

Love is Just Too Weak of a Word

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Love is Just Too Weak of a Word

by [OfInkandStars](#)

Summary

But maybe it's not insanity that drives him now. Maybe this is just what love is at its core; doing anything to make sure the person you love is safe, whatever the cost.

Even if that means driving thirteen hours across the country.

Especially then.

Or — A rewrite of post chapter 24 of The Long Game where Shane actually does drive thirteen hours to get to Ilya.

Notes

Hi!! It's me again :D

Thank to anyone who commented, kudos or read my previous fic, it means the world to me <3 I hope you enjoy this fic just as much!! This took an embarrassing long time to write and went around in my head for even longer.

(Also I am not American so there may be some inaccuracies)

Title from Inventing by Matilda Mann

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

After hanging up on his phone call with Ilya, Shane expected to feel a little bit of relief. Which he did but mostly he just felt anxious. Dizzy with it. His heart was racing and he felt like he might throw up.

Ilya could be *dead* right now. *Dead*. The thought of his beautiful, wonderful, loving boyfriend in a coffin made Shane spiral all over again. They had been *fighting*. So much time wasted with a stupid fight, when it could've been spent pouring his love into Ilya, making sure he knew how much Shane loved him.

Because Shane did love Ilya. More than any word in any language could encapsulate.

If Ilya died, what would become of Shane? They weren't married, Shane had no right to Ilya in any legal sense. He would be broken and no one would know why. Hell, they didn't even have any photos together. Ilya would be *dead*, Shane would be left by himself with nothing but fleeting memories of what they had and the knowledge that he let the love of his life die thinking Shane was mad at him. He's well past the point of rational thinking, all he wants is to feel Ilya's heart beating under his hand.

Maybe that's why he does it. Because he needs to see Ilya. Because he knows Ilya won't sleep well tonight. Because if he leaves now, he can get to Tampa in time for breakfast. Because Ilya is the love of his life and Shane needs to see he's ok.

This is insane he thinks, putting on his shoes and coat

This is insane, he thinks, collecting the keys to the rental car.

This is insane, he thinks driving down the highway.

But maybe it's not insanity that drives him now. Maybe this is just what love is at its core; doing anything to make sure the person you love is safe, whatever the cost.

Even if that means driving thirteen hours across the country.

Especially then.

Standing in the lobby of the hotel he knows the Centaurs are staying at, Shane realises that his plan is not that well thought through. Firstly and foremost he has no idea what room Ilya was in. He can't very well just show up looking for Ilya without questions being asked or drawing attention to himself. He is Shane Hollander for crying out loud. Already the possibility of being seen here was bad enough. Secondly, no one on Ilya's team knows about their relationship. Shane will have to be creative about his reasons for being there. He regrets now not agreeing to tell the team about their relationship.

Unless—

Instead of lying about why Shane is in Tampa, he could give Ilya the option to come out about them to his team. Shane is pretty sure Ilya would go for it and the plane incident has given Shane a new perspective. Fuck it, in this moment Shane would shout about how much he loved Ilya from the roof if Ilya asked. He almost lost the love of his life, nothing— not even the daunting prospect of being honest about their relationship— will keep him from making Ilya feel happy and loved for the rest of his life.

No, that's not long enough. Shane will do it forever.

With a new resolve, he decides to just text Ilya and wait in the lobby until Ilya wakes up and texts him back. If people see him, well they can just fuck off. (Not that he actually has to worry about that in this empty hotel lobby). Shane has more important things to think about. Like how soon he can get a ring on Ilya's finger.

He's so lost in his thoughts he almost misses it. That unmistakable, Russian, lilting voice.

Ilya.

A small part of Shane is soothed by just hearing Ilya's voice. Proof that he is in fact okay.

He stands and whips around to where the sound came from just in time to see a flash of golden curls walk past, down the corridor, chatting amiably to someone who appears to be Troy Barrett.

Stumbling over the legs of the chair, Shane tears off after them. He reaches the corridor just in time to see them disappear into a room at the end of the hall.

Shane doesn't hesitate.

