

Don't Make Me Beg

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Don't Make Me Beg

by [thethickofit](#)

Summary

“Shane.” Ilya’s hand wraps around his forearm like a vice. “Pull over.”

“What?” Shane asks cautiously, careful to keep his eyes on the road. If Ilya's suggesting what he thinks he's suggesting...

Ilya’s grip tightens, and Shane realises that he isn’t suggesting anything at all. “Pull over," he repeats. "*Please.*”

Notes

TW for vomit. Takes place between Heated Rivalry and The Long Game.

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

Shane's leg won't stop bouncing.

For his entire life, people have been telling him to quit it; his parents, his friends, his teammates. Even Ilya has told him a million times that Shane's fidgeting drives him nuts. It's an annoying habit. He knows that.

Right now, Shane wishes Ilya were here to tell him that. More than anything, he wishes he were here to simply put a hand on his knee and tell him to stop.

Soon, he reminds himself as his leg continues to bounce. *Soon*.

He's been circling the airport for half an hour now, killing and biding his time, eyes constantly flicking to his phone to see if Ilya's texted or called. Cell signal's terrible here, there's a very real possibility that the flight's landing even later than its expected 8 PM arrival time, and Shane is so amped up with excitement that he's buzzing with energy.

Every time he passes the arrivals doors, he squints his eyes and scans the crowd for his boyfriend.

By the time he catches sight of Ilya, who has his sunglasses on even though the sun's been down for hours, Shane's so jittery with anticipation that his face breaks into a huge smile.

He finds an empty spot on the curb, leg bouncing incessantly.

Ilya throws his stuff into the trunk first before sliding into the passenger seat, leaning over just enough to press a quick kiss to Shane's cheek. Shane's eyes grow wide, head jerking reflexively to the window in case anyone saw, but everyone standing on the curb is too busy staring at their phones.

"Hi," Ilya says with a wry smile.

"Hi," Shane says back.

Ilya doesn't say anything else. He puts his seatbelt on, reclines the seat as far back as it'll go, and closes his eyes.

Tired, probably, Shane thinks, reassuring himself. It's late, and Shane knows for a fact that Ilya just spent most of the day fielding questions from reporters for an upcoming article for Sports Illustrated before flying over. He's tired. That's all.

Shane shoves down the unhelpful idea that Ilya might be mad at him for some reason, and instead reaches over and turns on the radio so music can replace the silence.

It isn't until they pull out of arrivals, far from the gazes of any prying eyes, that Ilya reaches over to place a hand on Shane's jittering leg.

"Stop," he murmurs, eyes still closed.

Shane stops.

It's a two-hour drive to the cottage. After an hour of nothing but the sound of inoffensive indie rock and Ilya's soft breathing, Shane assumes that Ilya has fallen asleep.

Until-

"Shane." Suddenly, Ilya's hand wraps around his forearm like a vice. "Pull over."

"What?" Shane asks cautiously, careful to keep his eyes on the road. If Ilya's suggesting what he thinks he's suggesting...

Ilya's grip tightens, and Shane realises that he isn't suggesting anything at all. "Pull over," he repeats. "*Please.*"

As quickly and as safely as he can, Shane pulls over.

Without warning, Ilya unclips his seatbelt, opens his door and pukes. It's violent and abrupt and wholly undignified, and Shane is halfway out of his seat to come over and help before Ilya stops him with a shake of his head.

"I'm fine," he manages, unscrewing his water bottle and tilting it to his lips. He fills his mouth with water and then spits onto the pavement. He wipes his lips with the back of his hand, straightens with visible effort, and shuts the door.

For a second, he just sits there with his eyes closed and his head tipped back against the seat, collecting himself.

Then he opens his eyes and looks at Shane like nothing has happened.

"Drive," he says, nodding weakly. "Please."

Shane drives.

Ilya is sound asleep when Shane pulls into his driveway at the cottage. Shane exits the car quietly, circling to the trunk so he can haul in Ilya's bags. He knows, had Ilya been awake, that he would've dragged himself out of the car to bring his stuff in himself. But he isn't, so Shane relishes the fact that he's able to do him this little favour.

It isn't until Shane opens the passenger side door that his boyfriend's eyes snap open, wide and alert, before they shift to fond recognition upon remembering where he is.

"Fuck, Hollander," he says, blinking hard. "What?"

"We're here," Shane says, shifting uneasily. "You okay?"

