

i think my ways are wearing me down

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by [Literal_Multifandom_Trashcan](#)

Summary

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Ilya moved to sit in the second chair. Shane bristled, hands trembling.

“Don’t.” Shane snapped. Ilya froze, glancing at Shane with a concerned and confused expression. Shane inhaled, then exhaled. Guilt crawled up his throat. He was being fucking insane.

Still though, what if he wasn’t being insane? What if there was a 0.1% something bad would happen to Ilya?

or:

shane hollander has a bad ocd day. luckily, he has people to help him through it

Notes

hello!! going to be completely honest-this is fully a vent fic, conveying my own person experiences with ocd and anxiety!! everything in here is based off of my experience, but everyone has different experiences with mental illness, so please keep that in mind!

please enjoy <3

Shane *knew* today was going to be a bad day. Could feel it in his bones.

As soon as he woke up, his mind was already racing, body feeling like lead. He knew he had to wake Ilya up for practice-could hear his alarm going off-but he couldn't get himself to move.

Anxiety was already thrumming through his veins and he had just woken up. He knew he had to get ready for practice, but what if something bad happened today, what if someone died, what if there was a freak accident and Ilya got hit by a car on the way to practice, what if there was secretly a sniper waiting outside for Shane and Ilya to walk into the kitchen-

Shane shut his eyes again. Inhaled. Exhaled.

He *would* get through today. He wanted to go to practice, loved skating with Ilya, loved his new team. There was no good reason for him to be filled with such dread. Nothing had even happened-there was no sad anniversary, no waking up to a bad news phone call. Anya was resting at the foot of the bed, breathing and healthy.

The man he loved was next to him. Healthy. Alive.

"Ilya." Shane whispered, turning to nudge the man with his arm. Ilya let out a groan, and Shane nudged him again.

"We have practice."

Ilya let out a quiet mumble, slowly opening his eyes and blinking a few times. He shut off the alarm on his phone, sleepily smiling at Shane.

"Good morning." Ilya murmured.

Shane weakly smiled back. He resolutely ignored the way his heart was racing in his chest for no good reason, the way his blood was pumping through his veins.

“Morning. We should get up and start getting ready.”

Ilya heaved out a sigh, sitting up and swinging his legs over the side of the bed. Anya perked up, raising her head from where it had been resting to look at Ilya. Ilya laughed quietly, walking over to pet her head. He glanced at Shane.

“I will brush teeth and take Anya out, you want to start on breakfast?” Ilya asked.

Shane inhaled. Exhaled. Nodded.

This was good. He had a plan, things to do, steps to take. Today would be okay. Nothing would go wrong, Ilya and Anya wouldn't die in the short amount of time it took to take her into their backyard.

“Sounds good.” Shane said. He forced himself to get out of bed, listening to the water in the bathroom running as Ilya brushed his teeth, the padding of Anya's feet as she wandered downstairs to the kitchen.

Ilya walked back into their room, raising an eyebrow at Shane who was still standing stiffly next to the bed.

“You okay, моя любовь?” Ilya asked.

Shane just nodded.

“Still a little tired.” He said. The lie tasted like ash in his mouth. He didn't want to say *no*, I'm not okay, I feel like everything is out of control and someone is going to kill us or

something bad will happen or I secretly did something really bad and I don't even remember it and the second we step outside I'm going to get arrested-

That would make him sound insane. He felt insane. He knew, logically, today was just a bad mental health day. His thoughts didn't define him. That's what his therapist always said.

It didn't always stick. Especially on bad days, where it felt like all he was doing was thinking crazy bad thoughts that would make any sane person put him into a psych ward.

("You don't judge Ilya when he has bad depressive episodes, right?")

Shane looked scandalized at even the mere idea of it.

"Of course not!" He exclaimed. His therapist leaned back in her chair, eyeing him with a knowing look and a soft smile.

"So why do you judge yourself so harshly?"

Shane didn't have an answer she would like. His mind had whispered at him - *Ilya has gone through hard things in life, he has a reason to feel bad. You don't. You have loving parents. A loving husband. You don't deserve his kindness, his help. You don't deserve anyone's help. They wouldn't even want to talk to you if they knew the things you thought.*

Shane had stayed silent.)

Ilya took Shane's response at face value.

"Maybe coffee will help? It *is* early." Ilya's point was supported when he trailed off into a yawn as he wandered over to their dresser, changing into his clothes for practice. Of the two of them, Shane had always been an early riser.

