

Take Back The Night

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Take Back The Night

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Summary

Totally worth it, Shane thought as he gazed at a gleeful Ilya Rosanov, all toothy grin and gleaming blue eyes as he reeled in his first ever caught fish. Even though the searing sunlight intensified the mild headache he'd woken up with into something monstrous.

-OR-

Shane tries to hide a headache in order to take Ilya fishing, and it goes about as well as you'd imagine. Missing scenes for 1.06, The Cottage.

Notes

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

The summer sunshine collided into the choppy surface of the water and shattered, scattering shards of light directly into Shane's skull. It fueled and intensified the mild headache he'd woken up with into something monstrous.

The swaying of the canoe churned up nausea, too.

Totally worth it, Shane thought as he gazed at a gleeful Ilya Rosanov, all toothy grin and gleaming blue eyes as he reeled in his first ever caught fish.

Oblivious to Shane's misery, Ilya released an honest-to-goodness giggle as he pulled the tiny, aqua and orange spotted Pumpkinseed out of the water by his fishing line. "I have battled Poseidon for this beast," he bellowed across the small lake, puffing out his chest.

The beast in question was slightly bigger than a hockey puck, but Ilya held the flopping fish up with the same triumphant reverence he had the Stanley Cup. Shane grinned genuinely, despite his discomfort.

Ilya had found the rods in the storage closet just after breakfast. "Do you know how to use these?" He had asked, expression painfully hopeful. "Can we fish? I have never fished before!" He confessed as he bounced on the balls of his feet, air-dried curls flopping. He reminded Shane of a rambunctious, tow-headed poodle.

Shane had been about to suggest they take it easy today in deference to the headache he'd been concealing since he woke up. But how could he have denied him this much joy?

Shane was ridiculously honored at the sight of the 6'3" feared, vicious Russian hockey player beaming and slightly scared of a tiny fish. He danced his feet around the bottom of the canoe to avoid the wriggling scaly thing, bobbing and weaving so hard, the tiny canoe nearly capsized.

Ilya's eyes flicker up to Shane's, overtly sad, as it suffocated. "We can put it back, yes?"

"Yes, we can put it back," Shane echoed, overwhelmed with adoration, and so grateful he didn't have to hide it. While Ilya gathered the confidence to actually touch the squirming fish, Shane let his throbbing head sag, chin to chest. He rubbed at his forehead in hopes to swipe the pain away.

He'd had intermittent headaches since his on-ice collision three months ago. At first, they'd been almost daily, ranging in severity from a minor annoyance to cresting even the heights of his higher-than-normal tolerance. But he hadn't lied to Hayden. They were getting better, less frequent. Unfortunately, better didn't mean *healed*.

Ilya gently eased the fish in the water, and bid it farewell in Russian.

Another jerky wobble of the canoe and Shane's precarious stomach finally revolted. He dove over the side and vomited into the water. His eyes teared as his stomach convulsed, but somehow the worst part was the humiliation of throwing up in front of Ilya and the devastation of ruining their peaceful afternoon.

Ilya laid a massive hand on his back. “Whoa, Hollander, Hollander, are you okay?”

He was transported to the same question posted on another, far scarier day. *“I just wanted to...are you okay?”*

He heaved again, bringing up mostly bile.

Shane closed his eyes to block out the punishing sunlight, overcome with the need to simplify and diminish. “Just...motion sick or something. It’ll pass.” Shane wiped mouth.

Eyebrows climbed in audacious disbelief as Ilya immediately clocked the lie. “Hockey player gets sick from motion?”

He squinted against the brightness of the sun. *Busted.* “It’s just a headache, Ilya.”

Ilya’s face slammed into something rigid and unreadable. It had been wide open, like a book only Shane could read, since he arrived. “We go back.” Ilya grabbed the oars of the canoe, rowing so fiercely he actually produced wind.

Even if he was on the wrong side of agony, Shane could still appreciate Ilya’s biceps as they twitched and bulged as he powered them back to shore.

The canoe bumped roughly against the old dock, and less than a second later, Ilya was reaching for Shane. However, two giant hockey players trying to exit a canoe was a blooper reel waiting to happen. Shane’s stomach lurched with the boat. “Sit the fuck down, Ilya,” he snapped. “I’ll get out first, then you.”

“Okay.”

Chancing to open his eyes fully, Shane slowly stood to make the simple step from the canoe to the dock, irritated that it seemed more treacherous than walking on iceless surfaces in skates. But he was having a difficult time discerning up from over and keeping his eyes open for more than a few seconds. He made the transfer, and dumbly started walking towards the house, just needing to get out of the sun.

The dock vibrated as Ilya jogged to catch up with him. In the days after his concussion, his brain seemed to disregard the laws of physics. Inertia became force. Up became down. Brightness became pain.

