The Weight of the Quiet

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The Weight of the Quiet

by DamnSterek

Summary

WARNING: the Long Game spoilers
WARNING: Depression and (passive) suicidal themes

Ilya navigates grief, isolation, and the weight of holding himself together, until he learns to let himself be supported when he can't hold everything together alone.

Notes

soooo… i was feeling a little down, and this story just kind of poured out. not sure what else to say, except that i'm awkwardly baring my soul here.

for more context on the 'suicide attempt' tag, check the end notes for a spoiler!

See the end of the work for more notes

Ilya lay awake.

Which was not new.

The ceiling above his bed in Ottawa had turned familiar quite fast—the faint crack near the corner, the shadow the streetlight threw when a car passed. His eyes traced the same lines over and over, counting his breaths as they refused to settle into sleep.

Beside him, Shane was asleep.

That, at least, was steady. Shane's breathing was slow and even, a soft weight pressed into Ilya's side, warm and real and unmistakably alive. One of Shane's arms was slung over Ilya's waist, careless in a way only someone deeply asleep can be. Their legs were still tangled, bare skin against bare skin, the sheets pooling around them, pulled back sometime earlier, when heat and motion had made them unnecessary.

Sex always did that. It left Shane boneless and pliant, dropped him straight into sleep like a switch had been flipped.

Ilya kept staring at the ceiling and waited for the same mercy.

It didn't come.

His body felt wrong in the quiet aftermath—heavy but restless, exhausted but humming, like he'd been wound too tight and left that way. The pleasure had already drained out of him, leaving behind the now familiar hollow ache in his chest, the one that had nothing to do with muscle or bone.

He was just so tired. He just wanted to sleep.

He wanted—*no*. He didn't finish that thought.

Shane shifted slightly, nose brushing Ilya's shoulder, exhaling warm air against his skin. Ilya didn't move. He'd learned how to be very still, how to exist without disturbing the people around him. He didn't want to wake Shane. He didn't want to worry him.

Ottawa was quiet in a way Boston had never been. No sirens, no distant roar of traffic, no sense of something always happening just out of reach. He had chosen this place for a reason: two hours from Montreal. Far enough. Close enough. Safe.

The house was too big for just him, but it was fine whenever Shane was here. He bought the place fully furnished two years ago and never changed much. It seemed unnecessary. He was not the kind of man who needed things to feel personal.

Ilya turned his head slightly, just enough to look at Shane.

Shane's hair was a mess, dark strands flattened on one side and wild on the other. His mouth was slightly open, lashes resting against his cheeks. Beautiful freckles spread like constellations. There was a faint line between his brows even in sleep, like his brain never quite shut off completely.

Shane Hollander. Captain of the Montreal Voyageurs. Media darling. Ilya's ex-rival.

Ilya's *boyfriend.* The love of his life. His best friend.

The words still felt strange in his head, even two years after their first shared summer at the cottage. *Boyfriend* implied softness, implied something fragile that must be handled carefully. What they had had always felt forged instead—heat and friction and time, hammered into shape whether they meant it to be or not.

Nine years of rivalry. Eleven years of knowing each other. Two years of this.

Shane loved him. He had said it out loud back then. He said it often now, like repetition might make up for the years they hadn't.

Ilya loved him too. He knew this in the same way he knew how to skate, how to read a defense, how to take a hit and keep moving. It was a fact of his body, not something he needed to examine too closely.

If he did that, things could get… complicated.

The Irina Foundation paperwork was stacked neatly on his desk downstairs. He had signed off on next summer's camp locations just yesterday. Kids from all over would come again. Suicide prevention pamphlets with clean fonts and hopeful language stacked next to it.

He wondered, not for the first time, what it would have changed if someone had handed his mother one of those pamphlets. Would she still have been alive? Would she still live in the hell they used to call home? Would Alexei still be such an unbelievable asshole? Would she have lost her humor, her spark?

He swallowed and focused on Shane's breathing again.

Shane would notice if Ilya moved too much. Shane noticed patterns. Shane noticed changes. But Shane also believed him when he said he was fine. Or tired. Or sore from practice. Shane did not push.

Ilya was grateful for that. And, in a way he refused to examine, resentful.

His chest tightened, sharp and sudden, like he'd forgotten how to breathe properly. He forced himself to exhale slowly, carefully, counting in Russian under his breath because English felt too hard for this.