Foregoing a response, Shane robotically changed into the clothes he had set aside last night for practice. He went through the motions of sliding on his pants-left leg and then right leg, like always.

Shane could feel Ilya's gaze on him. He remained silent, focused on sliding his socks on. He footsteps, and then the door opening downstairs and the jingle of Anya's leash.

He went to the bathroom. Brushed his teeth thoroughly-counted, in his head, for one minute and thirty eight seconds-anything shorter or longer than that something *bad* would happen, he just knew it.

Spat into the sink.

Looked up at his reflection. He was fine. His skin wasn't secretly peeling off, he didn't have bugs crawling around under his face, he wasn't covered in blood without even knowing.

He walked down the stairs. Right and then left - opposite of his pants. No extra steps. One and then two. He counted the numbers under his breath. Exhaled with relief once he arrived at the kitchen.

See, he was fine. He hadn't slipped and fallen down the stairs and broken his neck. Hadn't stepped in the wrong place and caused the whole staircase to collapse.

The kitchen was its own battle. Shane opened up the fridge, trying to think of what he could eat that wouldn't send his brain into overdrive. Immediately, unwillingly, the calories of every possible breakfast item popped to the forefront of his mind.

Eggs were entirely out of the question. If he cracked them open he knew he'd freak himself out over salmonella, because they would touch his hands and then touch the table and he'd somehow undercook them and poison him and Ilya and Anya and-

Definitely no eggs.

Worrying his lower lip, Shane caught sight of the bag of low calorie, low carb toast he had bought at the grocery store ages ago. He'd been trying, for Ilya and his therapists sake, to be better about eating, but this was *not* the morning.

Yeah...he could do a piece of toast with peanut butter, and he could make Ilya a bagel with cream cheese using the leftover bagels they had from when they hosted brunch the other day. That felt safe.

He walked over to the sink, washing his hands at least three times, thoroughly scrubbing at the skin until it was raw and red. Walked back over to the fridge, pulling out the toast and bagel, setting them both on two different plates.

He made Ilya's meal first. Took out a serrated knife, cut the bagel in half. Ignored the voice in his head telling him to slice the knife through his palm, to slowly cut his skin open, feel each serrated edge of the knife sink into his skin and tear it apart until all that was left underneath was a festering, bloody mess.

Put the knife in the sink. Pulled the cream cheese out of the fridge. Checked the expiration date, even though they had bought it two days ago. What if it was expired? What if it was moldy, and Shane didn't check, and he got Ilya sick?

He popped it open. Examined it thoroughly. There was no mold. He pulled out a spoon, spreading the cream cheese onto the bagel. He didn't toast it-the toaster felt too risky, what if it malfunctioned, exploded somehow, maybe Shane's hands were wet and he wouldn't know it and he would touch the toaster and-

He finished spreading the cream cheese, closing Ilya's bagel. He washed his hands again. Opened the fridge and grabbed some grapes to put next to Ilya's bagel, all of a sudden feeling guilty.

Normally Shane loved to cook breakfast for Ilya. He knew his diet was very strict compared to Ilya's, but he loved to make Ilya a breakfast sandwich before practice, filled with joy at the

person he loved enjoying something he made.

He washed his hands again. Opened up the jar of peanut butter and pulled out another spoon, spreading it across his own piece of sad looking toast.

Shane washed his hands again. His skin *hurt*. His brain didn't care.

He looked at the breakfast plates he had set out. One piece of toast and a thin layer of low fat peanut butter felt safe and okay. He didn't accidentally poison Ilya, didn't somehow feed them both moldy food.

Grabbing out a cup from the cabinet, Shane poured himself some of the fancy cold brew they had sitting in the fridge. He added one packet of sugar, foregoing milk entirely. It was too many calories.

(He shouldn't think like that, he *knew* he shouldn't. He was a person, who's body needed calories to function, not a machine with a daily limit. It was hard though, when he already felt like his skin was too tight around his body.)

The door opened, Anya sauntering in with Ilya close behind her. Shane let out a breath he didn't even realize he was holding. They were both safe. Safe and back in the house and hadn't died somewhere in the backyard without Shane knowing.

Ilya walked over to Shane, kissing him on the cheek.

"The bagel is for you." Shane said, letting himself genuinely smile at Ilya. Ilya nodded, grabbing his plate and going to sit at the counter.

