

Great Big Sea

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Great Big Sea

by [mynameisnotmac](#)

Summary

Shane Hollander loves a plan. Unfortunately, all of his are falling apart, and on the day before hockey camps are set to start.

Notes

I am not immune to the Heated Rivalry Brain Rot™

This is for Sam, if he ever finds it. Thanks for yapping with me, brother.

Chapter 1

Shane Hollander loved a plan. His day had already been neatly shuffled into a colour-coded calendar, tasks ready for him to check off as he went through his day. He'd already gone through his morning workout and protein smoothie, went over both his and Ilya's packed bags before stowing them in the trunk of the SUV, and double checked his list of everything they would need at the cottage to make their evenings after hockey school easy and relaxing. He'd kissed his boyfriend after he got out of his ridiculously long shower (not in the schedule, but he could be flexible for the right reasons) before getting them on the road.

They would get to the cottage in plenty of time for dinner with his mom, who was already out and finishing the last of the admin work for day one of their second year of camps that would support the Irina foundation. Shane would then spend the rest of the evening worrying over details while Ilya tried to convince him to settle down for five minutes. (And Shane had missed him enough this season that he might even give in to it.)

The latter half of his plans seemed to be disintegrating in real time, however, as Shane found himself standing outside the stall of a gas station bathroom an hour outside of Ottawa, listening to Ilya fight a losing battle with his stomach.

"Please unlock the door."

"No."

"Ilya,"

"There is no room for you to spiral in here. Go away."

"I'm not spiralling," okay, maybe that was a tiny lie, but he was managing. His boyfriend, who'd been asleep for most of the drive, had woken up with a start and quietly but urgently asked him to pull over at the rest stop on the horizon, then made a mad sprint out of the car before it even fully stopped, but he was rolling with it. "I just want to help."

"I am fine. Give me five minutes."

There was a moment of silence, Ilya's panting breath the only sound echoing between them. Maybe if he kept very quiet, Shane could trick Ilya into thinking he'd gone away.

"Shane. Go. Before someone is seeing us, yes?" Appealing to Shane's panicky nature was a cheap trick, but unfortunately, it did sort of work.

"Fine. But if you're not out in five minutes, I'm coming back, and you're letting me in, okay?"

"Da. Sure."

“...I love you.” Shane said, voice rising on the end a bit. He was unsure how to convince himself to leave. His feet felt rooted to the floor. There came an exhausted but fond sigh from the other side of the stall door.

“I love you too moy bespokoyunny.” And then in a shakier voice. “Shane?”

“Yeah?”

“Can you buy a water bottle?”

That’s a task. Shane could handle a task. “I can do that.” He assured both him and Ilya. He backed out of the washroom. “See you in five.”

Shane bought a water bottle. And a Gatorade. And a bottle of chewable Pepto tabs, Ginger Graval, and a car wash bucket, just to be on the safe side. By the time Ilya slowly made his way across the parking lot, Shane had everything lined up on the dash like toy soldiers, and the plastic convenience store bag was lining the bucket and neatly tucked in the passenger side footwell.

“You are very prepared,” Ilya teased weakly as he leaned against the side of the SUV, peeking through the open door at the setup, “like boy scout.”

“I wanted all of our bases covered, sue me.”

“No, it’s cute; you’re cute. Sexy nurse Shane.” Ilya smiled faintly, but it turned into a grimace as he shut his eyes. “I’m sorry for snapping. I feel bad inside, so I am bad outside.” Shane’s heart sank, and instead of making the snarky reply he’d thought of, he simply started maneuvering his boyfriend into the front seat.

“It’s okay, although I wish you had told me you weren’t feeling well before we left.” He admonished gently, as he settled Ilya and handed him the water.

“I feel fine this morning. Then I wake up in car and...” Shane watched him struggle to find an english word. “Bleh.” Well, it was straight to the point. After a quick glance around the thankfully empty parking lot, he leaned into the car and pressed a kiss to the side of Ilya’s head.

“Do you want to go back to your place?” The water bottle paused halfway to Ilya’s lips.

“Of course not. I’m okay now.” He took a hesitant sip of water. “Mostly okay,” he allowed as Shane’s eyebrows knit together. “Is probably something I ate. You know I love to eat bad things.”

Shane hummed in half agreement. “Are you sure? You don’t look great.”

Ilya pouted. “Rude.”

“Sorry, but it’s true.” Shane couldn’t help the smirk growing at the corner of his lip.