He was not falling apart. He was functioning. He played, he led, he signed contracts, he built foundations in his mother's name. He woke up every morning and he went on with his life. He did what was expected of him.

This was just… how it was.

Shane murmured something in his sleep, fingers twitching slightly where they rested on Ilya's hip. The sound anchored him, pulled him back into the room, into the present moment where there was a warm body beside him and a life he had deliberately constructed.

Ilya closed his eyes, even though he knew sleep wouldn't come.

He lay there in the dark, holding himself together quietly, the way he always had, careful not to wake the man who loved him. Careful not to let anyone see the cracks.

*

A week and a half later, Ilya was underwater. The bathtub was filled nearly to the brim, the water gone lukewarm around his shoulders, his ears ringing with the muted thrum of his own pulse. His hair floated around his head in dark strands, drifting like something detached from him. He kept his eyes open, staring at the blurred porcelain beneath the surface, the world reduced to distortion and soundless pressure.

His chest burned.

He was aware of that, distantly. The sharp, insistent ache that said *breath*, that said *now.* His body knew what to do even if his mind lagged behind, even if his thoughts moved slow and syrup-thick.

He needed to get up. He knew that. He didn't want to die. Not really.

The thought hovered there, oddly neutral. He wasn't trying to hurt himself. This wasn't that. He was just… staying a second too long. Curiosity, maybe. Or exhaustion. Or nothing at all.

Still, a part of him wondered quietly what it would feel like to just… let go. To stop fighting the burn, to stop counting seconds, to stop holding everything together so tightly it ached.

The burn flared sharper, impatient now.

Ilya pushed upright suddenly, water sloshing over the edges of the tub as he broke the surface with a sharp gasp. He sucked in air too fast, coughed, water spilling down his chin and chest as his hands gripped the sides of the tub hard enough that his knuckles went white.

He bent forward, breathing hard, hair plastered to his face, lungs dragging in like they hadn't quite remembered how.

Idiot, he thought dimly. *Fucking idiot.*

Water rolled down his cheeks, dripping off his jaw, splashing back into the tub. He swiped at his face roughly, irritated more than anything—

And froze.

The water didn't stop.

More spilled down, warm against his skin, blurring his vision. His throat tightened in a way that had nothing to do with lack of oxygen, his chest hitching once, sharply, like something inside him had misfired.

No.

He scrubbed at his face again, harder this time, dragging his palms down his cheeks like he could physically erase it. It was just water. Condensation. Heat. Something stupid.

But the tears kept coming.

His jaw clenched, teeth grinding together as frustration flared hot and immediate. He hated this—hated the weakness of it, the lack of control, the way his body was betraying him without permission. Crying didn't fix anything. Crying didn't help. Crying was pointless.

He wiped his face again, breathing unevenly now, and reached blindly for his phone next to the edge of the tub before he could think better of it.

Shane was on the road. Had been for ten days now. West coast swing, back-to-back games, late nights and early flights. They talked when they could, texts more than calls, voice notes sent at odd hours when schedules didn't line up.

Ilya stared at the screen for a second too long, thumbs hovering. Then he typed.

miss you.

He stared at the words after he sent them, throat tight again, like he'd already said too much. He told himself it was nothing. just a fact. You could miss someone without it meaning anything else.

The reply came almost immediately.

Miss you too. Got pregame now. I'll call later, okay?

Ilya exhaled slowly, something easing in his chest even as disappointment curled beneath it. He typed back.

yeah. go win.

A pause.

Always do.

That made something almost like a smile tug at the corner of his mouth, brief and fleeting. He locked the phone and set it aside, letting his head fall against the cool tile.

The bathroom was quiet again, save for the slowing rhythm of his breathing.

What the fuck was that? he thought.

He replayed the moment under the water in his head, trying to pin it down, to categorize it, to make it make sense. He hadn't been trying to die. He was sure of that. He'd never really thought about it before. Why would he?

He was fine.

He was good.

He was—objectively speaking—successful. Captain of the Ottawa Centaurs, even if the team was… not great. Shitty, if he was being honest. But they were good people. Hardworking. Kind. They listened to him. Respected him. Treated him like a friend.

There was Chiron, too. Small, adorable, gentle Chiron, who greeted him every time Harris brought him over like Ilya was the best thing that had ever happened in his life. Sometimes, when practice ran late or the day felt heavier than usual, Ilya thought about taking him home.