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“Don’t.” Shane snapped. Ilya froze, glancing at Shane with a concerned and confused expression. Shane inhaled, then exhaled. Guilt crawled up his throat. He was being fucking insane.

Still though, what if he *wasn't* being insane? What if there was a 0.1% something bad *would* happen to Ilya?

“Just...not that one. Don’t sit in that one. Sorry for snapping. Brain is being loud this morning.” Shane managed to choke out.

Ilya relaxed a little, but the concerned expression remained. He slid into the third chair, and Shane sighed quietly in relief.

“You will tell me if you need anything from me, yes?” Ilya asked. Him and Shane had been together long enough that they had established a system for when either of them were having rough days.

Shane nodded.

“I’ll try.” He murmured. He grabbed his plate, joining Ilya in sitting at their counter (the first chair, Shane mourned not being able to sit directly next to Ilya, but he couldn’t risk it). He took a few minutes out of his toast.

All of a sudden, the food tasted like chalk in his mouth. What if there had been bugs crawling around on the food and he hadn’t known? What if he had swallowed a bug without knowing?

What if there had been organisms growing inside Shane's food in the few minutes it had been sitting out between Shane making it and eating it?

Shane forced himself to choke down the rest of the toast. He knew Ilya would get even *more* worried if Shane didn't finish his breakfast, and he knew practice would be energy intensive. It tasted disgusting.

It sat heavy in his stomach. Shane tried to calm himself down. He stared down at his empty plate, tapping his thigh in quick succession. Three times, then pause, then three again, then pause, then three again, because the number couldn't be even.

Ilya had gotten up, food already finished. He grabbed Shane's plate without saying anything, bringing them both to the sink.

"Thank you for making breakfast." Ilya said brightly. Shane swallowed past the lump in his throat. He wished he could've handled eggs and made Ilya a proper breakfast, wished he hadn't snapped at Ilya, wished his head wasn't so fucking messed up.

He just offered a weak smile, sliding off the chair. Ilya grabbed both of their hockey bags, starting to walk out to the car. He knew Shane was less verbal on hard days, never took it personally when Shane didn't audibly respond.

It made Shane feel like the worst husband alive.

He checked the stove once, twice, three times to make sure he hadn't accidentally turned it on when he was making breakfast, walking out of the house and locking the door, jiggling the handle seven times because what if he *hadn't* locked the door, what if he had somehow magically unlocked it between the fifth and sixth time he jiggled the handle.

Satisfied with his checks, Shane made his way out to the car. It was already running-now that the weather was getting colder they had to let it defrost for a few minutes so it wasn't an ice brick when they got in.

Ilya was sitting in the drivers seat. Shane slid into the passenger side of the car. Clicked his seat belt in.

“You want to drive, or are you okay with me driving?” Ilya asked. Sometimes Shane got anxious about Ilya driving in the mornings - he loved his husband, but he tended to use the speed limit as a very loose suggestion, especially early when there were few cars on the road.

Today, though, driving sounded like a *nightmare*. Because his brain was working at a mile a minute, and Shane didn’t trust himself behind the wheel right now. He could swerve the car into a truck or a pole, could mistake the break for the gas and speed right through a red light.

“You drive, please.” Shane said weakly. Ilya just nodded.

Shane shut his eyes the whole drive to practice, tapping his foot against the floor of the car. It was a short drive, they had both made sure their house was about ten minutes from the rink, but it was still enough time for Shane to spiral.

He focused on tapping his foot. It worked for about five minutes, before Shane forced himself to open his eyes, because *oh my god what if I’ve been driving this whole time and I didn’t even know it, what if I was behind the wheel with my eyes shut and Ilya is dead because of me-*

Shane glanced over at Ilya, who was humming along to some Russian pop song playing at a low volume, tapping his fingers with the beat against the steering wheel.

Ilya was driving. Shane was sitting in the passenger seat. They had made this trip hundreds, if not thousands of times.

Ilya pulled the car into the rink. They hadn’t crashed, hadn’t died in some insanely cartoonish way, hadn’t had an argument that ruined their entire relationship, hadn’t received any phone calls with life-changing news.

They walked into the rink together. Shane forced himself to put on a collected, calm facade, genuinely smiling and greeting coach Wiebe before entering the locker room.

Ilya had, thankfully, reserved Shane's spot in the locker room. It wasn't his officially, they didn't *have* assigned spots in the locker room, but it was where Shane always sat. Far corner on the left, putting his back to the wall and giving him a view of everyone in the room.

