matter of fact, i caught you lookin' back

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matter of fact, i caught you lookin' back

by sargeantwoof

Summary

> “No,” he says, smiling gently, like he doesn't know how irritating he's being. “Is my room first, da? *You* should speak with front desk.”
>
> Hollander stares at him.
>
> And then he starts to laugh.
>
> “*You* ask the front desk,” he shoots back, in between his odd wheezes. Ilya's heart starts to pound in double time, because this is not—this cannot be Shane Hollander playing bed chicken with him. Their competitiveness is fierce, to be certain, but surely, Hollander would be the bigger person, no? “This is my fucking room, Rozanov. Wild horses couldn't drag me away.”

OR: Ilya's apartment is under construction. Shane's in town for a game. It'd be a shame if they somehow had the same hotel room.

[or, or: we need some more goddamn 'there was only one bed' out here.]

Notes

this is inspired completely by hearing a family member talk about the boston piles over the holidays. that shit is **so** crazy. they do civil engineering around the city so i got to see literal pictures of it and it's *madness*. boston is so bizarre.

See the end of the work for more notes

By the time Ilya gets off the phone with the building manager, his head is spinning from all the too-fast English words that have been tossed at his ear with little consideration for just how much he needs to translate.

He thinks he managed the crux of it, which is that somehow, his building is no longer safe to live in. For now, he thinks, but that was also a blur in the mess of words like *timber* and *steel metal frames,* and *don't worry, Mr. Rozanov! We'll fix this in just a jiffy*, which he doesn't even know what the fuck a jiffy is, or how it pertains to *him*.

He stares at his phone for a long, long moment, mulling his options over, and then he calls Marlow.

"My man," Cliff greets him as soon as he picks up, faint laughter clinging to his voice. Ilya can hear more people chattering in the background, loud and rowdy. "What's up?"

"House is broken," Ilya says, drumming his fingers on the counter. Outside his apartment, something metallic clangs as a bunch of people erupt into shouts, and he grits his teeth, stepping over to snap his window shut. "I need a place to stay."

"Are you—is this you *ask*—"

"No," Ilya says, exhaling. He does not want to live with Marlow, does not want to infringe like that. It stirs some discomfort under his skin, but he can't pinpoint it now. Doesn't even really want to, in all honesty; it's enough for him, now, that Marlow even knows. That someone *else* knows. "I am—do you have any hotel suggestions?"

Cliff pauses, as if Ilya has said something wrong, but Ilya can't be bothered to figure out what the hell the issue is; he's already spent too much time dealing with irritating English speakers today—he has no patience anymore.

You could call Svetlana, his mind murmurs, soft and coaxing, but something about it feels odd, despite how easy it would be. *She would have space. And you could have a whole week, tangled up in her bed.*

But, he has already called Cliff, and he doesn't want to—he doesn't know. She may not even be home, he thinks; she is heading back to Russia sooner rather than later. Everything is too much, and he is exhausted, and he just wants to figure it out. He just wants it *over*.

"You could always do the hotel that they book the other teams at," Cliff finally mutters. Laughter surges in the background, hoots and hollers, the sound of a shouted *fuck!* echoing down the line. Ilya thinks that if he concentrated, he could figure out at least one of them, but he can't muster up the urge to care. "I think they tend to have some in reserve, and you know that they'll be good at handling shit discreetly—*and* they probably overbook what they need? Someone in Comms was talking about it recently." He clears his throat, his voice stilted and awkward as if they have not known each other for several long years. "How long do you need it for anyway?"

“Not long,” Ilya says, pulling his phone off his ear to plug in the Courtyard Marriott that's down the street from the Garden. He hits the speaker button, his brow furrowing at the home page. He should just call them, instead of emailing; quicker response, and if he can get out of here tonight, he will, since whatever's happening underneath him is already happening. He's not a huge fan of the ominous clanking or the gathering of strange trucks that has begun outside his window. “Week, maybe two? I am not sure. They are doing evaluations. The ground is—ah, disappearing? Beneath the apartment.”

“What the fuck?” Cliff says after a beat of silence, concern spilling into his voice. In the background, voices murmur, but far quieter, as if they’ve clocked that something is wrong. “Roz, what does that even mean?”

Ilya hums, shrugging before he remembers Cliff can't see him. “It is what I am told, Marly. Something about timber and ground and steel work—it was all very quick.”

“Well, shit,” Cliff mutters. He sounds genuine, Ilya notes, pleasantly surprised at how warm that makes him feel as he continues, “That sucks.”

“It is something they are handling,” Ilya says, vaguely dismissively, because he has no idea who the fuck *they* are. He just knows his landlord said so. “It will all be fine.”

“Yeah, I'm sure,” Cliff agrees immediately. “Okay. Uh, well. Let me know if you do need a place to stay.”

“Yes,” Ilya says, even though he knows he won't. Sveta will be his next call if the hotel doesn't work out. “The offer is…thank you.”

“Sure thing,” Cliff mutters. “See you at practice tomorrow. Keep your blades sharp to fuck up Montreal this week.” He pauses. “Shit, wait—if they're at the hotel and we kick their asses —”

Ilya snorts, cutting him off before he can dig himself a grave. “They are sore losers, but not *that* sore,” he says, as heat prickles across his palms. He and Hollander may be mere floors away from each other—it's *stupid* how excited that makes him. He should *not* be so overcome at the thought of him; he is merely conveniently close and cute, a beautiful player, and a pretty face. “If I do get killed, I expect you to defend my, ah, honor.”

“We'd kill ‘em back,” Cliff says, somehow sounding utterly earnest and viciously deadly. “Don't even worry, Roz.”

Ilya grins at the fierce declaration, his rotten mood lifting slightly. “You are a good team,” he says, shaking his head when Cliff whoops an agreement that's echoed by the others in the room. “See you tomorrow.”

He ends the call and stares at his phone for another long moment before he sighs and tries to sort his shit out.

The call with Marriott goes smoother than Ilya had hoped; he has a room on one of the floors set aside for the Metros within fifteen minutes. It's a single, and he's been assured that he can

reserve it for as long as he needs—which, honestly, is quite a relief. He doesn't quite trust the *maximum two-week* assessment, especially not given the way his landlord's voice had shifted higher and higher the longer he spoke; a clear sign of a liar.

Even knowing that, though, he doesn't bother too much with efficient packing. His games this week are at home; he's sure he can skate by with a suitcase and a backpack, and if not—he's fucking rich. He can afford to drop some money on new clothes. Or old clothes.

He hums, eyeing his bags full of athletic gear and sweats. He should ask Sveta if she wants to go explore the old hidden thrift shops again—she is always down for a good hunt.

It doesn't matter now, though. No, now he must depart his—his home, he supposes. How odd, to still be in the same city and be unable to go home.

He shakes his head, banishing his thoughts as best he can, and goes to find the keys to his most obnoxious car. If he must deal with Boston traffic, then everyone must *also* deal with him.

Check-in is fine, easy. The Marriott is as courteous as he assumes they always are, his needs handled discreetly and swiftly.

His keycard is in his palm before he can blink, and he's standing outside of his home for the next week or so before he can even register how he arrived.

He swipes the card, waits for the mechanical whir, the flash of green, and pushes the door open.

The room is cold and quiet, sterile with neutral colors.

Empty.

Ilya sighs and lets his bags slip down to the carpeted floor. It doesn't click for him how awful this is going to make him feel until he sees how hollow the room is.

Fuck, this is going to suck.

But there's nowhere else to go but through, so he'll just have to deal with it.

His first night passes in a whisper; the pink russet of a sunset fading into a murky black, the gray dimness of an unfamiliar room appearing every time he opens his eyes.

He feels hollow himself by the time he makes himself get up after snoozing his alarm three times.

A bad day, then; one that will lie heavily across his shoulders.

The morning passes as it always does when he gets like this; in staticky bursts of being able to do something, followed by the slow creep of exhaustion. Loneliness winds up his ribs, curls around his heart; he almost wishes he had asked Marlow to open his home up.

He feels better when he gets outside, though, and indulges in a cigarette on the way as he walks through the crowd. The hotel is only a few short blocks from the Garden, and he has always enjoyed the regular bustle of a city he can prowl through.

Acrid smoke curls in his lungs with each inhale, the end of the cigarette flaring a bright cherry-red, and he wonders what Hollander is doing, how he's preparing for Boston. He imagines he must have a whole routine, exacting and specific, just like he is.

Sharp wind whistles through the buildings as he walks, the smell of salt straight from the Atlantic filling his cold nose in between the bitter taste of ash.

He likes the slow trek to the Garden more than he expects, likes the way it makes him feel steady, centered. The mid-morning winter sun spills through thin clouds, shimmering rays glancing off of icy patches as he meanders slowly down the road, dodging piles of slush.

The city hums around him, lively and vibrant. People chatter as they pass by, a flock of children screaming in delight as he stalks past, pointing at some ad as it flickers across a screen hoisted up the block. He glances up, but the words scroll too quickly for him to read.

Horns honk, and someone swears viciously about their incorrect Dunkin order as he shoulders through the crowd, a thin trail of smoke wafting after him as he lights up another cigarette.

By the time he's at the rink, after doing another lap around a block, the quiet of the hotel room feels like a distant memory, though the weight of it lingers.

Suiting up for practice is easy and familiar. His jersey hangs just how he likes it, the locker room is warm and relatively fresh-smelling; no one so much as bothers him as he tightens up his laces. It's as close to perfect as he can get, even with the itch of discontent sewn into his skin.

Out on the ice, laughter rushes through him, the sounds of his teammates filling the space over the familiar scrape of blades.

It's oddly nice, after all the silence. He’s not sure why his hotel room has stolen peace from him so easily, but he suspects it may be the fact that he is even more adrift than usual.

People—he has found—when they speak of leaving, or more frequently, when they speak of *going*, talk of missing home. They talk of easy welcomings and lovely want, of staticky change and rotten fear. They talk about how it can fill someone up with so much love that they might burst from the feeling of it, that they might bleed slowly from a wound invisible to most.

Somehow, though, they don’t talk about the way homesickness can latch to the notches of a spine, how it can suck out everything, until the memories are hollow, ashy things; filmy with irregularities.

On his worst days, at the beginning of his move to Boston, Ilya was full of that dread, hollowed out with sorrow that he would never know home again. He worried that he would

never stumble home again, that each footprint in Moscow was shallower every time.

Now, he is surprised to find that he feels a dampened sense of the same fear for his Boston apartment.

Home, he is realizing, has found him again, though he suspects that it is not *just* Boston.

“Feeling better?” Cliff asks when their practice has ended, and they're all back in the locker room. Ilya glances at him, and he shrugs, looking vaguely sheepish. “You seemed sort of,”—he gestures around the room and shrugs again—“Out of it, I dunno. I wanted to check in.”

Ilya blinks at him, before he smiles, faint but there. “I am better,” he agrees, accepting the heavy clap of Cliff's hand against his shoulder as his due. “Was weird night, to be in Boston but not at home.”

Cliff nods, grinning at him. “Once a pipe burst at mine, and I had to get a hotel room, and it was awful,” he says. “Sometimes hotel sleeping just fucking sucks.”

Ilya nods, sighing. “Will be okay,” he says. “Do not worry about the game tomorrow.”

Cliff shakes his head. “Was never even in question, Roz,” he says, patting his shoulder again, before he pulls back. “See you tomorrow, dude.”

Ilya nods in faint agreement and continues to slowly redress.

The locker room empties out around him, quiet settling in.

It’s a different one from his hotel room. The Garden hums with energy, the occasional voice echoing down a hall, the click of heels as someone rushes past, the pipes creaking overhead.

Ilya stands alone in the room and just lets himself *look* for a moment. He never takes a moment to soak it in, not like this.

What a legacy he is leaving here. What an honor he is holding.

And still, somehow, underneath it all, he’s thinking about Shane Hollander.

Hollander, vicious and deadly on the ice. Hollander, beautiful and serious before the press. Hollander, sweaty and gorgeous in his sheets.

Hollander, Hollander, *Hollander*.

He shakes his head, forcing back his thoughts, and shoves his phone in his pocket, gathering up his jacket.

He will be good tonight, and he won’t look at his phone, won’t wonder at who will text first—though, he knows it will most probably be him—until he is back at his hotel room, mere floors away from where Hollander will be staying the night.

And, to add to it, he will make himself walk *slowly*; no flying through the streets in eagerness.

There is dignity to be had here, he is sure, even if he is terrible at it.

