look telling him not to touch himself. So, Shane didn't.

"Do you want me to grab a condom?"

Shane shook his head quickly, and Ilya's smile widened. Shane watched him drizzle lube on his own cock, giving it a few strokes before lining it up. Without warning, it breached his tight ring of muscle. The hot feeling sizzled through his body, taking his breath away.

Ilya let out a low groan through his gritted teeth. Ilya's pace was mercilessly slow, leaving Shane a quivering and whining mess. Ilya gave him a knowing smile, and Shane didn't know if he wanted to punch him or kiss him.

"Oh God, Ilya-- Please," Shane begged, his breath heavy and his words trembling.

"Please, what?" Ilya picked up the pace, not enough to actually satisfy Shane but enough to tease him.

Shane only responded with whimpers. Ilya grabbed Shane's hips, thrusting all the way in but not moving. God, Shane felt like he could feel Ilya in his stomach.

"Use your words, Hollander." Ilya hummed, cruelly grinding. Shane loved it when Ilya said his last name.

"Faster-- a-actually fuck me." Shane bit out the next words. "Please."

Ilya almost pulled out completely before slamming back into Shane. His back arched off the couch, and his nails dug into the plush cushion below him. Ilya quickened his pace like Shane requested, leaving Shane breathless. The couch squeaked with every thrust. Shane normally would be worried they were going too rough and might break the couch. But current Shane was too lost in the haze of sex to care.

"Ah- fuck Shane." Ilya gritted out, somehow thrusting faster than he already was. "Touch yourself"

And so, Shane did, wrapping his hand around his rigid cock, stroking it quickly and sloppily. He was close, and he could tell Ilya was too.

"Fuck I'm--" Ilya cursed

"--Yeah, me too." His whole body shuddered, groaning as hot white spurts painted his chest and hand. It was soon after that he felt Ilya stiffen and hot come shoot up his body.

Shane bathed in the hazy afterglow, grunting as Ilya pulled out and fell on top of him. Ilya wrapped his arms around him tightly, like if he let go, Shane would run away. Shane did the same, one of his hands running through the back of Ilya's hair. Ilya nuzzled his face against Shane's cheek like a puppy. Shane loved it when Ilya got like this.

"Shower?" Shane offered. Ilya only responded by nodding against his face.

"Soon." He mumbled half a minute later. "I love you."

"I love you too, Ilya."

Chapter End Notes

I know this chapter is short, but I hope it's sweet as well!! Thank you all for the comments and kudos ILY!!! I appreciate the support so much, and I hope you're satisfied with the ending!

I don't know when the next fic will be out, hopefully sooner than later! If you're interested in reading more of my work, then stay tuned! It'll be longer than this one!!

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