

“I want your midnights” (A New Year’s Eve Fic)

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“I want your midnights” (A New Year’s Eve Fic)

by [cinnabunny05](#)

Summary

When Ilya almost didn’t get to make it on the Hollander’s New Year celebration, almost.

Set at the same year they first visited the Cabin, and Ilya was still with Boston Bears.

Notes

i miss them bad >.<

*** Hotel in Detroit, Michigan
Dec 30, 2017*

“You’re seriously bailing on us, Rosz?” Marlow glanced back at Ilya, half-disbelieving.

“Yes, Marlow. For the hundredth time.” Ilya’s reply was flat, disinterested and a little annoyed.

Marlow sighed. “Alright, man. Just doesn’t seem like you.”

Ilya only answered with a glare.

“Suit yourself.” The door shut behind Marlow.

Ilya didn’t care much about Detroit, or celebrating their win. The game is just another win, at least that is how Ilya sees it, he does not think they *have to* celebrate. It wasn't like winning a game for the Stanley Cup. But the truth was post-game partying no longer tempted him: the alcohol, the girls... None of it mattered when all he could think about was the beautiful freckled boyfriend he hadn’t seen in two months.

He couldn’t wait to leave. Tomorrow will be December 31st, and he’d be welcoming the new year in Ottawa with Shane and his family, at Shane’s parents’ cottage. The thought only made him want to fly to Ottawa right at that moment.

After the game, when he took hold of his phone, Shane’s congratulatory text was the first one to pop up and he’d been glad to know that he was watching their game. Ilya had sneaked off from the team for a bit to have a quick call with Shane, but it hadn’t been enough. Not even

close. So despite the late hour, Ilya tapped Shane's contact for a facetime. Shane answered on the first ring.

"Hey." His boyfriend's face filled the screen, softly lit, glasses perched on his nose. "Why the call?"

"Hey to you too." Ilya leaned back against the headboard. "What, your boyfriend can't call you now?"

"No— Ilya, aren't you sharing a room with Marlow?"

"The guys went out. Some end-of-year, or early New Year thing." He shrugged. Because of course, their last game for the year just had to be scheduled the day before New Year's Eve.

"And you didn't go?" Shane asked. His tone was carefully neutral.

"Would you have liked that?" Ilya shot back, his voice dropping slightly.

"You can go, Ilya." Shane tried to sound indifferent but he was not exactly looking straight at his camera or his phone, as if virtually avoiding Ilya's gaze. "If you wanted to."

"That's not what I asked." Ilya said bluntly. "Would you have liked that? If I go?"

A pause. Then, "I wouldn't be against it," Shane said at last, resigned. "Going out doesn't automatically mean you'd be grinding on someone on the dance floor... right?"

There it was, that edge in his voice.

"No," Ilya said immediately, a crooked smile tugging at his lips. "The only ass I'd want to grind on is yours."

“You are such a horny asshole,” Shane muttered. He tried to look annoyed, but the blush blooming across his freckled cheeks gave him away.

“You like it.” Ilya sounded smug. “And you can’t blame me. I’ve been dry for months because you’re sooo far away.” Ilya sounded whiny, because he did in fact want to whine about missing Shane's ass.

“Or *you’re* far away,” Shane shot back. “We’ll see each other tomorrow, anyway. You won’t have to wait much longer.”

“Mm. Still not enough.” Ilya shook his head, then tapped at his temples to sign “Your glasses.”

“What about them?” Shane leaned closer, inspecting himself.

“Take off clothes now. I want to see you wearing only that.”

*** Detroit Airport
Dec 31, 2017*

"Fuck!" Ilya would’ve liked to direct his anger at whoever was responsible for delaying his 9 AM flight to eleven.

The rest of the team was probably already headed back to Boston now. He, on the other hand, had booked a separate flight to Ottawa— and of course, it was the one that got pushed back for **two** hours. There was no one to complain to, no teammate to bitch with. Flying separately was suspicious enough already, no one needed to know, or question, why he was headed to Ottawa.

> Messaging Jane

Lily: Flight got delayed for two hours. Fuck

Jane: Oh. Don't worry, you'd still make it on time.

Lily: Yes, but now I have 2 hours less with you which we could've used to sneak from your parents and fuck.

Jane: We'd still have time...

Lily: Better be.

