

Spiral (I'll catch you).

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Spiral (I'll catch you).

by [orphan_account](#)

Summary

Everything was on the verge of spiralling; he had felt that rush of familiarity—a distinct feeling he experienced just before everything went badly. A pattern. Everything had felt off. He'd woken up this morning with a terrible headache and a familiar heaviness in his chest. In which Shane Hollander has the worst day ever.

Notes

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

Everything was on the verge of spiraling; he had felt that rush of familiarity—a distinct feeling he experienced just before everything went badly, a pattern. Everything had felt off. He'd woken up this morning with a terrible headache and a familiar heaviness in his chest.

A part of him wanted to throw in the towel, go to Ilya. But he didn't want to look needy, like he couldn't handle himself.

Instead, he was standing in line waiting to purchase a costly coffee; his hands were sweaty to the point that they felt clammy, and he was too aware of his breathing. His heart sped up. What if he never remembered how to breathe? If he fainted in the middle of a crowded cafe...shut up, A smaller voice in his head shouted.

Was he standing weird?

What if someone looked at him, and he was standing weirdly? His leg went stiff at the thought, and time slowed. He needed to get out of here, but the thought of leaving when there was only one person ahead of him and dozens that he'd pass on the way out was humiliating. He knew realistically they would not care, but Shane Hollanders brain did not always favor realistic, more like practically never.

He could skate confidently on a rink with thousands in the audience, but a busy cafe was nerve-racking. It was pathetic, honestly. Shane couldn't figure himself out.

The guy ahead, whose face he had not looked at until now, finally walked off. Shane merged forward, his skin buzzing with discomfort.

"Hi! What can I get ya?" The girl in her early twenties grinned.

"Hi, could I just get a latte please?"

"Sure thing, can I get a name for that?"

"Shane." There was an awkwardness when saying his own name out loud; it sounded so natural when reporters would exclaim 'Shane' or 'Hollander'.

Places like this set his senses on fire; he could feel the way his jacket rubbed against his skin that was already buzzing with discomfort. The sounds of several conversations blended, becoming louder in his ears. That, with the sound of the blender, was practically torture.

"Latte for Shane." A voice said amongst the chaos. He smiled, quietly thanking the woman. He could leave.

The cold air hit him as soon as he opened the door. Thankfully, he had the sense to park the car on the sidewalk closest to the cafe.

The silence was refreshing; he reclined his head, resting gently on the back of the seat. He needed a second to breathe. It was only the morning, and his schedule was full for the day; he would not rest until late in the night. He had errands, then practice and then dinner with his

parents, which Ilya was looking forward to. The older couple had been in Italy for the last month, his dad's anniversary present to his mom.

He was driving steadily on the road, sensibly peering into his mirrors every so often and watching the speed monitor. The focus kept him grounded, similar to when he would play hockey; it kept the thoughts away, and it made his heart beat erratically in a healthy way. A satisfying way.

Tires screeched in front of him as a sleek black car emerged far too quickly from an intersection, swerving all over the road. Shane checks his mirrors before pulling to an emergency stop. A second later, and he would have collided with the sports car. Hot liquid hit his face, the burning sensation earning a whine. The cup had hit the roof, the latte was everywhere, and it hurt.

Shane looked frantically for another side road that he could pull into and find a place to park. His hand shook as he clutched the steering wheel for life.

Luckily, there was a McDonald's in his line of sight. He sighed, relief flooding his lungs.

Tears were clinging to his water line, refusing to move. He furiously wiped them away, shaking his head. Today sucked. Now he wouldn't even have time to run errands because he needed to clean the car.

He flipped the overhead mirror, and a hot mess stared back at him. A red mark on his upper cheek, puffy eyes and hair that wasn't sitting right.

His hand hovered over Ilya's contact for a minute before he shoved the phone down. No. He was not going to be a baby about this.

"Breathe." He whispered to himself, wiping his eyes one last time before turning the car on with a sigh.

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Shane was off in practice, and everyone had felt it; he'd almost tripped over his feet five times, and he'd missed several shots into the empty net.

There was a ticking in the walls, and it wouldn't stop; that's where his head was at. Not here. He wasn't giving his 100% and that made him want to bow his head in shame.

Tick,

Tick,

Tick.

He'd only taken his eyes off the rink for a second when the wind was snatched from him. He'd landed on his back, a sharp dull pane erupting in his sides. The heavyweight of Victor St James, a fourth-line left winger, pinned him to the ground.

"Hollander!" His husband boomed as he managed to stand up on wobbly feet, voice thickly Russian. He did not sound impressed, despite the stern voice; he crouched and assessed his injuries. Concluding that Shane was fine, a harsh expression etched back over his usually soft features, the captain came out.

"Where is your head, Hollander? Was risky skating, and you know it. What if St James did not see you and had not tried to lean his weight off of you? If it had been the blade of a skate?" Shane could not look at him, his eyes darting from the ground to the team doing drills behind them. Ilya was seething, and he could feel a sting deep behind his eyes and a lump forming in his throat. Not now.