About lying on his bed with Chiron's weight pressed against him, burying his face in thick fur and just—letting it out.

Just crying.

He never did.

Because he was fine.

Everything was fine.

He sat there until the water cooled completely, until the tightness in his chest dulled into something manageable, something he could ignore again. Then he pulled the plug, watching the water drain away, carrying whatever had spilled out of him with it.

By the time he stood and wrapped a towel around himself, his face was blank again. Controlled. Familiar. He caught his reflection in the mirror—red-rimmed eyes, damp hair, skin pale against the steam-fogged glass—and looked away.

Tomorrow, he'd go to practice. He'd lead. He'd joke with the guys. He'd text Shane after the game and tell him he'd watched the highlights.

He would keep going. Because whatever that had been… It didn't mean anything.

*

But Ilya had been wrong. It *had* meant something.

Because after the bathtub, *everything* began to slip. Quietly at first, the way rot always did. Nothing dramatic. Nothing anyone could point to and name. Just the slow accumulation of absence.

The Centaurs were still playing like shit *and* he was the worst captain. He saw it in the locker room before he felt it himself. The way shoulders sagged when he entered. The way conversations died instead of shifting. Coach Wiebe had started giving speeches that should have been Ilya's—long, earnest talks about accountability and trust, about fighting through losing streaks and finding pride in small things. Ilya sat, arms loose next to him, staring at the floor, and said nothing.

He created distance between him and the others. He declined invitations to Bood's house, who always hosted the best barbeques. He didn't have drinks with the team after practice. He didn't go to the team dinners framed as *mandatory fun.* The invites slowed automatically—and honestly, Ilya didn't know how to feel about that.

Even Haas barely looked at him anymore. Haas, who had once followed him around like a shadow, who had listened to every word like it mattered. Now the kid's eyes slid past him, attention fixed elsewhere, devotion replaced by something brittle and careful.

Ilya's father had taught him his whole life that disappointment wore many faces. The Centaurs proved that fact. So… he only spoke to them when necessary.

He barely spoke to Shane anymore, either.

Shane had accepted it the way he accepted most things—logically, generously. Ilya was tired. Ilya was busy. The Centaurs were struggling, and captains didn't get to rest when their teams were sinking. Shane texted and called when he could, came over when schedules aligned, filled the silence with updates about games and travel and mundane details that felt safe.

Ilya let him.

The only person he really talked to was Galina. His therapist. That alone should have told him how bad things had gotten. He hadn't gone because he wanted insight, or growth, or

healing. He'd gone because he was afraid—terrified, actually—that one day he might reach for something familiar and go too far without meaning to. Because his mother had done that. Because he had found her. Because what if whatever lived inside him had always been there, dormant and waiting? What if he'd accidentally swallow a whole bottle of pills? What if he broke Shane's heart?

He had searched until he found the only Russian-speaking therapist in Ottawa and booked an appointment like it was an emergency extraction.

He had sat down across from her and told her to fix him. To make the aching stop. To make him sleep. To make him get hard for his boyfriend again.

Instead, Galina had watched him with sharp, unflinching eyes and talked about *patterns.* Coping mechanisms, she'd called them. Alcohol. Drugs. Sex. Distractions masquerading as desire. She talked about how he disappeared inside relationships, how he made himself useful and quiet and accommodating until there was nothing left to see.

She talked about trauma and PTSD. She talked about his mother and his father and his brother. She talked about emotions and feeling them.

Worst of all, she talked about Shane. She picked their relationship apart. She insulted them.

She had spoken of how Shane had people—his parents, Hayden, Rose—who knew him. Who knew about *them.* How Shane could talk openly, process aloud, exist without hiding. How Ilya had uprooted his life in Boston like it was nothing. How he had walked away from one of the best teams in the league to land at the bottom of the standings and told himself it didn't matter. How unfair it all was.

Ilya had yelled at her that he loved Shane and that he'd do *anything* for him. She had silently asked if he would do the same for Ilya.

He hadn't gone back for six weeks after that session.

Then the problems in bed had become even worse. At first, he'd convinced himself it was temporary. Fatigue. Stress. Travel. He still touched Shane, still kissed him, still knew how to please him with precision and care. He distracted him. Redirected. Once, he'd lied outright. He had told Shane he'd come just from watching him, from touching him, from loving him.

Shane had believed him. He had reached out, hand cupping him over Ilya's shorts, finding his soft dick there, and smiled anyway. He flushed and was stunned and glowed under the weight of a thousand soft compliments Ilya hadn't even realized he'd said.