Ilya spent the next 2 hours by exchanging texts with his boyfriend and mindlessly scrolling through Instagram, telling himself the time would pass faster that way.

*** Toronto Airport*

Turns out, it could be worse.

His flight had a layover in Toronto before heading to Ottawa. What was supposed to be a one-hour wait stretched into four. Apparently, the airline were overselling seats which was stupid to begin with, Ilya thinks. The next flight wouldn't be leaving until 7 PM. It would only take about an hour to get to Ottawa, but now, he had to waste another 4 precious hours that he could've been spending with his boyfriend that he hadn't seen for months.

Ilya was about to lose his calm when he received a call from Shane.

“Hey,” Shane said when he answered. “How’s it going?”

“Like shit,” Ilya replied, launching straight into a rant about the stupid delays, stupid airlines, stupid air traffic—anything and everything he could blame.

“It’s late,” Shane said once Ilya ran out of steam, “but we’ could still be together for New Year’s Eve.”

“I know,” Ilya sighed. “It’s just... annoying.”

“It is” Shane agreed.

“I’m so pissed.” Ilya let his body slumped down on his seat.

“So am I,” Shane said softly. “I can’t wait to see you.”

“Me too.” Ilya had imagined this day differently. Shane and him would spend a sweet afternoon together before heading to Yuna and David's. Now, he's here on a 4 hour layover, irritable and angrily glaring at everything.

“Soon, Ilya.” Shane's voice was soothing Ilya's racing mind. He knows they wouldn't be apart for too long now.

“*Da (Yes),*” Ilya murmured. “*Ya tebya lyublyu (I love you).*”

“I love you too”

They talked for more, Shane being the only good thing that happened on Ilya's day so far and calming him down.

** *Ottawa*

If Ilya had suspected the universe was messing with him before, this confirmed it.

He was stuck in terrible traffic. Usually, it would take two hours to get to Yuna and David's cottage but now, it had turned into a slow, grinding crawl with red taillights bleeding into one another, snow coming down thick and making the road slippery. Rush hour traffic mixed with holiday chaos and winter weather was a special kind of hell, and he was right in the middle of it.

Of course he was. It feels as if there was a checklist of everything that could go wrong was being ticked off, one by one.

Delayed flights.

Oversold planes.

Heavy Snow.

Traffic that refused to move.

He tightened his grip on his phone, seeing the screen display *9:03 PM*.

He should've been holding Shane by now— his warm body, inhaling the familiar scent. But he'd insisted for Shane not to pick him up because the man had sprained himself from a game a week ago. Not serious they said, but it needed rest. However, it was enough to make Ilya furious. He made a mental note to himself that the next time he played with the idiot who'd thought it was acceptable to injure Shane, he'd remember to get back at him.

That's why he opted to arrange a taxi ahead of time, told himself it was the responsible choice. And it was, Shane would've been waiting for hours otherwise given all the delays he's had today. But Ilya knew there's nothing he wished more than to pull Shane into a tight embrace and bury his face into his neck the moment he stepped out the airport. He needed to feel something real after months of just screens and phone calls.

9:48 PM

The car barely moved.

Ilya checked the map again, jaw tight. He was still nowhere near the cottage. Snowflakes streaked past the window, blurring into the glow of streetlights.

“Unbelievable,” he muttered under his breath.

Two hours before midnight. Two hours before the new year. And he was still trapped on the road like this was some sick endurance test.

10:15 PM

His leg bounced uncontrollably as he obsessively checked the live map on his phone, watching the arrival time inch closer. Every red light felt personal. Every slow car ahead of them felt like a direct insult.

He imagined Shane at the cottage. They’d been texting and calling every half hour, and Ilya could hear the pretense in Shane’s voice each time he said that it was fine. The image of Shane’s downhearted expression kept flashing through his mind.

That thought made his chest ache.

10:48 PM

Ilya exhaled sharply, dragging a hand down his face.

He should’ve been halfway there by now. Instead, he was counting minutes like they were being stolen from him. Midnight was closing in fast, and he wasn’t even close.

“Fuck this,” he whispered, voice rough.

He'd promised Shane he'd be there. He'd pictured it so clearly—sitting at Yuna and David's table, sharing a home-cooked meal, the warmth of a home. He loved being with them, but more than that, he wanted to be with Shane. Not just because he missed him, but because this holiday would mean something to him again.