“Why are you so mean to me? Is my day not bad enough? You must, how do you say it, kick me when I’m out?” Ilya closed his eyes, dramatically tossing a hand across his face.

“It’s kick me when I’m-“ Shane paused in his correction when he noticed Ilya start to legitimately droop. ”You know what, close enough.” He grabbed the Gravol and the Pepto, holding them out for Ilya to choose. “Here, take one of these and try to go back to sleep. Maybe you’ll feel better by the time we get to the cottage.”

Unfortunately twenty minutes later, it was obvious that Ilya was not going to go back to sleep or feel better. He sat upright, breathing through his nose, trying not to use the bucket he’d pulled up into his lap.

“Eyes on road, Hollander.” He mumbled, as if he could see Shane watching him even through his closed eyelids.

Shane reached over and laid a hand on Ilya’s neck, rubbing at the stiff muscles as he turned his gaze back to the single-lane highway. “I can do two things at once.”

“Please do not kill us. I refuse to die looking not sexy.”

“I’ve got this, trust me.”

“mhm, I trust you,” It made Shane’s heart flip to hear how fast Ilya responded with that. “But humour me.”

Shane did have this. Which is why, when Ilya went rigid underneath his hold, he was able to smoothly steer them onto an upcoming rest loop as Ilya started tossing a sidewalk pizza.

“Sorry,” Ilya panted as Shane came around and opened the door. He gestured vaguely to himself. “Is gross.”

“Hey,” Shane said, moving the bucket out of the car and trying to get rid of some of the grossness. He tried not to focus on the smell, instead taking Ilya’s pale face in both his hands. “No sorries. You’re sick, it happens.”

“Mmm,” He watched as Ilya eyed the puke that was now resting at Shane’s feet. It was tinged an alarming shade of bubblegum pink - so much for the Pepto. Belatedly, Shane noticed there was a little pink on the scruff of Ilya’s chin. Trying to keep the grimace off his face, he freed one of his hands so he could grab a napkin from the glove box to help fix that. “You must really love me.” Ilya murmured as Shane helped clean him up. The tone of his voice was light, but there was something in the way his boyfriend wouldn’t meet his eyes that made Shane lean over and kiss his forehead.

“I really do.” He dropped the soiled napkin in the bag of sick before tying it off. Then he reached over Ilya and grabbed the water bottle out of the cupholder. “Here, you rinse, I’ll go take care of this.”

“Shane Hollander, always knowing what the play is.” Shane rolled his eyes fondly as he walked over to the bear-proof trashcans, trying to ignore the way the bag he was holding *sloshed*.

He was doing good. He was barely panicking at all, and he could figure this out. Yes, it was all kind of gross, but bodies were always gross. He could deal with this, for Ilya; he would get rid of this, and then make a plan to get both of them to the cottage in one piece, and then-

Behind him, Ilya whined. The lid of the trashcan slammed down so fast it almost knocked his hand as he closed it. He was back to the car in what must have been record time, which was saying something for a professional athlete. “Hey, I’m here.” Shane took Ilya’s clammy hand in his, rubbing his thumb over the knuckles. His poor boyfriend looked rough and absolutely exhausted. “I don’t think this is something you ate, love.”

“Maybe.” Ilya conceded, which Shane knew was as close to an agreement as he was going to get. He listed to the side, half out of the SUV so he could rest his head against Shane’s collarbone, and Shane had to wrap an arm around him to keep him from falling the rest of the way out.

“Do you need another minute?” Shane asked, face pressed into mussed-up curls. Ilya considered briefly before shaking his head.

“No, we should go. I am already making us late. Yuna will wonder what is taking so long.” Ilya pressed himself tighter against Shane as he raked fingers up his vertebrae.

“If you need to rest more, then we’ll rest, okay? Don’t worry about being late.” Shane gently grabbed the scruff of Ilya’s neck. “Worrying is my job, remember?” He could feel Ilya smile into his shirt.

“Yes, but we should still be going now.” His lips pressed softly into Shane’s neck. “I want to be home, please.” It wasn’t the first time Ilya had called the cottage home, but it still made Shane completely melt to hear it.

Thankfully, the last stretch of driving was uneventful, and Ilya was even starting to doze by the time they pulled up to the sprawling pine building. Yuna came out to meet them as Shane was hauling Ilya onto his unsteady feet.