The shame of it had lingered longer than anything else.

He was just so tired. And somehow, despite everything, no one seemed to notice. No one seemed to care enough to pull it out of him.

Sure, Hayes asked if he was okay. A few times. Bood dragged him out with the others, twice. Troy sat beside him in silence on long flights, like he understood something he didn't know how to name. Harris brought Chiron over again and again, excuses flimsy and transparent, hoping the dog would do what people couldn't.

The Centaurs called him a private person. He'd heard it secondhand from Troy one night, said casually, like it was a neutral fact. Like it explained everything.

But Ilya had never been private. Not really. But silence hurt less than explaining. What did it mean if you couldn't say the things that mattered?

"Ilya?"

He blinked and looked up. Galina was watching him from across the small office, hands folded neatly in her lap, expression patient but unyielding. "Hm?"

"I asked if you had talked to Shane yet," she repeated in Russian.

Ilya shook his head, lips pressing together. “No.”

“Why not?”

He shrugged, a shallow movement that barely lifted his shoulders. “He’s busy. I’m busy. We’re busy.”

Galina’s gaze softened—not with pity, but with something closer to concern. “That’s not an answer,” she said gently.

Ilya looked away. It was the only one he had.

Galina didn’t fill the silence right away. She rarely did.

Ilya had noticed that early on how she let quiet stretch until it became uncomfortable, until it demanded something from him. He stared at the edge of her desk, at a faint scratch in the wood that looked like it had been there for years.

“He’s busy. I’m busy. We’re busy,” she repeated slowly. “That explains scheduling. It doesn’t explain avoidance.”

“I’m not avoiding him,” Ilya said automatically.

Galina raised an eyebrow. Just one. It was a small movement, but it landed with irritating accuracy. “Then why haven’t you talked to him?”

Ilya inhaled through his nose, exhaled just as slowly. “Because there’s nothing to say.”

“That’s unlikely.”

He glanced up at her, irritation flickering. “I don’t need to narrate my day to him.”

“I’m not asking you to,” Galina said evenly. “I’m asking why the person you claim to love is the one you’re most silent with.”

The words hit harder than he expected.

He shifted in his chair, crossing his arms, posture closing in on itself without his permission. “He has support. People. Parents. Friends. He doesn’t need me dumping my—” He cut himself off, jaw tightening. “Problems on him.”

Galina leaned back slightly. Not retreating. Creating space. “So you’re protecting him.”

“Yes.”

“And who is protecting you?”

The question was so simple it almost felt insulting.

“I don’t need protection,” Ilya said.

“Everyone does,” she replied. “Especially when they’re exhausted.”

He scoffed quietly. “I’m functional.”

Galina nodded once. “You’re playing. You’re leading. You’re showing up. I agree.”

Relief flickered in Ilya’s chest—brief and premature. She understood.

“But,” she continued, “you’re not sleeping. You’ve stopped wanting sex with your partner. You’re isolating from your team. You described an incident in your bathtub that frightened you enough to call me at midnight.”

Ilya stiffened.

“I wasn’t trying to hurt myself.”

“I didn’t say you were.”

“Then why do you keep circling it?” he snapped, sharper than he meant to.

Galina didn’t flinch. “Because something scared you,” she said calmly. “And you don’t scare easily.”

He looked away again, fingers digging into his forearm. “It was nothing.”

“It didn’t feel like nothing.”

Silence pressed in again, heavier this time.

“Tell me this,” Galina said after a moment. “If Shane were sitting here instead of you, and he described the same things—what would you tell him?”

Ilya’s mouth opened. Closed. Then opened it again. “That’s different,” he muttered.

“Why?”

“Because he’s—” He stopped, breath catching unexpectedly. He swallowed. “Because he’s Shane.”

“And you’re Ilya,” Galina said. “Why do the rules change?”

He didn’t have an answer. Just a familiar, gnawing sense that if he tried to find one, something fragile inside him would crack.

Galina watched him carefully. “You talk about your mother often,” she said. “About what happened. About what you’re afraid of becoming.”

Ilya’s shoulders tensed.

“But you don’t talk about your father,” she continued. “Or about what you learned from surviving that house.”

He frowned. “What does that have to do with this?”

“Children in unpredictable homes learn to minimize their needs,” Galina said. “They learn that being quiet, capable, and useful keeps them safe. That asking for help creates burden.”