Despite his assurances of a slow pace to himself, the sidewalk is eaten up by his lanky strides, the concrete and ice disappearing behind him as he makes his way into the hotel, ducking through a side entrance.

He pauses in the hallway, debating about a cigarette, before he shakes his head.

If he is lucky tonight—and he intends to be—he doesn't want to have to deal with Hollander's fussing.

He makes his way up to his room, sighing as he steps through to the still-empty space.

As usual, it takes him no time at all to settle in; less time, in fact, since the room is far smaller than his apartment.

He sighs again, settling in on the bed, his shoes kicked off haphazardly on the floor, and drags his phone out of his pocket.

Down the hall, laughter rises, a group of people rushing through the halls, the cheerfulness of their voices ebbing as they head for the elevators.

Ilya glances at his phone again, unable to stop himself from tapping into the *Jane* conversation.

Fuck you, Hollander had sent last.

His, *mm, no. i fuck you,* remains unanswered but read, sent yesterday.

He backs out of the text exchange and lets his head loll back as he listens to more sounds of people and life spilling through the floor, rising up to his cracked-open window.

Outside in the hallway, someone swears, their hands clattering against his door.

Ilya rolls his eyes, returning his gaze to his phone. Is it too much to text Hollander now? How's he supposed to know when the Metros' plane landed? He wrinkles his nose at the weird tone of his own thoughts, but thumbs the screen up again, sweeping over the bright *Jane* at the top of their chat.

It's only when the door latch clicks that Ilya realizes something else is happening.

He blinks, shifting as he leans against the headboard, craning his neck to peer down the short, dark hallway as the door swings wide, and someone mutters another swear under their breath.

His mouth twitches at the thought of scaring the shit out of the poor soul that just walked into his room, before he realizes that this *absolutely* should not be happening—*fuck*, what if it's a

fan? What if some stalker has finally found him, just like Marly is always saying they will? And then, he's so distracted by that thought that it takes him about ten seconds to clock just *who* is standing in the hallway, staring at him with wide, brown eyes as the door softly clicks shut behind him.

“Hollander?” Ilya says, blinking at him, his phone dropping out of his hands to hit the mattress. “What the fuck?”

“Rozanov?” Hollander splutters out, his face pale. He glances around, as if he expects someone to spring out from around the corner with a knife. “What the hell are you doing in my room? Is this a prank?”

Ilya clears his throat, grabbing his phone up only to neatly deposit it on his side table. Sparks start to collect under his skin as he watches Hollander’s mouth settle into a flat line of annoyed confusion. “This is *my* room, Hollander.”

“No,” Hollander says slowly, his bag clenched in his hand. “This is *my*—don't you have an apartment in the city, asshole? Why the hell would you need a hotel room?”

“Ah, no,” Ilya says immediately, arching an eyebrow as he kicks his legs out, hiding a grin at the way Hollander scowls at him, even as his eyes dart to his hips and then away. “Ground is…shrinking? Moving?” He shrugs carelessly. “I do not know, Hollander. It is just going away.”

“Rozanov,” Hollander says, with all the grace of a wet, feral kitten. Ilya likes the sound of his name in his clenched mouth, spat out like sour arils from a gone-bad pomegranate. He can taste the bitterness from here, and it is *so* sweet. What a strange turn this day has taken. He feels alive, suddenly, vibrant and sharp, the gray of the world respun into color. “What the actual *fuck* are you saying?”

Ilya sighs, louder. “I have said it,” he says. “What else is there to say? Ground is—” He waves a hand; careless, airy. “Gone. I am out of apartment for a week or so.”

“The ground doesn’t just disappear,” Hollander says, sounding enraged. His whole face is screwed up, outrage in every line as he talks. He looks just as enticing as always, Ilya notes sullenly, and resolves to needle him even further immediately as he continues haughtily, “So you’re either making this shit up or someone *lied* to you.”

Ilya shrugs again. “Many construction vehicles were there,” he says, leaning back against his pillows. He stretches back, deliberately widening his legs, gratified at the sharp glare Hollander throws at him, even though Ilya catches the way his eyes *absolutely* drag across his chest. “Seemed very urgent to fix.”

Hollander makes an inarticulate sound of rage, and Ilya immediately wants to hear it again, but in the fucked-out, dreamy voice he gets when Ilya’s inside of him, tangling the two of them in deep, drugging pleasure. He wants to hear him yowl for him, hissing insults before being settled by his cock, all the fussy scrum fucked out of him; pinned down and taking it just as he likes.

“Well,” he finally says, his knuckles white and clenched around the handles of his bag. “Go get another room.”

Ilya blinks at him, before delight slides through him. *Oh*, Hollander gives him the sweetest of gifts—his pleasure, his pretty face, the tight heat of his ass; *none* are as fulfilling as ruining his whole day.

“No,” he says, smiling gently, like he doesn't know how irritating he's being. “Is my room first, da? *You* should speak with front desk.”

Hollander stares at him.

And then he starts to laugh.

It's hysterical from the get-go, as if he were just *waiting* for a reason to snap. Concern bubbles up from Ilya's center immediately, but he shoves it down as Hollander's bag slips from his hand and he kicks off his shoes, nudging them into a line next to the door.

“*You* ask the front desk,” he shoots back, in between his odd wheezes. Ilya's heart starts to pound in double time, because this is not—this cannot be Shane Hollander playing bed chicken with him. Their competitiveness is fierce, to be certain, but surely, Hollander would be the bigger person, no? “This is my fucking room, Rozanov. Wild horses couldn't drag me away.”

Ilya makes a faint noise of disbelief as Hollander moves more firmly into the room, his face set into sharp annoyance. “There are no horses,” he points out. “Pride, instead?”

“It's not *pride*—”

“No?” Ilya murmurs, straightening up. He pushes himself off the bed, stalking around the mattress. “No, it could not be pride, hm? Pride would not see Shane Hollander on his knees for me. Pride would not have you begging. Pride cannot be the reason you cry so sweetly for me.”

“Rozanov,” Hollander warns, but he doesn't shift away or move when Ilya reaches out to curl a hand under his chin. “This isn't why I'm not going to the front desk. It's about the principle —”

“You talk too much,” Ilya says, unable to quench the swell of fondness in his chest, before he leans down and captures Hollander's pursed mouth.

Hollander cracks beneath his touch easily; his mouth breaks open like a sweet plum, ripe beneath dull teeth, warm and welcoming despite his fuss. He tastes like old mint and bitter tea, a hint of salt clinging to his lip that Ilya eagerly licks away.

He groans, his hands sliding up Ilya's back, his fingers knotting in his sweater as Ilya bends him backwards, just enough to make him *grab*.

He tries to talk, but Ilya sucks his tongue into his mouth and bites at his lips; hunger surges beneath his skin.

Distantly, he knows he has not felt settled since he got the call about his apartment. Distantly, he can recognize that this is the best he has felt since this whole mess started.

Distantly, though.

Currently, most of his attention is captured by the slick touch of Hollander's mouth, the relentless greed in his hands, the heat of Hollander's skin beneath his fingers as he rucks his shirt up and drags his nails across his stomach.

“Shit,” Hollander breathes into his mouth. He sounds dazed and blunted, pierced through his thick hull with the barb of his own desire. “Jesus *Christ,* Rozanov.”

Ilya hums, pleased. “No need to exchange room numbers,” he murmurs, grinning when Hollander whines in the back of his throat, a soft, aching sound. “I will know exactly where you are—in *my* bed.”

“It's *my* bed,” Hollander bites out, even as his hands shove at Ilya's sweater, fiddling with the buttons on his jeans, flitting across everything too swiftly to finish a task. Ilya feels stupidly entranced by how bad Hollander is at stripping him, too eager for it all. “You're the interloper here.”

“Hm,” Ilya says, leaning in to lick at his cheek, smearing spit across his freckles. He smirks at the disgust and want that sears across Hollander's face. “I do not think so.”

Hollander glares, but he doesn't wipe his face, and the fire in Ilya's stomach *burns*. He forgets, sometimes, how much *better* he feels when he can poke and prod Hollander. How his earnest reactions and shitty sexts fill him with joy.

Stupid, too, he knows, to be caught on his hook, reeled in by his specific, exact motions.

Hollander doesn't do anything but follow his path, which should be *boring*, except for how utterly *him* he is; how unrelenting in his march. Ilya hates how much he likes it.

“You are a lovely surprise,” Ilya says, leaning in to bite at his ear, to mouth at the crook of his jaw. He's bleeding out from all these emotions, sharp and angry and so, *so* glad Hollander is here. “Should ask if I was sent a stripper, no? Make sure you're paid well for your time?”

“As *if*,” Hollander snaps, even as he yanks his sweatshirt off, the zipper thumping against the floor. He shoves at Ilya's sweater again, as if it has offended him. “Take it off.”

Ilya tsks, shaking his head. He slides his hand up, curling his fingers into the fine strands of Hollander's hair, tugging his head back. “Ask nicely.”

Hollander scowls at him, before the fight slides out from the lines of his face. It's as intoxicating as always, watching Hollander give in; watching him accept his place, watching him understand: Ilya will do anything for him, so long as he *asks.*

“Please,” Hollander manages. His eyes are dark and wanting, his lips plush and pink. He is gorgeous as always, his beautiful freckles on display. “Please take your clothes off.”

“And then?” Ilya asks, tipping his head from side to side, admiring the way Hollander's eyelashes flutter. “What else?”

“And then I want you to suck my cock,” Hollander spits out, before going limp when Ilya shakes his head.

“I do not think that is all you want,” Ilya muses. “I think you want me to fuck you, no? I think you want me to bend you over our bed and wreck you.” He leans in, ignoring the way his stomach flips at *our bed*, and groans when Hollander surges forward, sealing their mouths together.

They kiss for long enough that Ilya loses track of time, falling to the relentless wave of desire that rushes through him every time Hollander sucks his tongue or parts his mouth wider, as if he wants Ilya to lick down his throat.

It has been a month or so since their last time together, but the swath of emptiness between them shatters as easily as it always does.

Here, in this hotel room, they know exactly who they are.

“I want you to fuck me,” Hollander confesses, gorgeous greed stretched thin in his voice. Heated desire is cradled in his words, spilling from his throat. Ilya wants to sip it from his mouth, wants to get drunk on his pleasure. “Please, let me—I wanna feel you.”

“Okay,” Ilya breathes into his lips, unable to stop himself from licking across the roof of Hollander's mouth, just to feel him jerk in his arms. He feels bloated with sin, glutted on the rapture of Hollander in his arms, hot with want. “Da, yes, of course.”

He forces himself back from where he’s trapped Hollander against the wall and watches as he strips, fighting a smile when he even bends down to pick up and fold his sweatshirt.

“You gonna get undressed too?” Hollander asks, shooting an unimpressed look his way when he's finally down to just his briefs. He sets his stack of clothes on the desk and quirks an eyebrow at him. “Or…?”

For a moment, Ilya toys with the idea of not undressing, of bending Hollander over the edge of the bed and fucking him, of listening to the slide of his hands over fabric, the groans he'll let out when he reaches to touch and is thwarted by the soft wool of his sweater.

Heat churns in his stomach at the thought of how desperate it would make him feel, how powerful, to know that he can snap his fingers and have the best hockey player in the world naked and whining for his cock. He wouldn't even have to undress, and *still*, Shane Hollander would let him open him up and fill him, would let him fuck him until they're both messes, until all that is left of them is unruly desire splattered across the sheets.

But he wants the touch, more than he wants the feeling of power, and it’s easy enough to follow after Hollander, shucking everything but his boxers aside.

“Holy shit,” Hollander breathes, when Ilya reaches out for him and nudges him back onto the bed. He scrambles backwards, back hitting the pillows. His legs fall open when Ilya tilts his head, his hands twisting in the sheets. “Oh my *god*.”

Ilya laughs, crawling up the mattress towards him. “Is not that impressive, *yet*,” he murmurs, pressing kisses up his legs as he settles between them.

He ghosts a breath across Hollander's cock, grinning when it twitches, the black fabric darkening as precum drools from the tip.

“Please suck my dick,” Hollander whimpers breathlessly. Ilya meets his eyes, watching as he tosses his head back and groans. “Please, Rozanov, *please*—I'm begging.”

“And so beautifully,” Ilya murmurs in agreement, before he presses a kiss to the head of his still-covered dick and listens to him whine, full-throated and hungry.

Ilya slides further up, curling his hands into Hollander's waistband and slowly tugging his underwear down, eagerly watching each inch revealed.

Hollander's stomach tenses, his muscles rippling as Ilya yanks it off completely, tossing it aside, his eyes fixed on the angry red heft of Hollander's cock.