It abated as his concussed brain healed, and Shane had no choice but to compartmentalize the anxiety of not being okay to get back on the ice.

But the injustice returned again, and when he began to feel the orbit of the earth, the slipping and sliding beneath his feet, he leaned into instructions from his neurologist and sank to the ground, just over the threshold of where dock met land. Sitting before he fell.

Ilya massive shadow crested over him as he wordlessly stooped beside him. “Are you going to be sick again?”

“N-no. I just need a second.”

“I should have known your head hurt,” Ilya said. “You kept...” he searched for the word, “pinching your face like in hospital.” He squinted his brow and one eye to demonstrate. “Why did you agree to fishing if it was going to make it worse?”

Shane didn’t realize that Ilya could read him so well outside of the rink. “I didn’t think it would.” More than that, Shane wanted to take Ilya fishing. He wanted to milk every moment of joy out of these two weeks together.

When he started to stand, Ilya moved with him, instantly slipping an arm around Shane’s waist. “Hold on to me. I am unmoveable Russian.”

Shane complied. He would have if he were 100% healthy. He rested his head against Ilya’s shoulder as Ilya reeled him in with his other arm. There, bracketed by one of the strongest players in hockey, he felt steadied enough to close his eyes and let Ilya guide him home.

Thankfully, the walk from the lake wasn’t that far. The relief of reaching the cottage was short-lived. He cursed himself for listening to the architect who pitched the resale value and rustic beauty of dwelling-wide picture windows.

Ilya busied himself by diving for the remotes to close the blinds to blunt the traitorous afternoon sun. With the absence of light, he could now only focus on the unrelenting scrape of damp cotton wedged under his arms and stretched tight across his shoulders. Nausea made him sweaty and as he peeled off his clothes, desperate and sloppy. He nearly tipped over trying to take off his shirt.

Shane was thankful for Ilya’s lightning-fast reflexes. They kept him from crashing into the nightstand.

“Hollander, hey, let me.”

Ilya pushed him down onto the edge of the bed and leaned over, pressing his face against his. Soft curls caressed his cheek, the oracles of his ears brushing against each other. Somehow, magically, it slowed the canter of his heart.

“Not the way I pictured you undressing me today,” Shane pouted as Ilya pulled the shirt over his head.

“I’ll take what I can get,” he replied. He bent down, face between Shane’s knees to remove his shoes. Ilya held both his elbows and lifted. “Stand up for me.”

Shane didn’t have to exert much energy as Ilya hefted him smoothly upright. He dropped down again, whisking off his shorts. Shane stepped out of them, and then let his forehead fall against Ilya’s chest. He smelled of woodsy aftershave, and the musk of the outdoors. He clung to Ilya. “And not how I planned to spend today.”

“We are together, yes?”

“Yes.”

“Then it’s already better than most days,” he said, kissing trails up his shoulder before settling on his mouth. It was chaste and soft, offering gentle pleasure instead of pain. “What do you need now?”

“Jus’ sleep.”

“You have medication, yes?”

Ilya’s concern was palpable, darkening his face. It was everything he didn’t want to bring to the cottage, their refuge. “In the bathroom. Medicine cabinet. I can get it if you...” Shane wasn’t sure how Ilya felt about bottles of pills after learning about his late mother.

He was already moving. “Is okay. I got it.”

Ilya came back with one pill and a glass of water. Shane swallowed it quickly and prayed it stayed down.

Shane turned to the bed, body weakening in sheer anticipation of being prone and quiet and warm. He shivered, a little. That was all it took for Ilya to wrap an arm around him as he pulled back the covers, tossing his carefully curated pillows on the floor.

Shane eased in slowly, and curled up on his side as Ilya undressed next to him, sliding in behind.

“Do you need to call your parents? I could go to hotel if they need to come over or...Maybe you call doctor...” Ilya was trying to talk quietly, but still the drone of his voice still ignited discomfort.

Eyes closed, Shane blindly reached back to cover his mouth. “Just be here with me. I’m okay.”

“I can do that.”

He settled against the pillows, braced against the battering pain. But when Ilya wrapped his arms around him, pulled him snug against him, it abated a bit, his racing heart dropping to a calmer canter. He innately matched the cadence of a breath. And before he felt another wave of cresting agony, sleep had claimed him.

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Shane opened his eyes to darkness, the ivory glint of the moon blotted out by the drawn blinds. He knew without inspection that the bed was empty. He turned his head towards the soft light coming from the great room, testing. The headache had retreated to a dull ache behind his eyes, muffled by the cottonheadedness of the drugs.

Nature of an entirely different kind besieged him and Shane gingerly extricated himself from the sheets and he headed to the bathroom. He relieved himself and washed up, feeling human again. He padded out from the bathroom and towards the living room in just his briefs.