Ilya looks very much *not* okay. A sheen of sweat covers the pale pallor of his skin, visible even in the moonlight.

“I’m fine,” Ilya lies, waving him off. “Just a headache.”

Doesn’t seem like just a headache, Shane thinks, but there’s no point in arguing here and now, so he tasks himself with coaxing Ilya inside instead.

It takes a bit of persuasion, but all Shane has to do is say *please* and then Ilya’s feet hit the ground with a sigh.

As expected, even sick, Ilya insists on walking under his own power, even though he ends up leaning on Shane once they make it through the front door. The second Ilya kicks his shoes off, he stumbles over to the couch and promptly crashes.

“You’re sick,” Shane says, obviously, planting his hands on his hips and looking over him.

Ilya cracks an eye open. From his position on the couch, arm slung over his forehead, he looks like a damsel in distress.

“Am not,” he says, offended by the accusation.

Shane snorts at the obvious lie, then sits on the free part of the couch near his head and presses a hand to his forehead. He’s burning up with fever.

“Geez, Ilya,” Shane says, properly worried now, and slightly guilty. Ilya hadn’t said anything in the car, but if Shane knew he was feeling so bad, then he could’ve driven home faster instead of sticking to the speed limit. “You sat through an entire flight like this?”

Ilya’s eyes slip closed again before shrugging. “Wanted to see you,” he murmurs, voice uncharacteristically weak and quiet. “Didn’t want to delay.”

Shane’s chest grows warm in response to the open admission. Like Ilya, he’s been looking forward to tonight the same way a kid looks forward to the last day of school; all giddy with anticipation. It’s been weeks since he’s seen Ilya in person, and video calls just aren’t the same, for obvious reasons.

Ilya shifts, moving up and placing his head in Shane’s lap. One hand comes up to rest on Shane’s knee, thumb rubbing slow circles through the denim.

“I’m sorry,” he murmurs.

Shane looks down at him, brows furrowing. “For what?”

Ilya removes his hand to gesture to himself. “For- this. I’m sorry,” he says again. “I’m tired. I don’t feel well.”

Shane laughs. He’s never heard Ilya apologize for something so utterly beyond his control.

Ilya frowns. “What’s funny?”

“I’m not laughing at you,” Shane says quickly. “I’m just-” he shakes his head. “I’m just really happy that you’re here.” And he means it. He runs a hand through Ilya’s curls, then leans down and presses a kiss to his boyfriend’s temple.

“Mmm,” Ilya mumbles, turning his head into Shane’s thigh. “I don’t want to get you sick,” he warns.

“It’s fine,” Shane says. He really doesn’t care. They have a whole month off; getting sick is a small price he’s willing to pay for Ilya’s company. “It’s alright.”

Ilya’s eyes stay closed, Shane can tell by the way his entire body goes slack that he really, truly is tired. So Shane keeps quiet, resisting the urge to bounce his knee with Ilya on top of it.

They stay like that for a couple of peaceful minutes, until Shane’s stomach growls obnoxiously.

Shane knows it came from him. Still, he decides to ask, “Um. Are you hungry?”

“Not really,” Ilya mumbles. “But it sounds like you are.”

Shane snorts. “Yeah. You got me. When was the last time you ate?”

Ilya takes a moment to think about it. “Lunchtime.”

Shane frowns, glancing at his watch. It’s almost eleven. “That isn’t good,” Shane says.

Shane slowly eases Ilya’s head off his lap, replacing it with a pillow before standing up. Ilya makes a displeased noise, but doesn’t fight him.

“You should really eat something,” Shane says, then immediately cringes. “Wow, I sound exactly like my mom.”

Ilya snorts weakly. “Terrifying.”

Shane rolls his eyes even though he can’t see him. “Stay here,” Shane orders, which is pointless, because Ilya clearly isn’t going anywhere.

He leaves and returns a minute later with a tall glass of water, which Ilya gulps down without resistance. With that task done, Shane heads for the kitchen, then immediately runs into a significant problem.

Earlier that day, he’d gone all out at the grocery store. Right now, the fridge is stocked with ingredients for fancy pasta that he’d been excited to cook together. None of it is remotely appropriate for someone who’s feverish and presumably still nauseous.

Shane peers into his pantry and pokes around the back of his fridge, looking for anything that might be bland enough for Ilya to keep down, but finds nothing that would fit the bill except for ginger ale, which doesn’t help him at all in the solid food department. The nearest grocery store is a half-hour drive away, and it’s probably been closed for a couple of hours already.