It’s as gorgeous as always, shining with precum, soaked down the shaft. The head of his dick is almost purple with heat and blood, twitching as Ilya curls a hand over the base of it.

“*Please*,” Hollander pants. “Rozanov, will you—I want you to—I *need* it.”

Ilya pauses, lifting his gaze up to meet Hollander’s. “Oh?” he says, stroking once and watching the tendons in Hollander’s neck strain as he tosses his head back, his chest heaving. He settles his other hand on the soft skin of his inner thigh, drawing tiny, teasing circles that inch no closer to anything Hollander wants him to touch. “Tell me.”

“I—” Hollander starts, only to pause, shaking his head.

Ilya ducks down to lap at the bead of precum pearling at the top of his cock, pulling back when Hollander’s hips twitch up. “Tell me,” he orders again. “Or I will leave you here and wanting, and I will make you watch as I fuck my fist until I cum all over your pretty freckles.”

Hollander blinks at him, slow and dazed, cockdrunk as his whole body shudders. “You—you can’t say shit like that,” he manages, one of his hands sliding up to tug his hair, the other still curled into the sheets. His knuckles are white, Ilya notes with satisfaction, and Hollander continues, “I’m gonna—”

“Then tell me,” Ilya repeats, cutting him off. His breath is shivering across Hollander's skin, a ghost of a lewd promise. “What do you need?”

“I need you to suck my dick,” Hollander blurts out, all propriety leaving him. His voice is thick with lust, laden down with his own greed. “I need you to—I need you to fuck me.” He groans as Ilya presses his mouth against his thigh, feeling the muscle jump under his lips as

he drags his mouth closer and closer to Hollander's cock. "Please, Rozanov—*please*. I want —I want to cum. I *need* to cum."

"And when you are walking different tomorrow?" Ilya muses, slowly stroking Hollander's dick, listening to him whine, the noise bitten off in his throat as if it feels too good to voice. He's drunk with power as he croons, "When I have fucked you so well, you are changed? When you have been hollowed out of anything but my cock and cum? What will you do then?"

Hollander slaps a hand over his mouth as Ilya lifts his dick up to tongue at the head of his dick, the bitter salt of his precum spilling into his mouth. His cock twitches between him and the mattress, a heavy reminder that he, too, would like to cum at some point, before Ilya discards it to continue teasing Hollander. "Would be shame not to see you on the ice tomorrow."

"Oh, fuck *you*," Hollander warbles, throaty and muffled through his own palm as Ilya pulls back to admire the heft of him, the angry red that's suffusing his cock. "If you could fuck the hockey out of me, you would've a long fucking time ago."

Ilya laughs, bright and shocked, grinning up at Hollander. His smile only grows brighter when Hollander peels his hand away from his mouth, revealing his twitching lips.

"Oh," Ilya says, arching a brow. "Gloves thrown, then, da?"

Hollander blinks at him, opening his mouth, only to be cut off as Ilya guides his dick into his mouth and swallows him down.

"*Roz*," Hollander gasps out, strangled and lust-struck. His hands fly to Ilya's hair, knotting into the curls with deft precision; a motion ingrained by all the times before. "Holy *shit*—"

Ilya hums, hollowing his mouth and bobbing his head, swallowing whenever the head of Hollander's cock nudges against the back of his throat, listening to his moans. He tastes like he always does, musky desperation and fervent desire.

"You're gonna kill me," Hollander slurs. "You're gonna—ohmy*god*—"

Ilya pulls back, lapping at the tip of his dick. "You are very easy to kill," he says, grinning when Hollander cracks his eyes open enough to glare. He ignores the dull ache as Hollander's grip on his hair tightens, a heavy zing of arousal ricocheting down his spine. "Did not know murder by cock was possible."

"Rozanov," Hollander grits out, but Ilya is leaning down to lap at his balls, dragging his tongue up the soft curve of his dick, precum and spit smearing everywhere.

Hollander tosses his head back, his whole body shuddering when Ilya slides back down his cock, sheathing it in his throat easily.

There is something so enticing about Hollander and his urgent need to cum, his feverish, greedy wants. He is so buttoned-up in life, so stable; to be the one who sees him when he's

undone with pleasure—it's a greater gift than Ilya has words for.

He hums again, swallowing down the spurt of precum that drips across his tongue, and opens his mouth, letting Hollander's cock rest against his lips.

He wants to get Hollander *messy*; wants his cum to slide from his mouth, to drip back down his shaft, soaked through with Ilya's spit. He wants to watch the restless shift of his hips as he lets himself chase his pleasure, as he clings and presses and aches for touch. As he wants for *Ilya*.

“Rozanov,” Hollander says again, meeting Ilya's gaze. He looks unwound with desire; aching, old hunger stirring in his eyes. “I'm gonna—” Ilya hums, fluttering his tongue against the slit of his cock, and angles his mouth just in time to let Hollander paint the roof and the back of his throat with cum.

It drips down Hollander's cock as Ilya keeps his mouth open, before he closes his lips just around the head of his dick and sucks.

Hollander *shouts*, one of his hands flying off Ilya's head to slap across his mouth, muffling the end of his loud grunt, as the other simply winds in tighter, seemingly unable to figure out if he wants Ilya to stay or go.

Ilya swallows down the final two spurts of cum, and gives in, bobbing his head down once to chase the tacky trails he'd let leak out.

Hollander, as always, tastes like furious, ruinous desire, like sloppy want, like all the things he cannot have but he wishes for; there is nothing but the flavor of need imploding across his palate.

Ilya's fingers that are curled around the base of Hollander's softening cock are coated in the liquid, and he doesn't hesitate, knocking Hollander's hand aside from his mouth to feed him his wet fingers.

As always, Hollander is eager, his lips sloppy with spit, his tongue immediately laving over his knuckles.

Ilya keeps his fingers firmly pressed against the wide flat of Hollander’s tongue as he pulls off his cock, glancing up the length of his body to find Hollander with his eyes shut, his mouth hollowed out around his fingers.

“You are so good for me,” Ilya rumbles. He wants to suck a mark into Hollander's hip bones, wants to dig his teeth in until there’s a brand of his mouth right in the soft flesh of him. “So beautiful, Hollander. So eager to cum, so easy for me.”

Hollander moans around Ilya's fingers, his words garbled but vaguely clear as he agrees, “For you.”

Heat streaks through him, greed flaying him down to his bones. For a moment, Ilya is nothing other than an echo of Shane Hollander’s agreement, of the cockdrunk look in his

eyes as he murmurs, however distantly, that he is *Ilya's*.

“Fuck,” Ilya says, agonizing desire splintering under his skin, shockwaves of want growing. He pulls his fingers out of Hollander’s mouth, hushing him when he whines and chases after them. “You are so—” He bites off the words in his mouth, unwilling to reveal more. “Come, Hollander, on your knees.” He reaches up to squeeze his chest, thumbing across his nipple before he pushes himself up, kneeling between Hollander's splayed open legs. “I want to fuck you.”

“I want that too,” Hollander says, after a beat of panting, his eyes dark with hunger, before he leverages himself up and twists, the arch of his spine settling into a deep curve, his ass lifting into the air as he settles down on his elbows, hands already fisting the sheets. “Fuck me, Rozanov, c'mon.”

“Ah, you are my good boy now, no?” Ilya asks, reaching out to slide a possessive hand over the swell of his ass, smirking as Hollander twitches back, pushing against his hand as if a needy cat. “You will let me pin you and fuck you, will let me open you up and taste you.”

“Yeah,” Hollander mutters. He sounds dazed, his voice fuzzy in his throat. “Yeah, I want—I want that.”

Ilya pats his ass. “Stay,” he murmurs, squeezing his hip when Hollander immediately starts to tense as he backs up slightly. “I am getting lube and condoms. Hollander—” He tightens his voice, lets his accent thicken. “You are being *very* good boy. Stay.”

Hollander's rigid spine melts back into languidness. “Yeah,” he whispers, resplendent supplication in the curve of his back. “Okay.”

Ilya makes it quick; his bag is right on the desk, and Hollander can see him if he opens his eyes and peeks, though Ilya does not think he will.

He thinks that Hollander likes the dazed, delirious state he slides into whenever they fuck. He thinks it must taste like some sort of relief; he knows it does for him when he can slide into Hollander's life and be handed the reins.

Control never tastes as sweet as it does when they are together, when Hollander is honest with his greed, with his wants. It is shocking to him how sometimes it tastes like forgiveness, like an apology, like a conversation they are unable to have with words.

He yanks the bottle of lube and the strip of condoms out of the bag, all other thoughts falling to the wayside, and strides back over, settling in behind Hollander.

“Very good boy,” he repeats, slicking up his fingers with lube and settling one hand on the small of Hollander's back, relishing in the way he relaxes completely, his face settling into the pillows, his eyes still shut, his mouth slack and open as he whines, squirming back into Ilya's touch.

Opening Hollander up feels the same as it always does: a miracle and a joy. Permission to want, to chase, to own, if just for a few moments.

Hollander pants into the sheets as Ilya slowly slides one finger in him, and then two, careful and steady as he always is.

By the time Ilya thinks Hollander is ready, he's been rolling his hips back against his fingers for minutes, whining about how badly he needs his cock. His own dick is leaking steadily again, a puddle appearing beneath him.

"*Please*," Hollander grits out, cracking his eyes open to meet Ilya's gaze. "I want—I need—fuck me, Rozanov, you gotta—I'm ready, please, please, *please*—"

"So greedy," Ilya says, watching sweat trickle down Hollander's spine. He chases it with his tongue, settling over Hollander with all the grace of a jungle cat. "Do not worry, moya shlyukha, I will give you what you need."

He slides a condom on, slicks his dick up, and presses in with no fanfare; too eager to be inside to even bother trying to tease as he watches the expression on Hollander's face; beautiful and dangerously greedy, lust unspooling in every flutter of his lashes, in the damp gasps as he fucks backwards, forcing more of Ilya's cock inside.

Tight heat clenches down, and Ilya groans, smattering kisses across Hollander's shoulder blades, his teeth catching on the muscle in soft bites.

"I could fuck you forever," Ilya mutters, half-hiding his smile against Hollander's skin. "Keep you wet and open, slide inside whenever I want." He rocks forward and grins when Hollander gasps, his whole body locking up as Ilya's cock nudges into his prostate. "Oh, you *are* wanting, no? No one fucks you like I do, yes?"

Hollander moans, shuddering. "No—*no*," he manages, over the sound of Ilya picking up speed, the slap of his hips, the slick squelch that starts up. "No one's like, *fuck*, like you."

Ilya grits his teeth, pride vibrating through him.

"Good," he snarls, pleasure knotting in his chest. He feels delirious with need and selfish desires. He wants to spend forever chasing pleasure with Hollander, wants to build a life for them that's nothing more than the frantic touch of their hands, the sensation of them twining together.

He wants their roots tangled, and it's *awful*.

"Harder," Hollander groans, rocking back. Ilya obliges, sweat beading at his temple, damp imprints of his fingers as he grabs Hollander's hips to fuck him better. "Fucking, *shit*—Rozanov, ohmy*god*—"

Heat builds at the base of his spine, a slow unfurling as they rock together, the bed creaking underneath them. Time blurs into nothing but the slick press of them, the smoldering tension rising.

All Ilya knows is the exquisite agony of fucking Hollander, of the spark of desire that rolls through his body, building and building and building. He thinks he may die from the feeling,

but cannot care; not when it feels so decadently *good*.

“I'm gonna—” Hollander chokes out as Ilya finally sneaks a hand down to stroke his dick.

“Yes,” Ilya rasps. He can feel his own release rising, the pinpricks of shimmering electricity blooming under his skin. “Da, yes, Hollander—you must, you can—”

“Holy*shit*,” Hollander slurs, his hole tightening as he starts to cum, spilling across their ruined blanket. “Roz—*Roz*—”

“I have you,” Ilya murmurs, letting go of his dick as Hollander slumps further into the mattress, rocking back against his punishing thrusts. “Hollander, *Hollander*—”

He slams in twice more and shudders, his release unwinding, shattering down his nerves, and spilling across his body. For a moment, he's floating, nothing but radiant pleasure singing in his blood, before he returns to his body with a gasp.

Dazedly, he pulls out, patting Hollander's ass when he hisses at the sensation, before he ties off his condom and drops it in the trash can next to the bed.

His immediate concerns taken care of, he slumps over Hollander, sending the two of them sprawling across the mattress, their limbs tangled every which way.

