

sleep, pretty darling, do not cry

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sleep, pretty darling, do not cry

by [bluemiilk](#)

Summary

Ilya smiles and leans in, his lips a few centimeters away from Shane's. "I thought you would not want me getting germs all over the place. You have game in a few days, you wouldn't want to be sick for that."

"So you're allowed to play sick, and I'm not?" he asks. Ilya nods again, the tip of his nose bumping Shane's.

—

Ilya Rozanov hasn't been cared for while sick in decades. This, predictably, brings up some feelings when the Hollanders try to do just that.

Notes

Golden Slumbers, The Beatles:

*Golden Slumbers fill your eyes
Smiles awake you when you rise
Sleep, pretty darling, do not cry
And I will sing a lullaby*

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

Shane is still unlacing his skates when a text from Ilya lights up his phone. Making sure no one is in a position to look over his shoulder, he opens it.

Lily 22:04

You looked very stupid trying to open that bottle of Gatorade with your gloves on tonight. Should have asked me to.

604

You 22:05

Aren't you sick?

Lily 22:05

Russians do not get sick.

You 22:06

I'm pretty sure they do. You should rest.

Lily 22:06

I will rest better after you are in me.

You 22:06

I'm not going to do that tonight.

Lily 22:07

Fine.

I will be in you. I heard sex is good decongestant.

That can't be true.

Lily 22:08

You will not know until you try.

604

Shane sighs, clicks off his phone, and finishes unlacing his skates. He finds it odd that Ilya is inviting him to his hotel room, rather than his usual assumption that he is welcome at Shane's apartment—which is correct.

Ilya played well tonight, as he always does. The sore throat that he had offhandedly mentioned to Shane earlier that night didn't seem to affect his performance. He had, however, been slammed into the boards early in the third period and benched, much to the dismay of Ottawa's fans. The final score had been 4-3, Montreal's favor.

Zippering up his bag and slinging it over his shoulder, Shane exits the changing room. He greets the security guards as he walks by their post. At this point in his career, he's quite familiar with the ones at his home stadium.

He's about to take out his phone to text Ilya back when he runs headfirst into a tall, sturdy figure.

"Oh shit, I'm—" He looks up and comes face to face with a grinning Ilya Rozanov.

"Hi, Shane," he says, hiking his own bag higher up on his shoulders and sniffing emphatically. "Is coincidence we run into each other, yes?"

"No, you were obviously waiting for me," Shane replies, a small smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. He gestures to Ilya's torso. "What'd the team doctor say?"

"What do you think? You have seen me naked hundreds of times. He said I have perfect abs."

Shane shakes his head. "No, I mean after you hit the boards."

"Oh," says Ilya, pouting at the topic change away from his muscles. "Just bruised ribs. Will not stop me from playing next game."

"Okay, good," Shane says. He pauses before he adds, "Well, not good, but it could be—"

"—worse," Ilya finishes. He swipes his sleeve roughly under his nose, reminding Shane that he is, in fact, sick. It doesn't seem to have taken a lot out of him, though, at least not yet. If it did, Shane knows he would never admit it. "I know."

Shane looks around before putting a hand on his shoulder. "Is all your stuff already at the hotel?" Ilya nods. "Let's go pick it up, then."

"You are kidnapping me?"

"I'm taking my boyfriend back to my apartment. You know, the one he stays in every time he comes to Montreal?"

Ilya smiles and leans in, his lips a few centimeters away from Shane's. "I thought you would not want me getting germs all over the place. You have game in a few days, you wouldn't want to be sick for that."

"So you're allowed to play sick, and I'm not?" he asks. Ilya nods again, the tip of his nose bumping Shane's. It's still cold, flushed pink from the chilliness of the rink. "I just got you to admit you're sick."

"I am not sick," he says defensively, but the dulled 'n' gives away a hint of congestion in his voice. "I am just saying that you think I am sick, and do not want to fuck me because of it."

"Ilya," Shane says, looking around. "People will hear!"

Ilya drops his bag and wraps his hands around Shane's waist, lifting him so his feet hover just above the ground. "Yes, they would, if there were any people around. Right now, is just us." He closes the space between their lips before trailing kisses across Shane's cheek to his ear. Just underneath his ear is ticklish, which Ilya knows, and he makes a point to kiss.