Not now. He repeated in his head.

Please. Not now.

"Go. Sit on bench," He ordered, tapping his own head "Think about safety."

Shane just nodded. Embarrassment was embedded deep into his soul. He could envision another nasty bruise forming on his ribs, the joys of professional sport.

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Sometimes Shane would get so restless that his leg would grow a mind of its own, restlessly bobbing up and down almost uncontrollably. This was one of those moments, sitting alone on the bench, trying not to cry. He drew the jersey closer, a minute comfort.

He'd barely noticed when Ilya had ended practice, but he did, however, notice the empty rink and his husband skating toward the bench. Annoyingly, Shane wasn't sure if he could get yelled at again without bursting into tears. He stared at the ground, knee still bouncing.

"Shane," Ilya spoke softly, dragging out each letter. He closed the distance, fingers gripping his husband's chin, tilting upwards. He pressed a few small kisses over the other's face apologetically. His hand smoothing through the brunette's hair, smiling at the sight of his smile upturned in the corners.

"Sorry," Shane spoke. It was small. Almost overtook by a groan as Ilya massaged his hair.

"We'll talk about it another day, sweetheart," His fingers leaving Shane's hair.

Great, he had worried Ilya. How was the other man even with him when he acted this pathetic and this needy? Ilya could not even be mad at him because Shane was so fragile...Really healthy.

"I'm going to shower, then I will drive us home." Shane nodded, he'd decided to just shower at home—It's not like he was on the ice anyway.

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He'd missed his parents, he realises as they walk across the restaurant's foyer.

His mom immediately pulls both him and Ilya into a hug. The waiter is standing there looking awkwardly at the four of them. Ilya notices, of course, he does. "We have a

reservation for four, uh, Hollander,"

"Yes, right this way." He leads them toward a four-seat table right in the middle of the large restaurant. Shane almost winced but held it back. He could put up with a badly placed seat for a few hours.

He had little desire to eat anything, something akin to nausea settling in his stomach as he settled in the seat. Shane listened to the three of them talk whilst he zoned out, his focus on the tableware.

A couple is arguing behind them, apparently over their daughter. A baby is crying slightly further away. It's someone's birthday, and the universe decided now was the perfect time to have the happy birthday song blasting through the speakers with sparklers everywhere.

He discreetly nipped at the skin on his hand, trying to draw himself back in, to narrow the attack on his senses. His attempts were futile, and his head seemed to be floating away from his body.

One minute, he was sitting uncomfortably still, the next—gasp. He'd heard the waiter briefly swear, and that was all the warning he'd had before he was inundated with a chilling cold. Shane froze, his white shirt now transparent with water seeping through it. Two waiters stared at him, one with an empty jug and the other with an extremely apologetic look in his eyes.

"I am so sorry, sir," Was all the man, scurrying to make it right, could get out.

The noise that had been coming from every corner of the room had suddenly frozen; you could have heard a pin drop. Shane's eyes were blown wide. This is not happening right now. He'd repeated affirmatively in his head, hands shaking slightly. He could feel eyes on his back, and although the waiter was probably similarly embarrassed, he could not help but feel nauseated by their gazes.

"It's okay," He whispered, wishing he could disappear. What was he going to do? He shivered, the cold settling uncomfortably against his chest.

His parents stared at him, mouths hanging open.

He needed to get out of here.

He needed this to end.

He felt a distant pressure against his hand, as soft, repetitive patterns were drawn into his skin. Shane wanted to lean into the touch, hide from the entire room. But he couldn't. He was frozen in the moment.

"Do you have a restroom?" Shane managed to get out, flashing a small smile at the boy who looked like he might die on the spot.

"Yes! Straight ahead and then to your left. I am so sorry, again."

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He gripped the sink with such sheer force that if he were not trying to talk himself out of a full meltdown, he would have been worrying about breaking it.

There was simply no way he could go back out there. He'd have to hide in the bathroom until everyone left.

He was a mess, his eyes glassy, and with the state of his shirt, he might as well not have worn one. The man staring back at him was pathetic. If this happened to anyone else, he's sure they'd be embarrassed, but they wouldn't be fighting back tears in a bathroom like an imbecile.

The door slid open, and Shane quickly hid in the stall. Closing the door as quietly as he possibly could.

"Shane?" It was soft, like it had been earlier when he'd seen him almost cry. Twice in one day. Three times in reality. This was not normal.

"Will you unlock the door?" He asked

Shane sighed, reaching toward the handle—his hands slightly shaking as he twisted the lock.

That's all it took for Ilya to push the door open gently; he always marveled at how soft he could be with him when he was such a terrorizer on the ice. Shane's eyes darted around, avoiding his husband's gaze.

Ilya held out his own jacket toward him, and Shane shook his head, "It'll get wet."

"Then it will dry, yes?" He gestured toward the other "Put it on, then we go."

"What about the food?" Shane asked, voice weak.