“Jesus Christ," Hollander murmurs after a lengthy pause of them both panting.

Ilya snorts, blindly reaching out to pat at his shoulder.

He misses, somehow drumming his fingers across Hollander's mouth, only to quietly laugh when he catches them with his teeth.

“You are menace,” he mutters, sounding entirely too fond and unable to change it. “Good?”

“Good,” Hollander answers, his lips brushing against the tips of his fingers. He presses a kiss to them, and Ilya feels his whole body shudder with want.

He twists, dragging his hand across all of Hollander he can reach, until he's on his back, his eyes fluttering open.

“Let me scrub myself down,” Hollander says, still vaguely breathless. “And then—” He shrugs, meeting Ilya’s eyes before his gaze darts away, and he smiles awkwardly. “Who even fucking knows?”

Ilya snorts, but nods. He knows exactly what Hollander means as the other man pulls himself out of bed and heads for the bathroom.

Who even fucking knows, indeed.

But, shockingly to Ilya, it's in the aftermath that Hollander *really* comes to life, vibrant in a way Ilya has never seen, as he settles himself on their bed, legs stretched out, skin slightly damp, boxers tugged over his hips, a thin t-shirt on. He looks *cozy*, at home.

It almost hurts to see.

To distract himself after wiping himself down and tugging on clothes, Ilya is lying across the foot of the bed, their damp top blanket knocked as neatly to the ground as Ilya could manage without actively getting up and folding it. He'd ignored Hollander's frown when he'd emerged from the bathroom, smirking at him until the other man gave up his hovering and sat on the bed. He's on his phone, half-content with texting Sveta back—who *is* in Russia, and *does* want to go clothes hunting with him—along with checking in on their food, and half-watching Hollander.

It's a shitty attempt, if he's being honest with himself.

He's thoroughly preoccupied by how easy everything feels. How simple it is; to lie at his feet, to watch his face, to exist with him—no pressure to flee. No reason to, either—he ordered them both dinner, not that Hollander knows.

Hollander hums, his teeth sinking into his bottom lip. Ilya can't stop the odd flush of wanting that stirs, watching the light of his phone reflect across his face. In the dark brown of his pupils, the gleam of his screen flickers as he swipes through; an odd kaleidoscope of colors blurring into nothing.

"You know, this would be a lot easier to find if you could give me *any* other information," Hollander mutters, his eyes darting up, only to widen in faint surprise when he meets Ilya's gaze. "Googling *ground shrinking Boston* gets me weird shit. The whole of your back bay is built on weird, rotten wood and fucking *trash*? There's no way—"

"Yes," Ilya says, cutting him off, snapping his fingers and tossing his phone up by his pillow. He ignores how easily the two of them have settled into sides in bed; it's nothing to think about at the end of the day, really, that they didn't even have a conversation, that they just *knew*. "Yes, that is it exactly, Hollander."

Hollander blinks at him, his mouth dropping open. Ilya eyes the imprints of his teeth against his lip, the faint burgundy that rushes to the skin, before he drags his gaze back up, meeting Hollander's furrowed eyes.

"What the fuck is wrong with America?" Hollander asks, and Ilya can't stop himself from grinning even as he shrugs.

"Is not my country," he says, propping himself up on his arm to watch irritation slide across Hollander's face. He dares to reach out and nudge him with his knee, his stomach flipping when Hollander nudges him back, absentmindedly, as if instinct, the tips of his toes bumping against his shin, sparking trails spreading across his skin. "I am not to blame."

"Your city," Hollander shoots back, his focus returning to his phone. "Wait, *hang on*, this shit is all *over* the place—Roz, I mean, c'mon, this can't be real—"

"Is real," Ilya says, ignoring how insane it feels to hear *Roz* from Hollander's mouth. He's only heard him say it publicly once or twice, out on the ice, spit in the middle of insults that would do more damage to a concussed grandmother than any hockey player *ever*, given

Hollander's propensity for being unable to insult anyone in any meaningful way. When he moans it in bed, there's always a sense of it being bitten off, of the word *actually* being Rozanov, just snapped clean through. Here, now, it sounds dangerously familiar. "Is happening to *my* apartment, no?"

"But the *trash*," Hollander says, sounding dumbfounded, and Ilya groans, wiggling his way up the bed to grab at Hollander's phone. "*Hey!*"

"*Trash* cannot be more entertaining than me," Ilya mutters haughtily, leaning over Hollander. He slides his phone onto the bedside table, meeting his annoyed gaze. "I am sure that there is *something* else we can do."

Hollander stares up at him for a long moment before he licks his lips. Ilya tracks the sweeping motion with hunger before he drags his gaze back to Hollander's eyes.

"I can think of a few things," he murmurs, and Ilya grins, smugly satisfied.

"C'mere," Hollander orders fussily, and Ilya leans in, pressing tiny little kisses across his cheeks, the bridge of his nose, the corners of his mouth.

Hollander makes a noise of discontent, tilting his head to get more of their mouths together, and Ilya's next few kisses are more teeth than lip, his smile too broad to contain.

Of course, though, that is what Hollander has been waiting for; the tiny ease of Ilya relaxing into the kiss, and he moves, knocking Ilya onto his back, before he slings a thigh across his hips and settles down, a smug grin on his face as Ilya blinks up at him, torso cradled by the pillows.

"Now then," Hollander murmurs, as Ilya's cock swells. *Fuck*, but Hollander looks good, perched in his lap as if it is his throne, gloating smeared across his brow. The only thing that could make it better would be if he were naked and wearing a crown, the gold lopsided in his mussed hair, a smirk on his lips, but instead, Hollander is reaching out for his *phone*, not for his clothes.

Ilya groans, low and annoyed, but lets himself go limp when Hollander's thighs squeeze in warning around his hips.

"It's *interesting*," Hollander mutters, flushing lightly. Ilya lets his hands slide to Hollander's thighs, creeping up the muscle to toy with the edges of his boxers. Hollander doesn't say anything as Ilya slides a hand under, his palm smoothing up and down.

For a moment, they're quiet; Ilya's cock aches in his shorts, trapped under the familiar weight and heat of Hollander, but he has no real urge to *do* something about it. Instead, he focuses on the way Hollander feels under his hands. The shift of muscle. The slow pulse of warmth that drifts between them. The occasional squeeze of his thighs, when Ilya's fingers wander over a faint bruise or tender spot.

He wonders if Hollander is even aware of the slow grind he's started up, the syrupy sweet glide of their dicks against each other.

It’s entrancing, watching him read, his brow furrowing, his lips parting to occasionally mouth along. He looks outraged by the time he finishes whatever article he's tracked down, his face screwing up into annoyance.

“This is a whole *issue,*” he declares after another beat of shifting on Ilya's lap. He's like a fussy cat, unable to settle into place, chasing after the perfect spot; though Ilya thinks he won't find it if they're both clothed. “Half of Boston is sinking, Rozanov. What the hell is this place even *doing?*” He meets Ilya's eyes and flushes, his freckles stark against the pink of his cheeks. “Sorry, this is probably—what?”

For a second, Ilya is so caught up in fondness, on the warmth of Hollander in his lap, that he almost breaks into sobs. His whole body aches.

He has holes in his heart that are the shape of Shane Hollander, and nothing else can fill them.

I want this, he almost says, stupid with attachment and drunk with passion. He is such a fucking lovesick idiot. *I want you*.

“You are very concerned over a city you do not live in,” he says instead, smiling when Hollander frowns at him. “Is interesting to see. Have not seen you so worked up over anything but hockey and dick before.”

Hollander scowls down at him. “I like more things than dick, asshole,” he mutters, suddenly stiffer than he has been all night.

“Not more than hockey,” Ilya says lightly, dragging his fingers down towards Hollander's knees. “Is not a bad thing to have passion.”

Hollander pauses, the tension coiling within suddenly faltering. “Oh,” he murmurs, his eyes darting across Ilya's face, as if searching for a lie.

Ilya lets him look his fill; there is no lie. Not about this.

Hollander inhales softly and leans back over to the side, settling his phone down with a decisive click.

“Hey,” he says, and bends down to kiss him.

Ilya closes his eyes at the first brush of his lips.

It is a slow kiss. A steady one; firm pressure, the faint press, the edge of a tongue, gone too quickly for Ilya to capture.

Hollander pulls back, keeping close enough that Ilya can see the way his pupils shift as he reopens his eyes, the way a tiny furrow appears between his eyebrows.

“Hey,” Hollander says again, but Ilya doesn't have any words for him. He doesn't have anything but his hollow heart and his firm hands and the enticing appearance of a *bad idea*, and he cannot—he has offered all that he has.

He cannot offer anything more, without being brave.

He doesn't feel brave.

He doesn't feel brave at *all*.

A knock at the door startles both of them.

Hollander wrenches himself up, his face pale, terror in the whites of his eyes, frozen over his hips; Ilya's hands remain on his body, holding him still.

“Sir?” A knock sounds again. “Your food delivery is here.”

Ilya clears his throat, his head spinning. “Yes, thank you,” he calls back. “Will be one moment. Can leave the food. Thank you."

“Of course,” the person answers, and Ilya can hear the crinkle of bags being set down. “Have a good night, sir.”

“You too,” Ilya manages.

Neither of them so much as breathes; Ilya's whole focus is straining for any sign of the worker still being outside the door, and he's positive Hollander is doing the same.

“This is so fucking stupid,” Hollander whispers, after another long, still moment. “If this gets out, it's going to ruin both of our careers.” Ilya meets his eyes, watching the swirl of devastation and want, a tangled mix of emotion; for a second, he looks *gutted*, before it fades quickly enough that Ilya thinks he must have imagined it. “I should get another room.”

“So this is my room,” Ilya says, because he doesn't even know how to handle the fact that he wants to beg and plead with Hollander to stay. He doesn't want to open his mouth and say *the day is brighter when you are here*; he doesn't want to risk it.

Not here, at least. Not now.

Hollander groans, slumping back down into him. “This is so stupid,” he repeats. “This is my room, Rozanov.”

Ilya knows what that means.

It means neither of them is going anywhere.

He swallows down the tidal wave of relief that crashes through him and pats Hollander’s hip. “Dinner,” he says, when Hollander doesn't move. “Up, Hollander. I will get.”

Hollander mutters something Ilya can't catch, but slumps to the side, gracelessly letting Ilya slide free from his thighs.

Ilya pads to the door, peeking through the eyehole to be sure the worker has left, before he unlatches it, stooping down to grab their food, tucking the bottles of ginger ale and coke

under his arm.

He pauses as he turns around in the short hall in his room, the door clicking shut behind him, as he stares at the inelegant lump of Shane Hollander spread across his bed.

It aches to see him. To watch him fit. To get these hints of how easily they could slide in together, linked irreparably.

He had no idea, before all this, what it felt like to come *home* to someone.

Hollander stirs, pushing himself up, and Ilya lurches back into motion, offering him his ginger ale.

“What's for dinner?” Hollander murmurs, looking vaguely apprehensive as Ilya unpacks the unlabeled brown paper bag. “I can't eat a lot.”

“I know,” Ilya says, focusing on figuring out exactly whose container is whose so he doesn't have to see whatever expression Hollander is making. “You only eat boring food, Hollander. Is like basic trait.”

A smile flickers over his face before Hollander noticeably forces it back. “Right,” he says quietly. “Boring.”

Ilya sniffs, hiding his own silly little grin. “I got you baked salmon, and brown rice, and broccoli, but if you do not want—”

“I want,” Hollander says, sounding almost startled by it.

Ilya holds back a pleased smile, thrilled at the degree of curiosity in his voice. He would never hold food back from Hollander; he has seen the way Hollander picks at things, has watched the way he gets *particular*, especially the further into the season they get.

It's strange to know both so much and so little, but Ilya shoves that thought to the side as he hands over the flimsy box of lukewarm food.

“Is from a favorite restaurant of mine,” Ilya offers, keeping his eyes averted as he settles onto the bed next to Hollander, neither of them making any mention of the two chairs in the room that linger by the desk. He doesn't know what his face is doing, can feel it flickering up into an almost smile. Slow delight simmers within; another thing he has managed to share, a piece of him offered with an open hand—and *accepted* too, he thinks. He's pretty sure he is still the dumbest man alive for doing all this; he wouldn't change a thing. “Close to Cambridge.”

Hollander hums, and Ilya can't resist stealing a look at him. He's smiling down at his food, unguardedly and painfully beautiful; Ilya has to look away before he does something dumb, like confess how much he genuinely and agonizingly *likes* him.