It didn't take long to find Ilya, who was lounging on the couch, watching a nearly muted TV in the glow of the crackling fire. Shane shuffled forward, preparing to sit on the other end of his massive sectional, but Ilya wordlessly uncrossed his legs. Shane changed course and shimmied between them, resting his head on Ilya's chest. He pressed a kiss against Shane's forehead and pulled the fluffy, knitted blanket off the back of the couch, draping it over them both.

"How's the head?"

"Better," Shane said, honestly.

Ilya whispered something in Russian, and rubbed his shoulder. "You are cold."

"I'm always cold."

"Oh, I know. I feel your icy feet," Ilya chuckled.

Shane lifted a leg so the sole of his foot brushed against Ilya's shin. He squirmed and clapped him in the bottom. "You are polar bear."

"Rawr," he mock-growled, closing his eyes. "Sorry about today."

"Why do you apologize for head? You can't control it."

"I know."

"If I got sick, would you be mad?"

"Of course not, but..."

"No 'but'," Ilya persisted. "I am just happy you are better."

"Me too." Shane frowned as a thought struck him. "Did you tie up the canoe?"

Ilya froze, a small grunt punched from his lips. "Was I supposed to?"

"If you don't want to drift away, yes."

The fire crackled and snapped as Ilya grappled for an answer. "I owe you canoe, then."

They broke out in peels of laughter. Their mirth echoing through the walls of the cottage.

When they settled, Ilya began kneading his neck, bearing down with satisfying pressure until Shane hummed. He chuckled lightly. "You purr like *kotenok*."

"That better be Russian for 'gladiator.'" Shane grumbled.

"You are a strong *kotenok*." Ilya snorted, tickled. The humor floated between them and disappeared into vapor. "Was that headache from...your last game? The hit?" His voice was light, but the tone was heavy.

Shane had vowed they were to be honest here, even though this was the last thing he wanted to dredge up in their cocoon of bliss and sex. “Yeah. It doesn’t happen much anymore.”

“How often do you think about it?” Ilya wondered, sounded slightly haunted.

“Every day,” Shane sighed. Ilya gripped his shoulder, either in agreement or sympathy. The second he’d been cleared to train, he’d hit the gym and the rink with a rabid tenacity, determined to be more than healed next season, he wanted to be even better and stronger. He had yet to take a check though, and he knew that hurdle would be the most challenging. But that wasn’t what he dwelled on when he dared to venture to that cordoned off corner of his psyche. Shane licked his lips, and found Ilya’s hand beneath the fleece. “I mostly thought about you.”

“Me?”

“I heard you yelling if I was okay. And there was no way to tell you. Your father had just died, and now this...I didn’t want you upset.”

Ilya tensed between him, already hard sinew snapping taught like a guitar string. “I was worried sick. Scared.” Ilya admitted. “The medics were calling your name, and you weren’t answering, you were so still. I couldn’t even tell if you were breathing.”

For Shane, he hadn’t felt that dramatic, but only had smeared, disjointed scraps of memory: glaring white lights, the thump and buzz of the CAT scan, the agony of fractured collarbone. And they both knew how serious it could have been. Hockey players couldn’t get decades into their careers without witnessing or being a part of truly catastrophic injuries.

“I think you’re giving Marlow too much credit,” Shane said, attempting to diffuse the candor of the conversation.

“I couldn’t do anything,” Ilya hissed, voice breaking. “*Nothing.*”

Shane lifted his head from Ilya’s racing heart, and kissed him hard and impassioned, because he couldn’t in the hospital or in the weeks after. “There’s something you can do for me now.”

“Name it,” Ilya breathed.

“Let’s train tomorrow. I haven’t taken a check since that day. And I want you to do it.”

Ilya’s eyes buzzed, mouth falling agape. “Now I know head is scrambled. I’m not hurting you, Hollander.”

“I haven’t taken one yet, and...I don’t want it to be a problem when I go back to training camp. I trust you, Ilya.”

“You are crazy.”

“Probably.”

“You must reward me.” Ilya pronounced. Deviousness flashed in his eyes.

Shane’s hands roamed beneath the blanket. “I can think of a few prizes you might want.”

Ilya arched as Shane’s fingers breached waistband of his shorts. “Okay, okay. I will do it.”

“You give up so easily.”

“I am thinking of your head. I will collect my prizes tomorrow. *Multiple prizes.*”

Fully invested in Ilya’s pleasure, Shane straddled him, hand sinking deeper. “I’m feeling generous.”

“Head is better, yes?” He moaned, breathily.

Shane grinned, biting his lip as he stroked. “All better.”

Ilya’s head fell back, opening himself up to pleasure. The afternoon may not have gone as planned, but they were definitely going to salvage the night.

Fin

End Notes

The cottage was kind of a microcosm of a relationship. The only thing missing was the sickness and health part, so here we go. I had a little fun with this one. Though, this is about as spicy as my writing gets. I hope you like it! It feels so good to be writing again.

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