The words slid under his skin, uncomfortable in their accuracy.

“You learned how to endure,” she went on. “Not how to be supported.”

“I don’t need—”

“—support,” Galina finished gently. “You’ve said that before.”

Ilya let out a breath that sounded almost like a laugh. “You make it sound like a flaw.”

“It’s not,” she said. “It kept you alive.” Her voice softened, just slightly. “But it may also be keeping you alone.”

That did it. Something twisted sharply in his chest, a pressure he hadn’t anticipated. He pressed his lips together, jaw trembling once before he could stop it. “I don’t want to be like her,” he said quietly.

Galina nodded. “I know.”

“I don’t want to wake up one day and realize I’ve ruined everything,” he continued. “That I hurt him. That I didn’t say something when I should have.”

“Then say something now.”

He shook his head. “I don’t know how.”

“That’s okay,” she said. “We can work on that.”

He laughed under his breath, hollow. A silent tear rolled down his cheek. “I told you to make me better.”

“I can’t do that in a few months,” Galina replied. “But I can help you understand what’s happening and help you decide what to do with it.” She leaned forward slightly. “For now, I’m not asking you to confess everything to Shane. I’m asking you to tell him one true thing.”

Ilya looked up.

“One,” she repeated. “Something small. Something real. No minimization.”

His throat tightened. “Like what?”

Galina considered him for a moments. “Like *I’m struggling*. Or *I’m more tired than I thought*. Or *I don’t feel like myself*.”

The words felt dangerous. Exposed.

“And if he asks questions?” Ilya asked.

“Then you answer what you can,” she said. “And you tell him when you can’t.”

Silence fell again. This one felt different. Less heavy. More expectant.

“I don’t want him to look at me differently,” Ilya said finally.

Galina’s expression softened into understanding. “He already loves you,” she said. “That will not disappear because you’re human.”

Ilya looked down at his hands. *Human*. “I’ll think about it,” he said.

Galina nodded. “That’s all I’m asking.” She glanced at the clock. “Same time next week?”

He hesitated, then nodded once. “Yeah.”

*

By the time evening settled in, Ilya felt flayed.

The therapy session hadn’t ended when he’d walked out of Galina’s office. It had followed him home, lodged itself beneath his ribs, made him nauseous in a way he couldn’t talk himself out of. He’d barely made it to the bathroom before he threw up, palms braced against the sink, vision swimming as if his body had decided to purge more than just bile.

He hadn’t told Shane.

When Shane arrived, all warmth and noise and presence, Ilya had slipped the mask back on like muscle memory. Ordered takeout. Set the table. Asked the right questions. Nodded at the right moments while Shane talked about road trips and bad hotels and a teammate who couldn’t stop losing his charger.

Ilya listened. Or tried to.

By the time they were curled together on the couch, the glow of the TV washing the room in blue light, his head still felt too open, too exposed. The New York Admirals were playing someone—he couldn’t tell who. The puck moved back and forth across the screen, sticks clashing, bodies slamming into the boards, but none of it stuck.

Galina’s voice kept cutting through the noise.

Tell him one true thing.

Shane shifted beside him, adjusting their legs where they tangled together, attention flicking between the screen and Ilya's face. He'd been doing that all night, Ilya realized. Watching. Noticing.

"Ilya," Shane said finally, muting the TV. "Okay—*what* is wrong?"

"Nothing," Ilya replied immediately, eyes fixed on the screen. His jaw clenched hard enough to ache.

Shane frowned. "No. Something is wrong. Tell me."

Ilya swallowed, blinking fast. The room felt too small, the air too thin. This was not the time. He couldn't—he *wouldn't*—fall apart like this.

"Look at me, please," Shane said.

There it was. The note in his voice that made Ilya's chest tighten, something close to distress, threaded with confusion.

Ilya didn't turn. He couldn't. If he looked at Shane, really looked, he knew what would happen.

"Talk to me," Shane tried again, softer now.

Somehow that hit the wrong nerve and something inside Ilya snapped, not loudly, not cleanly. Just enough to open his mouth. "You wouldn't understand," he murmured, still staring at the TV.

Shane shifted closer, knee brushing his. "Why wouldn't I?"

Ilya laughed once, sharp and humorless, and finally turned his head. “Because you’re perfect,” he snapped.