“I was wondering where you were!” She sounded curious, but not worried. “I thought you’d be here half an hour ago, given when you texted, did something-” Her face fell as she took in the two men before her. “Oh, Ilya.”

“Hi mom,” Shane said in way of greeting, as he slid his arm around Ilya’s waist to support him. “There were a few, uh, unexpected detours, but we’re here now.”

Ilya did his best to perk up as Yuna came towards them. “Sorry we’re late. Is my fault.”

“Don’t apologize, honey.” She came up to his free shoulder and laid a hand on it. “You look awful.”

“Why must everyone keep telling me this?” He moaned, but it didn’t hold half of his usual playfulness. Shane squeezed his hip in sympathy.

“Mom, can you get the bags? I’m going to get him inside.”

“I can carry my own bag.” Ilya protested. Yuna shook her head.

“Not a chance.” She said firmly. “I’ve got the bags, and Shane’s got you.”

Together, they made their way into the house and over to the master bedroom. Yuna dropped the suitcases and pulled back the covers as Shane sat Ilya down on the bed. She then rested her hand on his forehead, a scene she’d acted out with Shane a hundred times, and it made him smile to see Ilya close his eyes and lean into the gentle warmth.

“Where’s your thermometer?” She asked, turning to her son.

“First aid kit, top drawer on the far left of the island. Tylenol is in there too.” Yuna nodded, patting Shane’s shoulder on her way out.

In front of him, Ilya was getting himself tangled in his t-shirt, hands grabbing at it in a feeble attempt to remove it.

“Easy there,” Shane said, grabbing Ilya’s hands to still them. “My mom is right outside, and you’re in no state for that.”

“Noooo,” Ilya whined, managing to pull one arm out of its sleeve before Shane grabbed it again. “You hate outside clothes on sheets. So off.”

“It’s okay, I can deal with it this one time.” But Ilya wriggled harder against his grip.

“Offffff.”

Shane gave in, helping strip Ilya down to his briefs and digging a pair of sweatpants out of his suitcase. He was just flipping the covers back over the mollified Russian when his mom knocked. She handed him the thermometer, along with a couple of pills and a glass of water.

“You good in here?” Shane nodded. She smiled, this time reaching up to pat his cheek. “Just yell if you need anything. I’m going to finish going through registration forms.”

When Shane turned back around Ilya was staring guiltily at his lap. “The camp,” He said, voice wobbling at the end. “The kids-”

“Don’t worry about that right now.” Shane set everything down on the nightstand and sat down on top of the comforter, cupping Ilya’s warm cheek. He brushed a thumb over Ilya’s pouting bottom lip. “We’ll see how you feel tomorrow.” He knew the odds that Ilya would be up and moving tomorrow were slim, but he really didn’t feel like fighting him on this all evening.

“This is horseshit,” Ilya grumbled, still pouting.

“I know,” Shane said, trying to sound soothing. He reached for the thermometer. “Let’s see if we can get you doing a little better for the moment, yeah?”

After dosing Ilya with Tylenol and another Pepto tab, Shane helped him shuffle further under the blankets. He stood up to smooth the comforter better and was pinned by the saddest pair of watery blue eyes.

“Are you going to go?”

The covers were flipped back up, and Shane slid into bed, outside clothes be damned. “Not if you don’t want me to.” Ilya took a moment, and Shane could see him warring with himself to let him have this. Finally, he shook his head, all but clawing Shane to his side.

“I know I said earlier that I wanted...but I change my mind. Please don’t go away.”

Shane wrapped his arms around Ilya’s shoulders. “I’m here.”

He held Ilya until long after his boyfriend was fast asleep before slipping out as carefully as he could. He cracked his neck, trying not to let the unfolding chaos of the day make him spin out of control. The plan for tomorrow was going to need some huge last-minute adjustments.

Later that night, Shane was talking details with Yuna in the living room. The sun had set hours ago, and the cottage was aglow in warm lamplight. They sat on the couch, laptop perched on the coffee table corner between them, but both paused at the sound of Ilya’s bare feet padding across the hardwood. He looked up as his boyfriend shuffled around the corner, face half buried in the collar of Shane’s fluffy Patagonia pullover that he must have found hanging on the back of the door. His eyes tracked him as he silently parked himself on the long extension of the couch and slumped over, pressing the top of his head against Shane’s hip.

“Hey you,” Shane murmured, quickly shuffling over and adjusting a limp Ilya so he was lying with his head in Shane’s lap. Ilya responded by immediately rolling over and wrapping his arms around his waist. “Did we wake you up?” Ilya shook his head, nose pushing up the fabric of Shane’s t-shirt. “Did something happen? What’s wrong, love?”