They're quiet as they eat, Ilya slowly working his way through his stir fry, picking out pieces of carrots every so often.

“You don't like carrots?” Hollander asks when he notices, sounding offended, before making a strangled noise when Ilya shakes his head. “What the fuck?”

“I do not like cooked ones,” Ilya says, grinning when Hollander rolls his eyes, before he pointedly meets his gaze and wiggles his eyebrows. “I like raw.”

Hollander flushes, knocking his shoulder into his. “Asshole,” he mutters, even as he obligingly takes the carrot pieces Ilya silently offers him. “I like how sweet they can get,” he muses, almost absentmindedly. He waits until he has swallowed to speak, Ilya notices fondly; another piece of the puzzle of Shane Hollander. “Though sometimes I don't like the texture.”

“Too soft?” Ilya asks, fascinated as always by how he sees the world.

Hollander wrinkles his nose. “Yeah, I don't like the *mush*,” he says, in the exact tone Ilya says *Hayden Pike* in. “When vegetables get too close to baby food, I'm out.”

Ilya snorts, his mouth tugging up into a grin. “Smoothies are okay, though? Not too *mush*?”

Hollander rolls his eyes and knocks into him again, letting himself lean into Ilya ever so slightly. “Smoothies are a drink,” he says, scandalized by the very insinuation. “That means it isn't capable of being mush.”

“How?” Ilya says, tracking the flush working its way across Hollander's skin as he presses back against him, hardly hoping for more. “Smoothie is goop, no? Goop is mush.”

“I don't even want to know where you got the word *goop* from," Hollander mutters, biting his mouth to poorly hide a smile. “Or why you think it's like a smoothie?”

“Is like wet…thing,” Ilya says, unable to pull the exact words from English he needs to explain himself. Hollander snorts, his mouth tugging up into a smirk when Ilya glances at him. “What? Is true! Smoothie is wet, goop is wet, mush is wet.”

“Mush isn't *wet*,” Hollander says primly, as if that's the issue. “And I don't think that goop is either—isn't that more like slime? Like super sticky and awful?”

Ilya rolls his eyes. “English is stupid,” he declares, grinning when Hollander sighs. “Too many words for too many of the same things.”

“Well, you seem to know a lot of them,” Hollander mutters, and Ilya would think it was a joke if it wasn’t for the way he steals a look at him, his cheeks pink. “It’s certainly never held you back from throwing out insults on the ice.”

“Of course I need to know insults,” Ilya says, pleased and grinning. He nudges another carrot into Hollander’s container, watching as the man immediately eats it and fights the urge to preen. “Is most important part of hockey, no? Not the goals, but the chirp.”

Hollander laughs, louder than Ilya expects, before he slams his mouth shut, looking almost horrified. “That is *not* the point of the game,” he announces, as if this is somehow news to either of them in their *professional hockey careers*. Ilya doesn’t bother to hide his smirk, beyond amused, watching him as he scrambles to correct. “And I know you know that.”

“Do you?” Ilya needles, letting out a loud *oof* when Hollander rams his elbow into his side. “*Ow*, motherfucker. This is *not* the rink, Hollander—save the fight for the ice.”

Hollander shakes his head, poorly hiding his amusement as he ducks down, focusing on his food. “You’re the worst,” he complains, but for a moment, all Ilya can hear is the fondness nestled in the words. “It’s a miracle the Bears ever score with you on the ice.”

“Oh?” Ilya says, arching a brow. “This is about *me* and *my scores*?”

“Don’t—”

“I think is funny, since I am leading the current point—”

“What part of *don’t* do you not fucking understand, Rozanov?” Hollander snaps, bumping into him again. He looks a little wild-eyed, glaring at him even as his mouth curls into a faint smile. Ilya’s *addicted* to this look of Hollander, the one he gets when he is trying to be stern and serious but cannot stop himself from smiling. He looks like he is laughing, a tiny joke just for the two of them.

“Don’t what?” Ilya says, innocently. “Stop scoring?”

Hollander groans, shaking his head. “You’re the worst,” he says, but he leans more firmly into him, so Ilya doesn’t argue, instead letting them lapse back into silence. Neither of them comments on how they’ve slouched into each other until Hollander is nearly tucked in against him, his head against Ilya’s shoulder.

They finish their food quietly, Ilya handing over his carrots and accepting the single broccoli floret Hollander offers him.

He’s pleased to see Hollander has eaten everything; a good choice then, to order from his favorite Thai spot.

Hollander wordlessly collects their trash, neatly settling everything into the bag it came in and then putting it in the trashcan, following some unspoken step in his usual plan. Ilya can see his shoulders, broad and relaxed as he moves through the room and shoves away how thrilled he feels.

This isn’t real, he should remind himself, but it feels too good to stop as he shifts up to lean sideways against the pillows at the head of their bed, grinning at Hollander as he returns from his fussing.

Hollander pauses in the midst of settling back onto the bed, suddenly awkward and tense.

Ilya hates that he can tell that he's worried, hates that the emotions are so clear even as Hollander tries to hide them, but he doesn't let it stop him from lifting his head, turning to look at his wan face.

“Are you sure you—” Hollander starts before he flushes bright red and fumbles for his phone. “Never mind.”

“You cannot start a question and not finish,” Ilya says, arching an unimpressed brow. Truly, Hollander should know better now; nothing gets Ilya honed in more than the thought of tantalizing gossip. It's one of Sveta's favorite things about him: how thoroughly he pays attention and brings back information to chatter about. “It is against the convection.”

“The convection?” Hollander repeats, sounding bewildered, before he snorts, humor in his voice. “Do you mean the Geneva Convention?”

“I do not know, Hollander,” Ilya groans, reaching out to thump at his shoulder. His stomach swoops at the quiet laugh that Hollander lets out, but he ignores it to shake his shoulder harder. “Is boring, okay? I only want to know what you did not say.”

Hollander huffs, crossing his arms, but he doesn't shrug Ilya's hand off his shoulder.

Ilya can see the war playing out on his face, and lets himself roll onto his back, staring at the bland, popcorn ceiling. He doesn’t remove his hand, though, and lets his thumb drag slow circles over Hollander's warm skin.

“Is it—are you sure it's okay if we,”—he lowers his voice, as if it were some scandal, and Ilya's whole heart clenches with something he can't bear to examine too deeply—“*Sleep* together? In bed?” He waves a hand, the muscles shifting under Ilya's touch. “Like *sleep,* sleep, not fucking.”

Ilya tries, really. He doesn't want to laugh at the earnestness of Hollander.

“Ah, yes,” he says, and grins helplessly when Hollander thumps him *hard* in the arm. “I think is okay.”

“*Asshole*,” Hollander snaps, but his eyes are twinkling, like he knows just how ridiculous his question was. Ilya ignores the faint relief he thinks he can see on his face, because *ouch*, does Hollander really think they can't manage to sleep next to each other? “Sorry for double-checking.”

“Is okay if you need excuse to cuddle,” Ilya says, smirking at him. He takes the next thump easily, but snags Hollander's wrist as he tries to withdraw and drags him into his lap.

“This is against regulations,” Hollander says flatly, but he's already leaning in, his fingers creeping up to curl against Ilya's shoulder.

The world slows as Hollander settles his forehead against Ilya's and closes his eyes. He sighs, a quiet exhalation, before nudging forward, pressing his lips against Ilya's.

Ilya kisses him back; instinctive, gentle.

It's a kiss that goes nowhere, somehow. A kiss he doesn't think he'll ever receive again; one that tastes like *hello* and *goodbye* and *I'm sorry* somehow.

When Hollander pulls back, he looks almost sad.

“I'm gonna—” he murmurs, jerking his head towards the bathroom, and Ilya nods, just watching.

He slides off the bed, a flush working its way down his back, and Ilya relaxes back into the pillows, letting his gaze drift back up to the ceiling.

He can hear Hollander clattering about in the bathroom, the sounds of him brushing his teeth and doing his meticulous skincare regimen.

It's odd, listening in.

It makes him think dangerous thoughts, like *what if this was normal,* or *what if I asked him to stay overnight next time,* or *when can I hear this next*. It makes him *want*.

By the time Hollander re-emerges, Ilya has gone fully limp, dead weight across the covers. Everything is heavy; soaked through with the sin of desire.

“Are—” Hollander starts, before he falters. “Is it cool if I go to bed?”

“Yes,” Ilya says.

There's a beat.

“Are you going to brush your teeth?”

Ilya can't stop the stupid smile from spreading across his face as he tips his head to meet Hollander's humiliated expression.

“I did not know you worried about my teeth so much,” Ilya murmurs lightly, pushing himself up. “Is nice to be cared about so deeply, Hollander.”

“Shut up,” Hollander snaps, sliding under the covers. His cheeks are painfully pink, clear splotches in the warm amber light. “Go brush your teeth and fuck off, Rozanov.”

Ilya laughs and doesn't stop himself from dropping a pleased kiss on Hollander's shoulder before he slides out of bed.

He runs through his usual routine on autopilot, head cocked for every rustle of the sheets, every shift of Hollander against the mattress, the quiet click of lights shutting off as he moves through the room.

When he steps out of the bathroom, Hollander is tucked in, his brow furrowed as he glances up from his phone. The light next to him is on, the only one in the room, a soft, dim glow sliding across his body.

“Your city is so full of trash,” he says flatly, and it takes Ilya a moment to realize he is back on his new favorite topic, before he starts to laugh, quiet but delighted. “What?”

“For a second, I thought you were talking of me,” Ilya confesses, grinning when Hollander shakes his head, looking appalled. “Is good chirp, to use.”

Hollander drums his fingers against his screen, shaking his head. “I’ll think about it,” he says, rolling his eyes when Ilya grins even more. “You’re the only player in the whole league who *wants* me to insult him.”

“Is not true,” Ilya says, heading for his side of the bed. “I am sure there are rookies who would die if you chirped at them.”

He glances over just in time to catch the wrinkled-nose expression on Hollander’s face.

“I said *players*, Rozanov,” Hollander mutters as he slides into bed next to him. “Not babies.”

“He has jokes,” Ilya says, widening his eyes as Hollander kicks at him under the covers. “Wow.”

“You’re so fucking annoying,” Hollander snaps, but his mouth is twitching as he plugs his phone in and sets it down. “I should go see the front desk.”

Ilya blows a raspberry at him, rolling his eyes even as his stomach swoops. He feels nauseated at the very thought.

“Is late, Hollander,” he says, arching a brow, careful to keep his tone as light as he can. “They will have questions.”

Hollander watches him for a long moment, but Ilya doesn’t bother to shift under his steady perusal. Let Hollander look his fill; Ilya is only thinking of his stupid Canadian sensibilities.

“Yeah,” he finally settles on, and Ilya lets himself inhale shakily, careful to keep it quiet under Hollander’s gaze. “Guess I’m stuck with you in my room.”

“Is my room,” Ilya shoots back, but Hollander just hums, shaking his head.

Ilya shakes his head back, but can’t stop the smile from curling across his face when Hollander scowls at him, as fussy as ever.

“Good *night*, Rozanov,” he says pointedly, and snaps the light off.

Ilya hums, double-checking that his phone is charging, before he wiggles further down the bed, settling into his usual sprawl. Beside him, he can feel Hollander shift, almost vibrating with tension.

He sighs, reaching out and refusing to let it hurt when Hollander lets out a quiet yelp and tugs away.

“What the fuck are you doing?”

“You are so *tense*, Hollander,” Ilya complains, reaching back out and huffing when Hollander again tries to shift away. “Will not be able to sleep with you shaking the bed.”

“I’m not *shak*—”

“You are bad liar,” Ilya interrupts, wrapping his fingers around Hollander’s wrist and yanking him down. “What, we fuck, and you suck my dick, and you cannot sleep next to me?”

“No,” Hollander snaps back immediately, squirming as Ilya throws an arm over his waist, but he doesn’t try to leave the circle of his arms. “That’s not it.”

Ilya waits, but nothing else spills from his mouth.

“Okay,” he sighs, curling in tighter. He will be getting sleep tonight—it doesn’t faze him to use Hollander as a pillow. “Well. Good night.”

For a long moment, Ilya thinks he will go unanswered, his quiet words parried away by the steel sword of Hollander’s eternal worry.

“Good night,” Hollander manages, when Ilya is on the cusp of sleep, warm and satiated against his side. Something touches the top of his head, but he’s too close to sleep to try to figure it out. “See you in the morning.”

Ilya manages a hum of vague agreement before sleep rises and tugs him under, sending him to a world where everything is warm, and Hollander smiles at him easily, and there is no fear between them at all.