They stand like this for a minute, blissfully unaware of their surroundings, the empty corridor made suddenly into an intimate space. Were they more observant and less involved in each other, and Ilya's ears less clogged, they would have registered the telltale tap of Yuna Hollander's shoes on the linoleum before she was right behind them.

"Holy shit," Shane says, his shoes similarly hitting the floor as he pushes Ilya away.

"What, I am turning you on too much in—" Ilya's brow scrunches as follow Shane's line over his shoulder. He turns around, and his posture immediately straightens.

The Hollanders are standing awkwardly behind them, seemingly embarrassed at having walked in on such a private moment. Yuna pretends to be searching for something in her tote bag, while David becomes very interested in his phone. It reminds Shane of being discovered at the cottage, a horrific memory he'd very much like to forget.

Ilya steps backward, as if putting a human barrier between him and Shane's parents will do anything to help matters. He's gotten to know them pretty well over the past few months, but Shane knows that doesn't stop him from being mildly terrified of them.

Shane clears his throat. "Hi, guys," he says quietly, reaching behind him to put a hand on Ilya's back. "We were just, uh, catching up after the game."

"Oh, Ilya," Yuna says, looking up and putting on a big smile. "We didn't see you! How are you doing?" She's lying through her teeth, Shane knows it.

"Am okay," he answers, shuffling forward and picking up his hockey bag. He snuffles and directs a cough to the side, probably less out of necessity and more to fill any awkward silence. "It was nice to see you, Mr and Mrs. Hollander. I have to get back to the hotel."

Yuna gives Shane a look that says she wants him to say something. "Bye, I love you," he says, hoping that's what she was signaling. Judging by the sigh that follows, it was not.

"What Shane means to say is that we'd love to have you over for dessert at our house," says Yuna, putting a hand on his arm. Ilya doesn't flinch at the touch, Shane notices.

"We've got Shane's room all made up, too," David adds. "You know, if you want to—"

"Dad," Shane interjects.

David throws up his hands, confused. "What? You two sleep in the same bed all the time!"

"Yeah, but it's weird when you say it, okay?"

Beside him, Ilya is holding back a laugh. "Thank you for inviting me," he says, smiling down at Yuna. "But I don't think I can tonight. Sorry."

"Yeah, me neither," Shane says, racking his brain for a good excuse that would allow him and Ilya to go, unhindered, back to his apartment. "I think Ilya's coming down with something, so I was going to pick up some stuff for him and bring it to the hotel."

Ilya looks as if he's been deeply betrayed; a dark secret of his exposed. "Shane, I am not—"

"All the more reason for you to stay the night at our place," says Yuna brightly, unfazed. "We have more than enough supplies at home. Plus, I bet Ilya would feel much more comfortable in your bed than on a hotel mattress."

Shane doesn't have the bandwidth to protest. Neither, it seems, does Ilya.

—

Ilya adjusts himself in the corner of the Hollanders' sectional sofa, plate balanced delicately on his lap. "Thank you for the lemon cake, Mrs. Hollander," he says, picking up said plate and placing it on the coffee table. "Was delicious."

"You're very welcome," she replies, standing up to clear the dishes. "And please, call me Yuna."

While she leaves the room, presumably to load the dishwasher, Shane puts a hand on his thigh. "You okay?"

"What? Of course, I am okay, what question is that?" He stubbornly swallows back a cough that's been bubbling up in his throat for the past ten minutes. Shane's not wrong about him being sick, but Ilya would rather be left to fend for himself against a wolf pack than admit that to those around him. Or himself. It's just a cold, after all, which barely counts.

"I don't know," Shane says, shrugging. "You just seem fidget-y."

"Maybe I am itching to take you upstairs," he counters, hoping his usual suggestive charm masks some of his discomfort. He is eager to go upstairs, but not to be with Shane. Being taken care of is not something he's used to; it's not something he thinks he'll ever be used to. He hasn't been truly taken care of since he was twelve years old.

Shane doesn't pick up on his deceit, simply smiles and kisses him, briefly. Then, Yuna is back, and he pulls away.

"Ilya, do you need anything?" she asks. Exactly what he was afraid of. Ilya resists the urge to squirm in his seat. "Tea, cough drops, maybe some NyQuil?"

What the hell is NyQuil? He'll have to Google Translate that later. "I am not coughing," Ilya says, though the persistent tickle in his throat begs to differ. He tries to keep his mouth closed to stifle them, but ends up coughing toward his lap. This makes his ribs twinge, and he lets out an involuntary sound of displeasure.