Shane smiled thankfully at Ilya, shoulders relaxing a little bit. He ignored the idle small talk in the room, focusing on putting his skates on. Everyone else on the Centaurs had luckily gotten used to Shane being more quiet during practice - he assumed they chalked it up to him being tired.

He laced up his skates. Left then right. Ignored the way his fingers twitched to grab at his skates and slash the blade across Bood's face, because Bood was lovely and Shane would never, ever want to hurt one of his teammates, why the fuck would he even *think* that thought, it made him nauseous-

A weight rested on Shane's shoulder. He glanced up to see it was Ilya, who had rested his palm on Shane's shoulder. It felt warm, grounding.

"Ready to get on the ice?" Ilya asked lightly. Shane could see the worry in his eyes. Some of the team had left the locker room already, but Barrett, Hayes, and Haas were still in the locker room. They were doing their best to act uninterested, but Shane could tell they were worried about how weird he was being.

Shane nodded, taking a swig of his water.

(Cold, ice water, from a bottle. Anything else and Shane would start spiraling about metals in his water, about toxins, about contaminants that could've somehow gotten in that he wouldn't know about.)

"Sorry, got lost in thought. Too early." Shane said. The excuse was flimsy, and judging by the looks on Barrett and Hayes faces' they didn't really buy it, but they didn't say anything regardless.

He forced himself to walk out of the locker room with Ilya, stepping onto the ice to join the rest of the team for practice. He let himself go on autopilot. The ice was the one place where his mind seemed to quiet down, at least a little bit.

He ran through drills mechanically-they were second nature at this point. Shane was running on pure muscle memory, but the last thing he wanted to do right now was start thinking. Coach Wiebe always did the same drill sets for morning practice. The routine was relieving.

Things sort of really went to shit when they got off the ice for a lunch break. They all sprawled out around the benches at the rink. Today had been Dykstra's day to bring the team food (they alternated every practice), and Shane was expecting Mexican food from the place twenty minutes away from the rink. It was what Dykstra always brought, and Shane knew the calories in every item and each serving portion by heart.

So when Dykstra started pulling food out for the team, and the bags were distinctly *not* the ones from the Mexican place, Shane's heart sunk.

"Thought I'd switch it up today! There's a new Italian place that opened up right near my house, huge portions, so it seemed perfect. Got a bunch of stuff so take as you'd like." The team cheered, clapping Dykstra on the back as they started grabbing food.

Everyone except for Shane, who was still sat on the bench, staring at the food set out like it might kill him. He could feel his chest tighten, could feel his hands start to tremble and his body go cold.

He ignored the concerned look Ilya and Dykstra shot him as he abruptly stood upright.

"Bathroom." He managed to breathe out, stumbling as quickly as possible to the nearest restroom. He didn't even register anyone following him, barely even knew where he was, he just knew he had to get to somewhere *safe*.

The bathroom was safe. He barged into the (thankfully) empty restroom, breathing heavily and staring at himself in the mirror.

Italian food was heavy-carb loading food. Shane had no idea how many calories were in *anything*. He had never eaten there before, Dykstra *always* brought Mexican food. What if something really bad happened because he had gotten food from somewhere else?

Shane found himself scratching deeply at his arms. Once, twice, three times, then four, then five, kept scratching until he hit the number twenty seven and there were slight lines of blood raising up from the welts he had carved into his arms.

There was blood on his nails. Shane looked at them with a sense of detachment. He couldn't touch anything with the blood on his hands, so he used a paper towel as a barrier, using it to turn the sink on.

He washed his hands. Dried them. Washed them again. Dried them. His hands trembled, his arms hurt, eyes welling up with tears, because he was *exhausted*, but he couldn't stop. Because if he stopped, something bad would happen, his whole team would die, everyone he loved would die, and it would all be his fault because he had only washed and dried his hands twice and that was an even number instead of an odd number and Shane barely registered the fact that he was hyperventilating on the bathroom floor (which was dirty, fuck, he'd have to scrub his body at least thirteen times when he got home) until something firm was holding at his arms.

"Shane, Shane, hey, come back to me. Sweetheart, breathe with me, okay? Shane, come on, моя любовь, I know it is hard but we have to breathe, yes?"

Ilya.