A sharp ring pierces through the haze of sleep, jolting Ilya from his dreams.

“What the *fuck*,” Ilya says, but he says it slurred and in Russian, so he's not sure if he got the point across, when the blaring noise starts up again. He's curled around Hollander, his nose nestled into the curve of his neck, his arm tossed over his chest, his palm over the steady beat of Hollander's heart. “Is attack?”

“It's my alarm,” Hollander rasps, his voice heavy and sleep-warm as he fumbles for his phone, sending the room plunging back into quiet. Ilya can feel arousal building in his stomach as he listens to Hollander whine and sigh, stretching his arms out but not shifting out of his grip. “You can go back to sleep.”

“Mmm, and if I have problem?” Ilya murmurs, concentrating enough to be in English—which Hollander *should* appreciate—given how fucking early it is. He grinds forward, relishing in the gasp that Hollander lets out. “You have caused problem, Hollander. Should fix.”

“*Me?*” Hollander bites out as Ilya slides a hand up, under his shirt, squeezing at his chest, dragging his fingers over the planes of his stomach. “How the hell is this *my* fault?”

Ilya hums, settling into a lazy rhythm. “You are moaning in sleep all night—”

“I am *not*—”

“—crying and whimpering for my big cock—”

“I am *going* to kill you.”

“But, is okay, I tell myself,” Ilya continues, pressing soft kisses against Hollander's neck. “I say, Hollander does not know he is so, so beautiful in sleep. Does not know how easy it would be to slip inside. Does not understand how warm and wet he still is.”

Hollander groans, throaty and wanting, and Ilya lets himself bite, just once, right over the top of his spine.

“Fuck me,” he pants out, as Ilya drags his hand down to ghost his fingers over his shaft. He is leaking already, sloppy and desperate, his hips jolting forward every so often, his boxers damp as Ilya palms over his cock. “Fuck me, Rozanov, *please*.”

Ilya hums, his eyes hardly opening as he fumbles around for the lube, swearing under his breath when it rolls across the bedside table before he gets a hand on it.

“*Please*,” Hollander whispers, as Ilya tugs his boxers down, hardly taking the time to warm the lube before he's sliding a finger inside of Hollander.

It's an easy glide, warm and slick; a slow press aided by the fact that Hollander is still loose from last night.

It makes Ilya feverish, to know that he has fucked Hollander a little less tight, that for now, he has changed his body in a small way, has opened him up to fit his cock with few adjustments.

He's dizzy with arousal at the thought of always having this; of being able to slick up his dick and slide inside of Hollander whenever he wants.

“*Fuck* me,” Hollander whines, shifting back, his walls rippling around Ilya's fingers as if he has something to prove. The low, sleep-worn rasp of his voice only makes Ilya harder, only adds to the impossibility of everything. “Please, Rozanov, give me your cock.”

“You wake up, and all you think about is my dick,” Ilya murmurs into his ear as he manages to wiggle his briefs down and slip a condom on, despite how desperately Hollander is writhing in his arms. “And you *still* think you are not a slut, Hollander?” He tsks, notching the head of his cock against Hollander's hole. “So demanding—where is my good boy?”

“I'll be good,” Hollander gasps out, even as he tries to slide back, his rim clenching around Ilya's tip. “I promise I'll be—I can be good.”

“I know you are, moya shlyukha,” Ilya croons, groaning when Hollander clenches impossibly tight around him at the Russian. “You are so good for me.”

“Wanna take it,” Hollander pants out. He sounds dazed, delirious with muddled thoughts and spiraling greed. Ilya cannot believe this is what he has awoken to, that he will get to fuck Hollander in the bed they have shared. That Hollander is nearly *crying* for him, his name low and gravelly in the Canadian's mouth. “Fuck me like you mean it, Rozanov.”

Ilya answers him the only way he knows how: by sliding in, bullying his way into Hollander's tight hole, listening to his gasp his pleasure out to the world.

Tight heat sheathes his cock, rippling across his shaft.

All of the air leaves Ilya's lungs as Hollander clenches down.

"Oh, *fuck*," Hollander hisses. In the dark of the hotel room, there is nothing more to the world than the feeling of Hollander around him, the warmth of his skin as Ilya drags his palms everywhere he can touch. He's fumbling for more contact, greedy for the touch of his body.

Everything is bleeding together into dizzying heat as Ilya starts up a slow rhythm, his hands wandering. Hollander twists in his arms, his mouth pressing slick imprints across his neck, down his jaw, catching on his shoulder, messy and half-teeth.

"You feel so good," Ilya manages to breathe out. "Would keep you here, Hollander. Would make you take it every day. Would split you open."

"Do it," Hollander gasps, his teeth sinking into Ilya's chest as he pants against his skin. "C'mon, Rozanov, make me feel it."

"Gonna ruin you," Ilya promises, fuckdrunk and warm with Hollander's body heat, intoxicated on the feeling of being tangled under the sheets. "Will make you nothing more than mine."

Hollander gasps underneath him, clenching down, and Ilya loses his English, slurring promises in Russian, his hand curling around Hollander's heavy, weeping cock.

Slowly, despite the constant rush of pleasure, heat begins to build in his stomach.

Buzzing begins in his fingers as he tightens his grip on Hollander and listens to him sob at the touch, his voice muffled as he presses his mouth against Ilya's throat, his teeth scraping over his skin.

Everything feels both permanent and fleeting; every touch is a heavy press that fades as soon as their fingers move on, as soon as the heat of their hands shifts. The wet slick noises of his cock, the faint slap of his hips, the loud pants of both of them fill the air, dizzyingly effervescent.

Ilya can feel his orgasm rising, a tide he has no desire to fight against, and strokes Hollander's cock exactly as he likes it, no longer teasing with his motions.

Hollander moans, low and gravelly, and Ilya manages to tip his head up, blindly kissing across his cheeks until he lands on the corner of his mouth.

As always, he opens so sweetly for him, eager and greedy, his tongue sliding against his, his mouth vibrating down his throat.

"Gonna cum," Hollander gasps out, his first words in a while. He sounds unspooled with thick pleasure, bloated with desire. Ilya wants nothing more than to fuck this voice out of him forever. He loves it when Hollander gets high off of arousal, stuffed full of hunger. "Gonna—*holyshit*—"

His whole body tenses, clenching down as his dick twitches and then floods Ilya's palm with cum, the mess of it immediately smearing everywhere.

"You gonna cum for me?" Hollander murmurs into his mouth through pants, greedy for more somehow, despite having just cum. "C'mon, Rozanov, fill me up."

Blinding want sears through him as Ilya tips over the edge, unstrung from everything but pleasure and Hollander—just the thought of fucking him full of cum is enough to undo him.

Shane, he thinks as he falls to pieces, as alarms begin to blare in the back of his mind, even as his mouth manages a choked gasp of, "*Fuck*, Hollander."

A minute passes of them breathing together, as Ilya's cock slowly softens; he's unwilling to move until Hollander makes him, far too content with breathing in the scent of them tangled together, of their sweat, of their cum.

Another minute slips by.

Ilya thinks he could stay like this forever.

Hollander stirs, his hand fumbling back, landing heavily on Ilya's hip. He squeezes, his grip firm and exacting.

"C'mon," he murmurs, hissing as they slowly separate, Ilya immediately mourning the loss of warmth against him. "Let's shower."

It feels terrifyingly domestic to shower together.

They've fucked in the shower before, and he's used it as an excuse to linger, but they've never showered for *real* together.

Ilya now knows what Shane Hollander looks like with suds in his hair. He knows what he looks like when he runs through his whole game day routine in the bathroom. He knows how meticulous he is as he washes his face and brushes his teeth, a timer set for two minutes exactly.

He thinks he may be irrevocably changed.

He's now seen Hollander in all stages of getting ready, in all stages of getting dressed. He'd almost accuse the other man of deliberately trying to throw him off his game if he was not aware of how *unkindly* Hollander would take to being accused of game interference.

No, this odd feeling is all his.

It buoys him through the walk to the rink, follows him down to the locker room, until it's shattered under the weight of the game and the loud chatter of his team.

"How's the hotel, Roz?" Cliff calls as soon as they make eye contact. He's stretching awkwardly, trying to follow along with Carmichael as the rookies lead them in some bizarre move that Ilya will *not* be doing, no matter how hard they beg. It's always good to give them

more motivation to win, even if he's lying through his teeth about participating next time. “Not too bad?”

Ilya shrugs, fighting the urge to smile. “Is okay,” he says blandly as he shoves his gear into his messy stall. “Could be worse.” *I woke up next to Shane Hollander*, he thinks, and feels stupidly giddy.

“Fair enough,” Cliff mutters, clapping him on the shoulder, looking relieved to stop whatever the fuck he was doing. “But, seriously, let me know if there's anything I can do.”

“Da,” Ilya murmurs, giving him a genuine grin. “Of course, Marly. Is no problem letting you feel needed *off* the ice, too.”

Cliff laughs. “You say that like it's an insult, but all I heard was *needed*,” he says, shaking his head. “What can I say, I like to provide.”

Ilya wiggles his eyebrows and smirks as Marlow shoves at him.

“Whatever, asshole,” he says, but he's grinning, so Ilya pays his annoyance no mind. “Let's fucking ruin Montreal.”

“Yes,” Ilya says, his blood singing. He gets to go to sleep next to Hollander *again* tonight. He shakes his head, trying to get back into fight mode. “Let's fucking win.”

The game starts, and every thought except for hockey gets stripped away.

It's *vicious* on the ice, brutal and heartstoppingly good. Ilya knows that he and Shane—*Hollander*, he reminds himself sternly—are clawing the ground out from underneath each other, every goal met and answered with an even tighter shot.

It feels as though they are the only two on the ice at point, whirling dervishes of hunger, shark-toothed and fierce, ready to do anything to win.

It's *exhilarating.*

The Boston Montreal rivalry is something that Ilya always feels, no matter when they play each other, but tonight it's a livewire strung taut between them, a call and response, a bloodsworn oath.

He's never played so sharply. Hollander's never been so vicious.

They're knocking into each other like they're trying to kill each other, and neither one of them can stop grinning, taunting the other to the delight of the crowd.

Victory, when it slides Boston's way one risky shot after another, never tastes as sweet as when it's dragged out of Montreal's hands, utterly bloodied and answered in full.

The Bears, miraculously, eke out a win.

8-7 Boston.

All but two points are due in some part to either Ilya or Hollander.

“Holy *shit*,” someone says, once they've entered the locker room, the team's walk completely silent in the tunnel on the way back, as if there was some spell holding them. “No, really, I mean, what the fuck?”

As if that was all that everyone had been waiting on, the room erupts into shouting and laughter, people clapping Ilya on the shoulder, bright grins on their faces.

“Dude, I've never seen Hollander like that,” Sebbin calls from across the room. “And *shit*, Roz—you are such a beautiful bastard on the ice always, but tonight was just—” He kisses his fingers with an exaggerated mwah. “*So* crazy, dude.”

“So crazy,” someone else yells, and then they're off again, voices loud and happy.

Ilya grins, but stays quiet for the most part, handing out little compliments when he has them, but mostly letting himself fade to the background, just taking them all in.

The emotions that swamp him are raw. Strong. Bewilderingly victorious, despite the expected outcome.

It's just—it's fucking *bizarre.*

He's going back to his hotel room in Boston. Not his home, where he will have to wait for a text from a beautiful man.

Hollander is going to be there. He's going to *stay* there.

They're going to fuck, and argue, and probably ruin some sheets, and then, they're going to go to sleep.

Ilya's going to *sleep* next to Hollander. *Again.* For the *second night* in a row.

After they played a game against each other. After he *won*.

Truly, it boggles his mind.

Holy shit, Ilya thinks, as he wipes water out of his eyes, moving on autopilot, half-heartedly bantering with his team.

Holy fucking shit, he thinks, as he dresses in a daze. *I am going back to the same room as Shane Hollander.*

He doesn't need to check his phone. He doesn't need to text; he knows *exactly* where Shane will be tonight.

The wave of lust that crashes through him is so dizzying that his head spins.

It's *dangerous*, how much wanting floods his brain. How eager he is to get back to their—*their!*—room.

“Jesus, Roz,” Cliff mutters as he yanks a shirt over his head. “What the fuck? Got places to be?” He groans. “Don't tell me you aren't coming out tonight?”

Ilya shrugs, but lets the quirk of his mouth speak for him, a smug unfurling. “Have plans,” he says, letting his smirk get wider, a little darker. “Have earned a reward with the win, no?”