"Babe," Shane says, concern lacing his voice. "Is it your ribs?"

"No," he grits out, wrapping an arm around his chest. "No, I'm fine."

Yuna frowns, sliding onto the couch beside them. "What's wrong with his ribs?"

"Bruised them when he got shoved into the boards tonight," Shane explains. His stupid, attentive boyfriend. "He could probably use a hot pack."

"That is really not necessary," Ilya says quickly, but Yuna is already heading for the door. He coughs again, this time loosely covered by his hand. "Govno." Shane must recognize the swear, because he starts rubbing Ilya's back.

"She's going to come back with a whole pharmacy," he says. "Just warning you."

Ilya knuckles at his nose. "Good to know," he says casually, although he swears he can feel his fight-or-flight response trigger.

Yuna Hollander returns only moments later, her arms piled high with the aforementioned pharmacy. She lays these out on the table in front of him and hands him the hot pack Shane had requested. "Okay, so I've got a lot of stuff here. We can get you some Advil for your ribs,

and I have a bunch of decongestant options. The Nyquil should knock you out, but we could do something more natural instead, like melatonin? Oh, and there are three flavors of cough drops." She pauses to count them. "Yeah, three. Shane used to enjoy the peppermint ones."

Ilya is overwhelmed by the number of words that come out of her mouth and struggles to translate them as she speaks. He tries not to let that show in his expression, but falters when he is expected to respond.

"What's wrong, honey?" asks Yuna softly, sliding onto the couch next to them.

Honey. Is he really being that obvious? Is his patented control over his emotions waning as he allows himself to open up to Shane? "I'm not—" He looks over at Shane. His face feels unusually hot. "I'm going to go to the bathroom," he says, his voice thick, but not just with congestion.

Someone calls after him, but he doesn't respond. Ilya doesn't know Shane's parents' house extremely well, but he finds his way to Shane's room with relative ease. His eyes are blurred with tears by the time he reaches it, and he shuts the door behind him, harder than he had intended.

Ilya can't remember the last time he had been around someone while he was ill. He tended to push through the days and isolate himself at night, caring for himself to the minimum extent possible. It had been easy to do so, a second-nature routine he would fall into once or twice a year. But here, now, with his boyfriend's family, it is almost impossible to escape attempts to be comforted; kind deeds and loving hugs.

"I'm okay," he mumbles into the sheets when he hears the door open. Someone pads across the carpeted floor and sits down beside him. "Promise."

"Yeah, okay people run away the second someone tries to do something nice for them," Shane says, though there's no malice in his voice.

Ilya sits up, wiping his eyes with the back of his index finger. "Fuck you," he manages, but it's similarly tame to Shane's statement. It's late, and he doesn't have the energy to get mad at his well-meaning boyfriend. "Sorry, I didn't mean that."

Shane pulls him into his arms and leans back into the many pillows stacked along the headboard. "I know you didn't. And I get that this is hard for you."

Ilya snuffles and looks up. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that you don't like to accept help. You're not used to it." He brushes a hand through Ilya's curls. He can tell Shane wants to mention what he knows about Ilya's family life, but he's holding back. Ilya appreciates the thought: he'd like to avoid being rendered a complete mess. "And I know that you'll eventually figure it out, but in the meantime, I should tell my Mom to go easy on you."

"Fuck," Ilya breathes, burrowing into Shane's shirt. It's soft and smells like the laundry detergent he's used since Ilya has known him. "I love you."

"I love you too," Shane says, the words sliding easily off his tongue. He presses a kiss to Ilya's scalp. "Ya tebya lyublyu."

Ilya turns over onto his back. "When did you learn that?"

"Where do you think I learned it? You say it all the time."

"Well, yeah, but I never gave you pronunciation guide or anything," Ilya says.

"I looked it up," Shane replies. He's smiling, obviously glad he could impress Ilya with his limited Russian vocabulary. "Thought you would appreciate it."

"I do." He shamelessly coughs into Shane's chest, muffling them into the fabric. When he finishes, his eyelashes are dewy with irritated tears. "God, I kind of want one of those cough drops now. You say mint is good?"

Shane nods. "You want me to get that for you?"

Ilya yawns and blinks up at his boyfriend.

"Actually, just stay here. For now."

End Notes

the gay hockey players in my laptop have taken over my mind. please accept this classic
norah ficlet with some light ilya angst

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