Shane blinked a few times, coming back into his body. It wasn't a nice feeling. His arms burned from where he had scratched at them, skin dry and raw. Ilya was crouched down in front of him, gently but firmly holding Shane at his wrists. His accented voice spread through Shane like a soothing lotion.

Ilya was safe.

Shane tried to focus on what Ilya was saying, tried his hardest to listen to the rise and fall of Ilya's chest and match it.

"Ilya, I don't-I don't think these new meds are working." Shane managed to choke out. His voice felt like sandpaper against his throat. He had been trying a new medication to manage his anxiety and ocd for at least a few weeks, unsure if it had been doing anything to help but not wanting to say anything just yet.

Ilya made a worried noise, leaning forward from his awkward position on the ground to kiss Shane's forehead. He hesitantly let go of Shane's wrists, pulling him into a tight hug. Shane immediately wrapped his arms around Ilya's waist, trying to shove himself into Ilya's ribs. The surrounding pressure and scent was immediately bettering Shane's mental state.

"Okay. We will schedule emergency therapy for you for tomorrow and figure it out. What do you need to do right now? I will not let you wash hands or scratch more. You were hurting yourself. Have not seen you have episode this bad in a while." Ilya said softly, rubbing a thumb over Shane's back soothingly. Shane sunk into him more, something he didn't think was possible.

(Back when Shane had first gotten diagnosed with ocd, Ilya had been super worried. Mainly because his understanding of ocd had just been that if you had it you were a little neater, a little more organized.

But the first true ocd episode he had experienced with Shane had genuinely freaked Ilya out, because Shane had just been non-stop for *hours*, showering and washing his hands and twisting the door handle and checking the stove and the door. By the time Ilya had managed to get Shane into bed, Shane hadn't even slept for a full hour before he was waking up sobbing.

Paranoid he had somehow killed Ilya in his sleep. Worried he had committed a crime while he was unconscious and that the second he stepped out of the door the police would arrest him. Ilya had hugged him tightly, reassured him over and over and over again.

Shane had managed to fall back asleep, but Ilya hadn't. He'd instead spent nearly the whole night researching ocd, what it was, how to help. Shane had later on explained a little bit of it to Ilya, how it impacted his daily life.

Ilya hated that Shane had to suffer with it. He felt tired just watching Shane do all of his rituals-he couldn't imagine what it was like to actually live with it.)

Shane took stock of his body. He mostly just felt *exhausted*. Bone tired from all the fucking thinking he had been doing from the moment he had woken up.

"Maybe home? I need-need to shower. I think the weighted blanket will help. M'just tired, mostly."

Shane felt Ilya nod.

"Okay, but I will be in bathroom with you when you shower. We will talk the whole time and I will even play boring podcast you like, but I cannot let you shower alone after bad episode."

Shane frowned against Ilya's chest. He knew why Ilya was saying this-his compulsions during especially bad episodes tended to veer sharply into self-destructive tendencies, so his therapist had spoken with him and Ilya about a safety plan to prevent him from further harm.

(This had been discussed after a particularly bad episode where Shane had slammed his head against the wall over and over and over again, unable to stop himself, praying he would just knock himself unconscious so he could stop his compulsions.

That hadn't been fun for anyone involved.)

"Okay. Did-did anyone see me? While I was being fucking insane?" Shane asked shyly. His teammates didn't know about his ocd-the only people who knew were Ilya and his parents, though he was sure Rose suspected.

Ilya pulled Shane out of his chest, frowning at him. His eyebrows were furrowed.

“Hey, do not talk about my husband like that. No one saw. Barrett was worried about you so he followed me, but he did not come in. I asked him to guard the door. Hayes was also worried, I told him to tell coach we were leaving early. Said you ate something bad and did not feel well.”

Shane relaxed. He gnawed at his lower lip.

“I feel bad lying to them. But I don’t want them to think I’m crazy.” Shane said, voice cracking. He knew he wasn’t normal, knew he had weird quirks and was bad with social cues, but he *really* liked the Centaurs. He didn’t want them thinking he was a basket case.

“Shane. You are not crazy. You have ocd. This does not make you insane. This does not make you bad person. You do not have to tell anyone anything, but I promise they will not think of you differently.” Ilya said firmly.

Shane sighed. His head hurt. He met Ilya’s eyes.

“I guess...I think I want to tell Barrett and Hayes. And then can we go home? Through the back entrance. Seeing everyone will make me more anxious, I think.”