Cliff hoots, clapping him on the shoulder. “Atta*boy*, Captain!”

Ilya grins at him, struck stupid with lust and hunger and greed. He wants to say *Jane is in town*, wants to really say *I am going to fuck Shane Hollander*. Wants to say *I have someone to go home to.*

But he keeps quiet, letting his smirk do the talking.

He knows that someone has spread the word that he will be unavailable tonight when none of his teammates ask him to go out; instead, they all just grin at him widely, as if they're in on the joke.

Ha! He wants to crow. *Joke is on you.*

But he doesn't. He keeps quiet, nodding along when people make good points, as the coaches break down the most important pieces.

Someone tries to snag him for the press, but he dodges, gesturing for Cliff to take one for the team, and hiding a grin when Marlow complies without question.

The walk back to his hotel is easy, loud and boisterous, the streets flooded with gleeful attendants of the game and the usual nightlife of Boston.

Ilya keeps his head ducked, a hat tugged low, his face tucked into his jacket's collar as he strides purposefully through the crowd, catching bits and pieces of conversations.

—did you see that beautiful pass?

Rozanov was on fire tonight!

And when Hollander hit—

Never seen anything like it.

Now, that was a game of hockey.

Ilya hides his smile, his heart full.

What a feeling, to be celebrated in his city.

His city. His home. His—

Shane, he hopes, is waiting for him.

He picks up his pace and hurries, sliding through the crowd easily, no one stopping him or even doing a double take as he makes it through to his hotel and then up to the room.

Ilya steps through the door, and there he is: Hollander, turning from the bed, his shoes kicked off neatly beside the door, his hair damp from his shower at the Garden.

“Hey,” he says, smiling slightly, looking pleased to see him. He's only in his compression shirt and briefs, looking as if he's about to crawl into bed. “I wasn't sure if—”

Ilya barely manages to drop his bags and kick off his shoes before he is across the room, toppling the two of them into the mattress.

“Oh, *fuck,*” Hollander moans, as Ilya bites at his jaw, laps across the hollow of his neck, before dragging his lips upwards and stealing the air straight from his mouth.

“I won,” Ilya manages, dizzy with relief, after he's licked over every tooth, tasted every corner. Spit is smeared between them, and Shane already has a dazed look in his eyes. “That means…”

Hollander blinks at him when he doesn't continue, squirming underneath him.

“That means?” he prompts, gasping when Ilya sneaks a hand up his shirt, scoring faint lines across his chest. “Roz—*Rozanov*—”

“That means you will do everything I say, yes?” Ilya murmurs, pinching Hollander’s nipple just to hear him squeak, to watch a faintly appalled look settle in his eyes when he realizes just how wanton he sounds. “It means you listen, da?”

Hollander nods, his eyes wide and lust-drunk. Pink streaks across his face, his mouth slick and open as he breathes. He's gorgeous like this, gritty tension releasing from his spine.

“Good,” Ilya mutters, peeling himself off of Hollander and nodding at the headboard. “Naked now. No touching. Go on, up.”

Hollander scrambles to obey, his shirt and underwear off faster than Ilya can blink as he crawls up the mattress in a way that does nothing to help how hard Ilya is.

“Shit,” Hollander hisses as he settles down just in time to watch Ilya yank off his shirt. Ilya watches as he slides his hands under his thighs, and his dick twitches as he realizes it's so that Hollander won’t *touch* himself.

“You are so good for me,” Ilya murmurs, his gaze dragging down Hollander's skin, watching him shift, his hips rolling once before he realizes, his cheeks red. “So eager to listen.”

Hollander whines before he flushes, looking utterly mortified.

Ilya cocks his head, smirking. “What was that, Hollander? I don't speak slut.” He watches Hollander's eyes blow black with arousal and grins smugly as he finishes stripping himself down, letting himself drag his fingers down his shaft just to taunt Shane. “Oh?”

“Shut up, Rozanov,” Hollander manages, already sounding drugged on pleasure, fucked out. He swallows raggedly, his eyelashes fluttering as he blinks. “What are you gonna do to me?”

“What do you want?” Ilya asks, curious. “I could fuck you, blow you. I could make you beg. I could work you open. Fit my fist inside. Could curl my hands around your throat, could fuck you into sleep.” He shrugs, grinning at Shane as he shudders. “Could do anything, Hollander. Whole world is oyster.”

Hollander whines, his legs shifting. “I want you,” he says. It would almost be cruel if Ilya couldn't see the water collecting in his eyelines, if he couldn't see the rapid blinks as Hollander tries to fight off whatever has unwound within him. “I don't—I know we—” He swallows hard, his gaze darting between Ilya's eyes. “This—if it crosses a line, if it makes you uncomfortable, we don't—actually, this is—”

“Hollander,” Ilya murmurs, setting his hand down on his ankle. He can feel the other man trembling under his touch, the hummingbird-quick shift of his muscles as he tenses. “Is okay. Ask.”

Shane meets his eyes, shattered want soaked through. “Will you—mark me?” He asks, flushing bright pink. “Not too much, but just—I like—I want—”

“It will not cause problems?” Ilya double checks, keeping his grip loose, even though he wants to pull Hollander down the bedding, wants to curl up in his ribs, wants to give him his heart. He thinks he might throw up from the sheer shock of the heat that floods his body. He feels as if he's about to step onto the ice during game seven in a tied run for the Cup. He thinks he's going to split right down the middle with frothy, filthy greed as he stares at Shane Hollander's sweet brown eyes and listens to him ask for *bruises*. “I do not want to cause… issue.”

Hollander shakes his head. “Just—keep it on my thighs and hips,” he says, permission granted, and Ilya cannot stop himself, as he curls his fingers around Hollander’s ankle and *yanks.*

“I will give you mark,” Ilya promises, a dark delight thick in his voice. “You will be wearing my mouth imprint for days, Hollander.”

Shane keens, his voice fading into a heaving gasp as Ilya slides a hand up and opens his legs, staring down at the canvas he has just been gifted.

“I am going to ruin you,” Ilya says, dragging a finger down the crease of Hollander's hip. “I am going to get my teeth so deep you feel it in your bones.”

“Yeah,” Hollander whines, his cock dripping onto his stomach. “Do it, I want you to.”

Ilya, as he so often does, listens.

He sinks down, his hands settling into familiar spots, holding Hollander open and down, spreading him wide for Ilya's perusal.

Unlike all the times before, Ilya's entire focus is on the curve of his thighs, on the soft skin that joins his leg and hips, on the tendon that tenses with every shift of Shane's body.

He presses kisses up his thighs, peppering them across wiry hair and strong muscles, scraping his teeth every so often to elicit a sigh.

“I wanna feel it,” Hollander groans, after a minute of his teasing. “Rozanov, *please*. Fucking —bite me.”

“I am picking perfect place,” Ilya murmurs, biting at his hips, at the top of his pubes. “Must be perfection, da?”

“It's *you*,” Hollander murmurs, meeting his gaze when Ilya glances up at him. His eyes are damp with wanting, his pupils black and huge, seething desire in the pit of them. “It'll be perfect because it's *you*, Rozanov.”

Ilya sucks in a breath, cracked straight down the center with sharp greed.

He doesn't break away from his gaze as he presses a soft kiss to the curve of his inner thigh, before he opens his mouth and *bites.*

Hollander yowls at the ache, but Ilya has heard this sound before; it's his *feels-too-good-to-process* noise, the one Ilya got from him the first time he fucked him in downward dog.

It's not all that rare to hear, but it always drags a smug edge out from under his tongue, always makes him want to swallow Hollander down and ruin his life.

Ilya catches the meat of his thigh between his teeth and digs in harder, watching the way Hollander's dick jumps at the sensation, blurting out precum across his stomach.

“Ohmy*god*,” Hollander gasps. He twitches up, pushing into Ilya’s mouth. “Harder, please, *please*. Give me another, Rozanov—I wanna—I wanna—”

Ilya laves his tongue across the caught muscles in his mouth, sucking hard enough that he hopes Hollander will feel the impression for days.

He wants to haunt Shane, wants to be the ghost that lingers, the smoke that curls from his mouth with every exhale. He wants to dissolve across his tongue, put teeth marks on his bones.

He *wants*.

Spit collects in the corners of his mouth as he holds on, worrying the dull edges of his teeth into Hollander. He tastes of salt and smells of faint sweat and sterile body wash from the Garden.

Ilya bites, just a little bit harder, listening to Hollander moan, and releases, darting in once to press a kiss smack in the center of the rapidly darkening bruise.

They are both still at the sight of it.

Nestled in the curve of Hollander's inner thigh, nearly on the edge of his ass, sits Ilya's mouth; a mottled collection of dents from his teeth, bright red fading into a deeper color from the suction of his mouth.

It's relatively carefully placed, but if anyone were to see it, there would be no mistaking what it is.

It looks—

It looks like possession.

“Holy shit,” Shane breathes out, his hands hovering over the mark.

“Can touch,” Ilya murmurs. “Go on, Hollander. Can you feel the mark of my teeth?”

“I'm—” Hollander starts, lowering his hand. Ilya watches his face as he drags gentle fingertips over the imprint of it, his lashes fluttering. He looks at peace. He looks like he's going to war. He looks like he has never been so worked up in all his life, and something in the pit of Ilya's stomach screeches in victory. “It's so—” He groans. “It's *hot*, Rozanov. To the, to the touch. And to—”

Ilya waits, but Hollander has fallen silent, panting as he slowly strokes across the bruise.

“And to?” he prompts.

Hollander's eyes blink open, water smeared across the edges of them. “And to me,” he says shyly, as if it is not obvious. “I think it's pretty fucking hot.”

Ilya grins at him, making sure he shows all his teeth. “I am sure, then, you would like another.”

“Yeah,” Hollander whines, lifting his hand without Ilya telling him. “Please.”

Ilya hums, his hand sliding down Shane's unmarked thigh, before he holds him down once again.

“You have been good,” Ilya murmurs.

“I have been good?” Shane repeats uncertainly.

Ilya meets his eyes. “You are always good, Hollander,” he says softly, watching a flush work its way down his chest. “But tonight you have been *extra* good.” He grins when Hollander moans. “You may touch.”

Shane has no hesitation; his hands slide into Ilya’s hair immediately, his nails scratching across his head.

“Please,” he begs when Ilya begins kissing up his thigh. “Bite me again.”

Ilya is helpless to comply.

He sets his teeth into Hollander's thigh, worries at the give of his skin. He hollows his mouth and sucks until he imagines he can feel the beat of Shane's heart in the pulse of blood.

He wants to be here forever, latched onto Hollander, carried in some soft and intimate place, handled with care. It's dizzying to want and lust and need so much; greed, he is finding, is his constant companion when it comes to Shane.

Hollander's fingers push at his hair, gentle, easy, as he moans, pushing into Ilya's mouth.

"*Fuck*," he croaks as Ilya pulls back. "Jesus *Christ*."

Again, they both pause to admire the look of it, the deep imprint of Ilya's mouth branded into Shane's soft skin, dug into muscles.

"Fuck me," Hollander blurts out, after a moment of silence. "Rozanov, *please*—"

Ilya nods, dazed as he pulls back. He can see his mouth on Shane. He can see his *teeth* on Shane.

He thinks he might die from the sheer mess of wanting that rises.

"I will—"

"You don't need it," Hollander bites out, his face screwed up. "I, uh, I prepped."

"You are—" Ilya starts, and then pauses as a thick blanket of want rolls down his spine. The room feels hot suddenly, sparks flying through the air as he stares down at Hollander's already slick hole, the pink puffy rim of him that glistens in the faint light.

He looks up, meeting Hollander's uncertain gaze.

"I thought you might come back, but later," Hollander mutters finally, his eyes darting away to stare at the ceiling. "So I wanted to be—" He swallows as Ilya tracks the bob of his throat. "I wanted to be ready for you."

"Moya shlyukha," Ilya breathes. "You spoil me."

Hollander lifts his head, a faint smile on his face. "You aren't mad at me?"

Ilya arches his brow. "Mad, Hollander? If only because I enjoy the show and missed it, then da, yes, I am mad. Mad that you came back to our hotel room and *prepared* to be fucked? Prepared for *me?*" He shakes his head, hot delight spilling under his skin as he rubs a thumb around the rim of Hollander's entrance, testing the give. "How can I be mad? Is an honor."

Hollander shudders underneath him. "Oh," he murmurs, sounding almost struck dumb. "Good."