Which leaves him with only one option.

He pulls out his phone and calls his mom. Like always, she picks up on the second ring.
“Shane?”

“Hi mom.”

“Hi, sweetheart. Is everything okay? Did you and Ilya make it back alright?”

“Oh, yeah, yeah. We’re fine.” He pauses. “Well, no, actually he’s not,” Shane says, glancing back to where Ilya’s still lying.

“Oh,” his mom says, and the concern in her voice is immediately apparent. “What’s wrong?”

“Um. He’s sick, I’m pretty sure. But I don’t really have anything for him to eat except for some stale crackers and I was just wondering if—”

“-I think we have a couple of cans of soup in our pantry,” she offers immediately. “I can send your dad over to drop some off.”

There’s a brief pause, then the sound of her moving around. “I’ve got... chicken noodle and tomato soup.”

Shane sighs with relief. “You’re a lifesaver. Thank you. I love you.”

Thirty minutes later, Shane has two bowls of soup that are piping hot and ready to eat. He carries them to the dining table, then goes back to the couch and crouches in front of Ilya, who hasn’t moved an inch.

“The food’s ready,” Shane says. “Time to move.”

Ilya lets out an exaggerated groan. “Do I have to?”

“Yes,” Shane says, sticking two hands beneath his armpits and tugging him upright.

“Doctor’s orders.”

Ilya squints up at him, smiling. “If you put your glasses on, you’d be a very sexy doctor,” he says. “I might actually listen.”

Shane snorts. “I am *not* indulging that.”

The chicken soup is surprisingly decent. Shane can’t rememebr the last time he was sick enough to need something like it, but it does the job. He eats fast and his bowl is empty within a few minutes.

Ilya, on the other hand, eats slowly and carefully, all while taking periodic sips of the ginger tea Shane made him. But at least he's eating, and that's enough to ease Shane's worries.

Not wanting to stare, he turns his head towards the window walls overlooking the lake. The deck's firepit is dark, and the lake beyond it is black save for the tiny waves that shimmer in the moonlight.

Tomorrow, he hopes. Maybe tomorrow, Ilya will feel well enough to enjoy the outdoors with him. Or maybe they'll stay inside and relax in a way that they rarely get to do. Either way, Shane doesn't care which. He's willing to do anything, as long as Ilya's with him.

Which includes watching him eat in silence. Shane thinks about how strange it is for Ilya to seem so subdued. He realises then that in the decade they've known each other, he's never seen him sick. He's seen him injured over the years, sure, but this is different. The sight of Ilya like this makes him ache, even though he knows it's nothing serious.

An hour later, the cottage is quiet as Ilya pauses at the threshold of their bedroom.

"What's wrong?" Shane asks from behind him. "Ilya?"

"You'll get sick if I sleep here," Ilya says, turning. He looks genuinely concerned, though he seems better thanks to the fever reducers his dad had brought without Shane even asking.

Shane sighs. "It's- I'll recover. It'll be fine," Shane says lightly. Even if Ilya's sick, Shane wants to be with him. He can't stand the idea of sleeping in separate rooms after being apart for so long. "I want you here, in bed, with me."

"Are you sure?" Ilya asks seriously, as if Shane would ever change his mind about this.

Shane answers by stepping in and kissing him gently. He'll suffer the consequences later, but he can't be bothered to care right now. "I'm sure."

Normally, on nights like these, they'd stay up late into the early hours of the morning, catching up on lost time. But tonight, they immediately fall into bed, exhausted. Ilya wraps around Shane, legs wedged between his thighs and an arm slipped over his chest, face pressed into the back of Shane's neck.

Against his nape, Ilya mumbles something in Russian.

Though he's been studying as much Russian as he can in his free time, Ilya says it too softly and too quickly for Shane to translate in his head.

"What does that mean?" Shane asks, half-asleep already.

"Ты тёплый. Warm," Ilya translates. "You're warm."

"Oh," Shane breathes, smiling faintly as Ilya's breaths puff gently against his hairline. "Glad to be useful."

Ilya hums, snuggling even closer to him before mumbling something else.

Shane grins into his pillow. He doesn't need a translation for that one.

"I love you, too."

End Notes

Thanks for reading, feel free to leave a comment if you want :D

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