He sprints down the hallway, heart in his throat, one thought going around in his mind.

Ilya Ilya Ilya Ilya Ilya Ilya Ilya

"Ilya!"

His cry is followed by a resounding slam as the door shuts.

Ilya freezes. Troy Barrett is staring at Shane, eyes wide. Slowly, Ilya turns around and everything else slowly melts away as Shane gets lost into the icy blue of Ilya's eyes. They stand, three metres apart, completely lost to each other.

"Ilya," Shane breathes.

"Shane."

The dam breaks. Shane throws himself at Ilya, who catches him with no hesitation. And when their mouths slot together in a kiss so urgent and stinging with relief, Shane's heart feels whole once more. Because in truth, Ilya will always have a piece of Shane with him and Shane will never truly feel as much peace as he does now, kissing Ilya, arms wrapped tightly around each, not knowing where one starts and the other ends. Ilya runs through Shane's veins, twined deep within his soul. To think, he almost lost this. Lost *him*.

Shane breaks the kiss, clasping his hands around Ilya's face and feels tears well in his eyes.

"You're ok," he whispers, voice caught in his throat.

Ilya cradles Shane's head and tucks it into the nook of his shoulder, placing gentle kisses, tinged with desperation, on Shane's temple.

"I am ok, moya lyubov, is all ok." He inhales sharply against Shane's temple before continuing, "How are you here? You were in Washington, we said it was too far."

Shane lets out a laugh that comes out wetter and shakier than he hoped. "I changed my mind. When your boyfriend almost dies, things get put into perspective. Love makes me crazy apparently."

"So crazy, you drive thirteen hours to *Florida*?"

"Especially then."

"Who are you and where is my Shane Hollander?"

Shane huffs a laugh, an actual one now, and tucks himself closer to Ilya, as if he was trying to meld himself to him.

A slight cough came from the corner of the room, and Shane and Ilya turned to see Troy Barrett shuffling awkwardly by the door, looking *very* red.

“I - uh, was guarding the door but the others are on the way down for breakfast now so—” He shifted from one foot to another before trailing off his sentence.

Ilya moves to untangle himself from Shane’s grasp but Shane’s hold tightens before he can.

“What if we didn’t hide it anymore, at least from your team? You said you trusted them right?”

Ilya gapes at Shane for a moment before he crashes their mouths together once more, muttering a litany of “I love yous” in both English and Russian, Shane giggling as he does.

Ilya whips around to Troy, grinning madly, Shane’s hand firmly in his as he declares “Troy this is my boyfriend Shane Hollander. Boyfriend Shane Hollander, this is Troy Barrett.”

“Hi, I’m uh, a big fan of yours .” Troy nods nervously at Shane, cheeks a furious shade of red.

There’s a beat of silence as Ilya looks at Troy, to Shane and back at Troy, eyes assessing before saying innocently “How’s Harris today?”

Troy *squawks*, blushing even harder. He tries and fails to open the door twice before mumbling “The others will be down in five,” and stumbling out.

Shane turns to Ilya. “What was that about?”

Ilya beams. “I think Troy finally got his head out of his ass.”

(Telling the rest of the team was easier than expected. As in, once the centaurs were in the private breakfast room, Ilya grabbed Shane's face, dipping him in a kiss. Easy. The team cheered, whistled and catcalled but it was all in jest. In truth each and everyone of the players were supportive of their captain which resulted in Shane squashed between them in a massive team group hug.)

The next day, on the plane ride back to Ottawa, Ilya had the luxury of sitting next to his fiancé on the plane. With Shane's warm weight tucked against Ilya's side, Ilya's head on his shoulder, the roaring, spiralling anxiety in Ilya's stomach is soothed. Because as long as Shane is with him, even in an unpredictable, flying tube, Ilya knows in his heart things would be ok.

They always were.

(Shane looks down at Ilya, sleeping peacefully, face young and free of worry, he's filled with such a love for this man. His heart is *finally* whole once more.

Yeah, he thinks,

I'm going to marry this man.)

End Notes

Comments and kudos are always appreciated and will get you a cookie <3

Thank you for reading!! :)

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