Ilya hums, nodding. "Is very good," he says, watching Hollander shiver again. "You are my very good boy, no?" Shane nods, and Ilya grins, before he gently lifts his legs, folding him carefully in half. "Then you will stay good and hold these, da?"

Hollander nods again, his hands immediately wrapping around his knees.

“You are so beautiful,” Ilya murmurs, dropping a kiss on his knee. “Let me fuck you, yes?”

“*Please*,” Hollander gasps out, and Ilya laughs quietly as he leans over and grabs a condom from the side table.

He slides it on, unable to resist stroking his cock once, before he notches the head of his dick into Hollander and slides in, unwilling to tease.

He stares down at Hollander, who's watching him with glazed eyes, his mouth dropping open on a moan.

“Is nice,” Ilya says, making sure his thumbs have settled over the imprints of his mouth on both legs. He pushes into them, greedily watching as Hollander arches into the touch, eager for more. “To know how much you like it.”

“Like what?” Hollander manages, as Ilya thrusts in again, starting up a steady rhythm.

His eyes linger on the wet gape of his mouth, on the sheen in his brown eyes. He will kiss Hollander again, he knows, but he aches to do so *now*.

“Like ownership,” Ilya says, gripping his thighs harder just to hear him gasp. “Like being *mine*.”

“Yours,” Hollander whimpers, his eyes locked on Ilya's.

They're caught, spellbound by this seething hunger that rises between them, this aching tide of devotion that would see them both undone.

Ilya has never had to imagine adult life without Shane Hollander. He never wants to.

“I am going to fuck you so that you are bruised inside too, da? I am going to make sure that you carry me with you wherever you go.” He grins down at Hollander's fucked out face, his glossy-eyed stare. “No one will know that you have been bent over and shown your place, moya shlyukha. Your slutty little secret is safe with me.”

“Fuck me,” Hollander whines, as if Ilya is not doing enough. “Harder, make me feel it.”

“Will be nothing more than a bruise, when I am done,” Ilya promises, and then he sets to work.

Hollander is hot inside, wet and slick from lube, his hole sucking him in deeper and deeper. Every other part of him is loose with pleasure, slack and eager as Ilya drives into him harder and harder.

The slap of his balls, the wet glide of his cock; Hollander sighs and gasps and begs for more, his hands locked into place around his legs.

Ilya lets go of one of his thighs and leans forward, capturing his plush mouth, grinning when their teeth click in their eagerness to devour each other.

“Would keep you here forever,” Ilya confesses. “Could be my prize after every game, my sweet slut, warming my bed.” Shane moans, rocking back against his cock harder, and Ilya continues. “Could mark you after every game, moya zvezda. Could bruise you for every goal, keep a permanent tally of victory set in your skin.”

Hollander leans up and licks into his mouth, sucking his tongue in without care for how sloppy their lips are against each other.

Ilya fucks forward, tension coiling in the base of his spine.

He feels unmoored, overcome. Lust boils inside of him, burning up under the sheer weight of his affection for Hollander, until the two are soaked through with nothing else but greed.

He bites at Hollander, sinks his teeth into his tongue in a mockery of the bruises on his legs, and smirks when he feels his cock jump between them, more precum searing across their skin.

He pulls back, grinning when Hollander chases after his mouth with a whine. “Be good,” he says, straightening back out and reangling so that he can drive into Hollander's prostate.

“Oh my *god*,” Hollander warbles, his voice shot through with shaky, vibrant pleasure. “More, *more*—Rozanov, I'm gonna—I'm—”

“You will cum on my dick or not at all,” Ilya snarls, and knuckles at the dark purple imprint of his mouth.

Hollander's whine cuts out as his whole body arches, all of him straining for more as Ilya glances down just in time to see his cock twitch and cum, the white liquid pooling in the places of his stomach, splattering up his chest.

“*Shit*,” Ilya swears as Hollander clenches around him, his hole fluttering in tight pulses with every spurt of cum. “*Hollander*, you are so—*fuck*.”

Hollander gasps, his chest shuddering, and Ilya can't stop his own orgasm as it roars through him, flooding him with decadent agony.

He leans forward, dropping kisses across Hollander's face until his cock aches with sensitivity and he has to pull out, tying off his condom before he drops it in the trash and collapses next to Shane on the bed.

“We have no fucking top blanket *again*,” Hollander says after a beat of silence, sounding annoyed.

“Okay?” Ilya says, blinking dazedly at the ceiling. He can't feel anything other than pleasure right now, and he's not going to let Shane steal that away from him. “So next time we put down tarp.”

Hollander snorts before his shoulder knocks into him as he resettles in closer. “If we started carrying tarps around to hook up, people would think we were murderers.”

Ilya shrugs, uncaring of the logistics. “Would be true, no? You have murdered me tonight.”

Hollander scoffs, but Ilya can hear a bit of glee in his voice. “Okay, drama queen,” he mutters, shifting around. Ilya's view of the white ceiling is suddenly blocked by the mirth-filled eyes of Shane. “C'mon, Rozanov. Let's get ready for bed.”

Ilya sighs, and Hollander drops a quick kiss to his lips, his mouth curling up. “C'mon,” he cajoles. “Shower and bed.”

“I am up,” Ilya mutters, shaking his head when Hollander pats his ribs. “Go start the shower, Hollander. I know you are finicky about temperature.”

Hollander blinks at him, before his face splits open with a grin, and he disappears from view. “That's a good vocab word,” he says, sounding earnestly thrilled. “You holding out on me?”

Ilya shoves himself up, staggering over to the bathroom.

“You are strangest man alive,” he says, smiling at Hollander. “To care about my vocabulary.”

Hollander shrugs, glancing over his shoulder from where he's fiddling with the dials, testing the water.

“I'm just saying—it's been a long couple of years,” Hollander mutters over the rush of the water. “And you've only ever been—” He shrugs again, his ears pinkening. “It's impressive, that's all.”

Warmth bubbles up within Ilya. Of all of the messy, impossible, improbable situations that have gotten him here, he could never regret being *here*. Not like this. Not with Shane standing before him, earnest and kind.

“You are too—” Ilya starts, and then cuts himself off. “Thank you.”

“Of course,” Shane murmurs, his gaze gentle. “Now, c'mon. I finally got it ready.”

Ilya laughs, the odd mood breaking, and follows Hollander in, dropping another kiss on his shoulder as he shifts past.

They get ready for bed, just as they did yesterday, and Ilya hates how easy it is that they have settled into a routine.

He should not be doing this, he thinks, but it's too late; he's already been trapped by the force of his own wants.

They stay mostly quiet as they go through the motions and climb into bed together. The ease of last night has faded somewhat, both of them well aware that Hollander will be leaving soon.

They won't have a bed together in twelve hours, and Ilya almost wants to cry at the thought.

Tonight, though, Shane doesn't even try to fuss about sleeping curled up together. He sets his phone down with a decisive click and pats the bed, and Ilya is under the covers before he can blink, both of them swaying into each other, Hollander nestling in against his chest.

The lamp clicks off.

“Good night,” Hollander murmurs.

“Good night,” Ilya whispers, pressing a kiss to the back of his neck. He already has a feeling that it's not going to be a restful sleep for him.

When Hollander's phone alarm goes off, Ilya's already pretending to be asleep. He’s spent most of the night dozing, his ears perked for any movement, his heart pattering whenever Hollander stirs.

It feels…wildly different from how it ever has before. Unsettling. Too much and too little and too careful, too sweet—it’s just *overwhelming*. Ilya does not have the words or thoughts for it.

The awful feeling of hopelessness rises in his chest, tangling around his ribs, as he listens to Hollander pull himself out of bed.

He can feel the other man hesitate, can feel the lightest of touches as he slides off the bed and tugs the covers up, tucking Ilya back in.

It makes him want to cry, damp and broken, curled up in his soft bed.

But he doesn't let it swamp him for too long, shifting about as Hollander reenters the room from the bathroom, hissing under his breath when his toiletries rattle.

“Shit,” Shane says, blinking at Ilya when he lifts his head up from his pillow, squinting blearily at the other man. “I didn't mean to wake you.”

“You are like herd of elephants,” Ilya bites out, and prays that the blatant fondness is covered up by his drowsiness. He lets his head drop back down, sighing as he raises his voice just loud enough to not be a mumble. “So loud, Hollander. Is miracle I am only one awake in hotel.”

Hollander snorts and circles around the bed to crouch next to Ilya.

He looks half-annoyed, half-soft in the faint light creeping in from around the edges of the blinds as he reaches a hand out and strokes lightly over the curve of his shoulders, his fingers sending ripples of goosebumps across his skin.

“I didn't mean to wake you,” Hollander repeats. “But I—” He pauses, cutting himself off. “Thank you for sharing my hotel room,” he says, and leans forward, pressing a soft kiss to Ilya's mouth.

Ilya shifts, cradling the curve of his jaw, his thumb stroking over the hint of stubble.

“Is my hotel room,” he whispers against Hollander's lips as he pulls back, smiling at him. “But good try, Hollander.”

Shane's mouth twitches into a familiar exasperated smile, and Ilya grins, sleepy and warm, half-convinced this is all some dream.

“See you at the next game,” Hollander mutters, poorly forcing back his smile, and rises, walking back towards his neatly packed bag. “I really need to—I gotta go. Our flight's in like four hours.”

Ilya shifts, rolling over to watch as Hollander gathers up his shit, patting his pockets, unzipping his bag once again, just to be sure he has everything. The spot where Shane slept is still warm, comforting, and Ilya lets himself nestle into the fading heat, blinking slowly at the almost-steady checks Hollander makes.

“If you do not have it, I am still here,” Ilya says finally, after watching him double-check all of his pockets for a second time. He can't keep the soft amusement from his voice as he continues, “I will not make you suffer *too* much in return, if you need me to send you international package.”

Shane rolls his eyes, but stops patting himself down long enough to exhale roughly and meet Ilya's eyes.

“Next game?” he repeats, as if Ilya's somehow forgotten in the three minutes; as if they don't have a running tracker in their chat history of just how and when they'll see each other next. “My place?”

Ilya nods, trying not to seem too eager, but it doesn't seem to matter so much when Hollander looks just as enthused.

“Okay,” Hollander mutters, inhaling. His dark brown eyes flicker over the bed, seemingly searching for something, only to soften when he meets Ilya's gaze.

“I have to go,” he says again, but it doesn't stop him from stepping back over to the bed, pressing another kiss against Ilya's sleep-clumsy mouth. “Shit.”

“Go,” Ilya murmurs into his mouth. “Soon, yes?”

“Soon,” Hollander agrees, and pulls back. “Fuck. Yeah. Soon.”

He chews on his lip, but whatever urge he has to say something fades after a few beats under Ilya’s steady gaze.

“Okay,” he says again. “I have to go.”

Ilya hums an agreement, and Shane backs up, sliding his shoes on. Ilya's whole body clenches when he realizes that Hollander lined their shoes up together at some point, as if it's a habit to see their sneakers next to each other.

“I—” Hollander starts, only to shake his head and meet Ilya's eyes. “Montreal. See you then.”

“Goodbye, Hollander,” Ilya murmurs, wiggling his fingers as he heads for the door. “See you soon.”

The last bit of Hollander Ilya gets to see is the glint of his teeth as he leans back to grin, before the door opens and shuts.

Quiet settles in the room.

The bed feels cold suddenly.

Ilya inhales, the smell of Hollander's familiar body wash and scent filling his lungs.

Fuck, he thinks, as his heart cleaves in two. How is he supposed to be *normal*, now? When he has seen Shane Hollander asleep, when he has heard the way he sounds at ungodly hours in the morning, the soft wheeze of his lungs in the middle of sleep? How can he ever be normal again, when all he wants to do is annoy Shane forever? What the hell is he going to do when he comes back to this room, and there is no one but him here?

Fuck, he thinks again, a scythe of sharp want zipping down his spine, a dangerous unspooling of all he is greedy for. *That was such a bad idea.*

End Notes

so, fun fact, this was supposed to be pwp, but then i started thinking about the implications of ilya realizing when he's homesick, he's homesick for shane somehow, and how mentally the switch of hollander to shane would be, and then i sort of...got lost in the sauce? i hope no one minds the accidental 19k fic. i just couldn't stop writing.

shout out to the boston timber piles as well, this fic would not exist without that shitty urban development plan. and, obvs, huge shout out to the heated rivalry fandom - my drafts are so insane right now (i have over TWENTY other fics started) and that's all because of y'all. here's to a year where we all end up at the cottage at some point, whatever the cottage may be for you.

i'm on twit. let me know what you think!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!