The words came out harsher than he meant, edged with something bitter and desperate. Tears blurred his vision almost immediately, but he could still see the way Shane’s expression fell —confusion giving way to hurt.

“You have everything,” Ilya went on, voice shaking now despite his best efforts. “And I have nothing. And no one.”

Shane stared at him, stunned. “What—no. I don’t—” He shook his head, hands lifting like he was trying to catch the words midair. “I don’t understand. You have me. My parents love you. You’ve got friends in the States and here. You’ve got a team where it’s okay to just be yourself. Your coach is great, Ilya. You—”

“Yeah,” Ilya hummed, tears spilling over now, unstoppable. “Yeah.” He scrubbed at his face with the heel of his hand, chest tight, throat burning.

“And I have no mother,” he said hoarsely. “I have no father. I have a brother who hates me. I haven’t spoken to any of my friends in two years. I don’t even know if I like hockey anymore, Shane.”

Shane went still.

“I don’t even know if I like *me*,” Ilya finished, voice barely above a whisper.

The silence that followed was thick, charged, fragile. *Terrifying*.

Ilya sucked in a shaky breath. His hands were trembling. He hated that Shane could see it. Hated that Shane saw him cry like this— weak, undone, messy.

Then Shane moved. He wrapped his arms around Ilya fully, decisively, pulling him in until there was nowhere else to go. Ilya barely resisted before his forehead pressed into Shane's shoulder, breath breaking as the dam finally gave way. Even if he had wanted to stop it, he couldn't have. The sobs tore out of him, ugly and uncontrollable, shaking his entire body.

Shane held him tighter, one hand sliding up to cradle the back of his head, the other firm between his shoulder blades. He pressed soft kisses into Ilya's hair, his temple, murmuring quiet reassurances—*I've got you, I'm here, I love you*—over and over, like repetition might anchor them both.

"I've been seeing a therapist," Ilya admitted after a few moment, the words spilling out muffled against Shane's shoulder, barely formed before they were gone.

Shane stilled just a fraction, then nodded. "Okay," he said gently. "That's good."

"For the past four months," Ilya added, voice cracking again.

Shane's breath caught. "Four months?" he echoed softly. "Why haven't you told me?"

Ilya's sob was wet and broken, his fingers curling into the fabric of Shane's shirt like he might fall apart without it. "Because I don't want you to think I am… weak."

Shane pulled back just enough to speak clearly, but not enough to let go. "Ilya," he said carefully, firmly, "this is brave. This is really brave. I would never think of you as weak. Never. I love you."

Ilya shook his head, tears soaking into Shane's shoulder. "I don't want to be a burden. I don't want to be—" His voice faltered, the word catching painfully in his throat. "Like her."

Shane went very still. Understanding dawned slowly across his face—not full comprehension, not something neat or easy, but close enough to hurt.

"You're not," he said immediately, voice steady and sure. "You're not your mother. You're not broken."

Ilya squeezed his eyes shut, shoulders curling inward. "How do you know?" he whispered. "What if I am? What if this is exactly how it starts?"

Shane shifted, hands coming up gently but firmly, cupping Ilya's face and guiding it upward. Ilya tried to resist out of instinct, but Shane didn't let him—not rough, just certain.

"Look at me," Shane said.

Ilya did.

Shane's eyes were fierce with it. Not angry or scared. But, certain. *Anchored*. "You know how I know?" he asked quietly.

Ilya shook his head, breath hitching.

"Because she didn't have me," Shane said. "And you do."

Something in Ilya shattered completely. He surged forward, burying his face in Shane's neck this time, arms wrapping tight around him as another sob ripped free. Shane held him without hesitation, rocking them slightly, grounding.

For the first time, Ilya didn't try to pull himself back together. He let Shane hold the pieces—this time, when he couldn't breathe, someone was there to keep him afloat.

End Notes

Spoiler suicide attempt: Ilya has a moment of crisis in the bathtub where he stays underwater longer than he should, even though his body is telling him to breathe. He isn't actively trying to die, but it's a tense scene that reflects his mental and emotional struggles.

If you're struggling, you are not alone.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 1 billion people worldwide experience mental health challenges (source). Yet access to care is limited: globally, there are only 13 mental health workers per 100,000 people, with severe shortages in many low- and middle-income countries (source).
There are people and resources ready to help. If you need someone to talk to, you can reach out to organizations like Find a Helpline or United for Global Mental Health.

It's okay to ask for help. You deserve support. <3

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