Ilya held up a paper bag. "We got it to go. Very generous, they offered to give it to us for free."

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As soon as the engine turned on in the car, he turned his attention toward the window. Everything was embarrassing; shame swirled around his body, refusing to let up, refusing to give him any sort of rest from the constant spiral.

He could not ignore Ilya's jacket brushing against his own, soaked through his own shirt; every minuscule movement had him wanting to rip the whole lot off.

The weight in his chest had only gotten mightier, a constant reminder of the burden of the day. Shane choked, barely grasping the sob that had threatened to leave his lips. They were close to home and if he did not get his act together he'd only end up humiliating himself.

The motion of the car stopping lulled him back to the humbling reality that lay in front of him. "Shane?" He couldn't look at him, couldn't move his head. A few seconds had passed

when he'd heard the soft click of the door being shut. He was paralyzed in his seat, something strange gripping his body and it was all over a simple mistake that could have happened to anyone in the restaurant.

Another click. The winter air assaults his senses as Ilya appears in-front of him. Leaning on the door. The Russian lets out a small gasp. "Oh," Shane was trembling, eyes completely glassed over.

"Sorry," Its quiet, his voice slightly quivered.

"No." Ilya reprimands "How long have you been feeling..." He paused, words lost but he gestured toward his husband "Like this,"

"I-"

"No lying."

"Since this morning,"

"Why didn't you come to me?" His eyes filled with an emotion that Shane could not quiet place. It was almost pained.

"I'm not a child, I should not breakdown over the smallest things."

Ilya fixes him a look at that. "No, not a child. You are much to hard on yourself. Things stack up throughout the day, you are not superman Hollander." Ilya leans down, causing Shane to freeze in his seat. He crashes a quick kiss again the others forehead before clicking the seat belt out of place.

"I can do that myself," Shane speaks, voice still wobbling slightly. Ilya shushes him.

"I know. Lets get inside. It's cold."

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Anya practically leaps to the door at the sound of their arrival. Ilya crouches down, fingers cascading through her coat of fur. He makes a quick affair of leaving out Anya's dog food before turning his attention back to his husband.

There's a silence in the air as they make their way up the staircase. Its deafening, he'd only gone and destroyed what should have been a playful night by acting crazy.

"I can hear you thinking." Ilya mused when they reached the bedroom "Stop thinking sweetheart." He melted at that, eyes meeting Ilya's voluntarily for what felt like the first time that day. Shane had always thought pet names where stupid, he'd cringe when his ex girlfriends would call him 'babe' but when Ilya said such things it made him weak. Made him tremble in the right scenario.

Ilya stretched out his hand, inviting. "Come," He nodded toward the bathroom "I'll draw you a bath."

"Take off your clothes." Shane raised his eyebrows at the command, a small laugh leaving his lips. "So you don't get sick," Ilya raises his hands.

He obeys, discarding the clothes into the bathroom laundry bin. An immediate relief, soothing some of the constant buzzing in his skin.

Ilya sits on the edge of the bathtub, fingers measuring the temperature as they settle across the water. It takes less time than expected for the tub to fill up.

He's still sat on the ledge when Shane works himself into the bathtub, sighing when the water hits his skin. The warmth slides down his joints like electric, causing him to drop his shoulders and submerge himself further in the water/

Fingers find their way to his hair, there is a gentle roughness to it. Grounding Shane in the moment, right there. in his bathtub with his husband sat right behind him fingers tangled in his hair. "Do you want to talk?"

"I-. It's stupid."

"No. Not stupid."

"I'm just overwhelmed."

"Overwhelmed?" Ilya studies his face, like he's deciding the appropriate way to go around the words "You feel like this a lot, yes? On a smaller scale, it builds up and explodes. I worried and did some research. Have you ever considered that you might be autistic?" Shane's head snaps up, a forced laugh leaving his mouth before anything else.

He was peculiar, sure. He'd felt different as a child, sure. And he wasn't exactly a social butterfly. But he was not Autistic. "I'm not." He was an athlete, a hockey player in the professional division who played in packed arenas multiple times a week for months straight. He might've opted out of casual eye contact and spent his childhood glued to the ice. But Shane Hollander was not Autistic. He would not have missed that.

"Why would you think that?" He asked

"It's not a bad thing. The computer said that it is a spectrum meaning everyone's experience is slightly different."

"But why would I be on any spectrum."

"It's just a suggestion," Ilya was almost certain in his proposition but he'd have this conversation with a more lucid Shane. "Now lets go to bed."

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The ache that he'd been feeling all day had been smoothed out into an ache of pleasure, of a desire to be wrapped up in bed. He was tucked into Ilya's chest, big arms surrounded him. This is what he'd wanted all day but he'd been too stubborn to seek it out. Being indulged in Ilya, in his arms completely covered in his scent was Shane's favorite thing ever.

"Maybe you were right about the Autism thing." Shane muttered.

End Notes

This was written over several days. The original vibe sort of got lost along the way.

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