Ilya smiled proudly.

“Yes. I will be with you the whole time. I will come by rink tomorrow to get our hockey bags. I have extra protein bar with me-you only ate small piece of toast at breakfast, and did not eat any of the lunch Dykstra brought. Can you eat the bar?”

Shane thought about it for a long moment, before slowly shaking his head. He averted his gaze, wanting to avoid the disappointment he was certain would be on Ilya’s face.

“Food is...hard for me, right now.” Shane mumbled, cheeks burning with humiliation. He was a grown adult and he was struggling with basic tasks that everyone was capable of doing.

“Okay, that’s okay. But dinner is, how do you say, non-negotiable, yes?” Ilya said. He brought his hand to Shane’s face, cupping his cheek gently.

Shane melted into the touch.

“Okay, fair.”

They remained in the bathroom for a few more seconds, before Shane found it in himself to slowly stand up. His knees and lower back ached. Ilya remained at his side.

Shane took a deep breath.

“Ready?” Ilya asked.

Shane nodded. He braced himself as Ilya opened up the bathroom door. They were met with the two very worried gazes of Barrett and Hayes, who looked relieved to see Shane standing. He offered them a weak smile.

“Hey, Hollander, you doing okay?” Barrett asked. His gruff voice held an undercurrent of concern. It made Shane feel like the worst person alive. Ilya rested his hand on the small of Shane’s back in a silent form of encouragement.

“Not..um, not really.” Shane said weakly, before clearing his throat. He avoided both of the other men, instead looking at the floor.

“I have, I have ocd? And today has just been a hard day.” Shane said. He held his breath, waiting for a response.

“Shit, man, my cousin has ocd, I know how tough it can be. I’m sorry today was a rough day. That really sucks. Is there anything I can do?” Hayes asked. Shane just shook his head, silently relieved at the support. He forced himself to look at Barrett, who was looking a little confused.

“You can ask.” Shane offered an olive branch.

Barrett smiled gratefully at him.

“Sorry, I just, I only really know about ocd from like, movies and shows and stuff? I don’t want to sound insensitive or anything, and you know I’m always here for you, you’re like a brother to me. I just thought ocd was only being organized and stuff. Sorry, I know that’s pretty ignorant to say.” Barrett sounded genuinely apologetic and upset that he didn’t know more. Shane’s chest warmed at the fact that he was so supportive and willing to listen.

He waved off Barrett’s apology.

“You don’t need to say sorry, seriously. Most people don’t understand the full scope of it. It’s just...I get these thoughts, that tell me something really bad will happen unless I do certain things a certain number of times. Sometimes it *is* about cleaning and organization, but most of the time it's like-if you don’t tap your foot eleven times before leaving the house everyone you love will die in an electrical fire and it’ll be your fault.”

Barrett’s gaze softened in understanding.

“Shit, Shane. That sounds like it’s an exhausting way to live.”

Shane barked out a sharp laugh.

“Sort of. You get used to it.” He sounded bitter, he *knew* he sounded bitter. But he had really been hoping these new meds would work, had been hoping they would quiet his brain down so he could get through one day without feeling insane.

“If you need anything at all, just shoot me or Hayes a text, alright? We won’t keep you any longer, you look dead on your feet. Get him home safe, okay Rozanoff?”

Ilya nodded at them, smiling. Shane felt proud of himself, felt a little bit like a weight was lifted off of his chest. He had told two of his teammates and they hadn’t thought he was a basket case, hadn’t insisted he get shipped off to the nearest mental asylum.

“Will do.”

Shane waved tiredly at Barrett and Hayes, following Ilya to the back exit of the rink and into their car. The cold chill felt nice on Shane’s face as they made their way to the vehicle.

Ilya held Shane’s hand, kissing his temple. Shane allowed himself to lean his head onto Ilya, resting his head on the man’s shoulder.

“I am very proud of you for telling them. Let’s go home, okay?” Ilya murmured gently. Shane shut his eyes, smiling.

“Yes, please.”

Shane was still absolutely wiped out, but leaned against Ilya, his head was finally, *finally* quiet. They would schedule an emergency appointment. Shane would figure something out with his therapist.

And, more importantly, Ilya would be there through it. Ilya, who didn’t think Shane was insane, who didn’t demand to break up with Shane as soon as he had been diagnosed.

Tentatively, Shane let himself hope.

Tomorrow, things would be okay.

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