New Year's had always mattered in Russia—more than Christmas, even. It was the time you spent with the people you loved, welcoming the year together. It hadn't been the same since he lost his mother. And for the past ten years, Ilya had spent it in crowded parties and empty celebrations, surrounded by noise but never by anyone who truly mattered.

This year was supposed to be different. This year, he would be with Shane for a warm celebration with his parents nearby. It would've been perfect.

Shane was sunk deep into the living room sofa, shoulders rounded in on himself. He tried to look relaxed, but the tension was obvious enough that Yuna and David could only exchange a sympathetic glance.

The clock read *11:28 PM*.

He received a text from Ilya some 30 minutes ago that he was still on his way but his phone's battery was about to die. Shane had pretended that he was fine, that it was okay because Ilya would still be with him, maybe just a few minutes behind midnight. But he had been looking forward to being with Shane earlier today, and they could spend time just the two of them, and just *be with his boyfriend*. No matter the strong front he tried to show, he knew from the glances he feels from his parents that he was not exactly doing a good job at it.

Ilya had texted half an hour earlier— still on the road, phone battery nearly dead. Shane had answered like he was fine, like it did not have to matter so much. He told himself it didn't. Ilya would still be here, even if it was a few minutes after midnight. That was what he kept repeating in his head.

Still, he'd been looking forward to having more time together. Just the two of them, finally in the same place with his *boyfriend*. He shifted on the couch, forcing a neutral expression but he knew from the glances he felt from his parents that he was not exactly doing a good job at it.

Then there was a knock.

Shane was on his feet before he could think, heart leaping into his throat as he crossed the room and opened the door.

Relief crashed over him all at once.

"Ilya" The next second, he was pulled into a tight embrace. Shane let himself melt into it, arms wrapping around Ilya like he'd been holding himself together by a single thread. He didn't care that they were still standing in the doorway. For the first time all day, he could finally breathe easy.

"Welcome, Ilya," David said gently from the hallway, Yuna at his side. "Why don't you boys come in? It's freezing."

They pulled apart just enough to step inside, their hands still intertwined. Ilya greeted David and Yuna politely, a little breathless from the cold.

"It's been a long trip for you," Yuna said warmly. "We're just glad you got here safe. Shane, why don't you show him to your room so he can drop his things and freshen up?"

"Sure mom" Shane said, it was plainly evident that Shane is in a better mood. The brightness returning to his voice that hadn't been there minutes ago and the heaviness that had clung to him all evening seemed to lift at once.

"You boys don't take too long, it's almost midnight" Yuna said casually, though her tone carried a hint of meaning.

"Mooom" Shane whined at Yuna's suggestive remark which had only earned a giggle from Ilya.

“Thank you,” Ilya said sincerely before Shane tugged him down the hall.

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There was less than a minute left.

Music played softly from the TV, the live countdown already underway. His eyes kept flicking between Shane and the clock, his chest tightening with anticipation. All the stressed of the day melted into nothing when Shane leaned into him, warm and steady, like he'd been there all along.

Finally, Ilya thought, *finally*.

“I’m so glad you’re here,” Shane murmured, voice low and shaky, and Ilya’s heart caught in his throat.

He pressed a kiss into Shane’s hair. “Me too... so much,” he whispered softly.

Ten... nine... eight...

Ilya’s mind raced. He hadn’t thought he’d ever get this kind of warmth and closeness, and this much love. For so long he had convinced himself life would always be like before: relentless, cold, passive, lonely...

Seven... six... five...

But this year had changed everything. Something he had almost convinced himself he didn’t deserve or didn’t think was possible, being with Shane. Now, the thought of losing him made his chest ache.

Four... three... two...

He clutched Shane's hand tightly, thumb stroking over the back of it, anchoring himself. Shane's eyes found his and Ilya leaned in instinctively, lips hovering over Shane's as the second tick down to

One...

"Happy New Year!" They heard David's shout and the pop of champagne.

Shane tilted his face up as Ilya closed their distance. When their lips met, it was fire. The kiss was quick but it felt electric—it sent signals to their senses that yes, they were here now.

They quickly recovered and stood to join David and Yuna. They all had glasses of champagne, except for Shane's ginger ale.

"To a better year ahead. Cheers!" Yuna toasted, her smile warm and knowing.

They all raised their glasses and drank. And once more, Ilya landed another brief kiss with Shane. He would always want his midnights like this. Them *together*.

This is what it was meant to be.

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