The continued silence was doing nothing for the thoughts spiralling in Shane’s head. Frowning, he pressed his hand to the back of Ilya’s neck before looking up in a borderline panic.

“Mom, he’s really hot.” The comment didn’t get Ilya to stir, which honestly concerned Shane just as much, if not more than the fever heat.

Yuna leaned over and gently brushed the backs of her knuckles against the same spot her son had just palmed. Her hand must have been colder than Shane’s, because he felt a shiver run down Ilya’s spine.

“It’s okay,” she said, seemingly half to Shane and half to Ilya. “He’s pretty warm, but he’s also due for a dose of Tylenol.” She pushed herself off the couch, already on her way to the kitchen. “It’s also not a bad idea to hydrate.”

By the time his mom came back to the living room, Shane was trying to convince Ilya to sit up. He felt her eyes on them as he gently prodded the hulking man beside him, who seemed to be reduced to a noodle in his arms. The couch shifted as Yuna sat down on Ilya’s other side, cracking the seal on the Gatorade she was holding.

“Here, honey,” she said, pushing the bottle into Ilya’s hand. “For my favourite son.” That got Ilya to look over with a small smile, and more importantly, to take a few sips of the icy blue sports drink. Shane rolled his eyes, pretending to be annoyed, but he couldn’t deny the glowing embers he felt in his chest anytime he saw Ilya soften under his mother’s affections.

They sat quietly for a few moments as Ilya took his meds and fought to keep down the Gatorade before burying his face into Shane again.

“The window was open,” he mumbled finally into the comfort of Shane’s shoulder. “...and there are many loons outside.”

“Loons?” Yuna’s eyebrow raised. “Were they making too much noise?” Ilya shrugged, but Shane just put a protective arm around him. He was losing the battle to hold back a smile, but he managed to keep his voice serious and understanding.

“Do you want me to come close the window?” Another shrug from Ilya. There was a beat of silence before Shane understood what his boyfriend really wanted. He kissed the top of Ilya’s curls, rubbing his thumb absently over the newest tattoo underneath the shoulder seam of the fuzzy sweater. “Do you want me to come to bed with you?”

There was a long pause, and then a mumbled “I do not want to interrupt your working.”

But Yuna was already closing the laptop. “I think we’ve done plenty for tonight; we should all get a good night’s sleep anyway.”

“Da,” Ilya nodded, eyes pinching shut as he braced to pull himself off the couch. “I will be better in the morning.”

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Day two of flu, electric boogaloo

Chapter Notes

hey y'all!

I forgot how fun it is to post in active fandoms. Usually when I post fic, it's like I'm shouting into an empty cave, and I've gotta let the echo lure the six people who are still in there back to the fire lol.

I thought I would have this done by now, but the more I work on it, the longer it gets. Oops 🙄

Anyways, here's chapter two, this time following Ilya.

“I don’t think you’re feeling better.”

Ilya managed to drag his head out of the toilet to glare at his boyfriend, who did at least have the decency to wince as the stupid words fell out of his mouth. He stood in the doorway of the ensuite, scrubbing sleep from his eyes, and Ilya felt a stab of guilt for waking him. It also put him on edge more than he would admit. He tracked Shane’s movement through the bathroom as he shuffled in and sat down before cursing himself. This was Shane; of course nothing bad was going to happen. Ilya took a steadying breath. No one seemed outwardly mad at him at least, so he allowed himself to lean into the arms Shane opened for him.

He hated this. Ilya Rozanov almost never threw up. Not from the stomach flu, or food poisoning, or even a night where the vodka was flowing too freely. Yesterday was a fluke, and- fuck. He shouldn’t have thought about the vodka. Just the barest imagining of the burn hitting the back of his throat was enough to send him scrabbling for a better angle over the bowl. What surely must have been the last of his internal organs tore a pathetic-sounding whine from his throat on their way out.

“Oh, sweetheart.” The pet name sounded a bit ragged as it stumbled off Shane’s tongue, but his hands were warm and solid as they rubbed circles over Ilya’s shoulder blades in a way that made his eyes sting worse than the retching.

“Maybe I should stay.”

“Nyet.” Ilya spat. “Absolutely not.”

“I don’t want to leave you like this.”

“I’m fine. Strong and, how you say, capable man, I don’t need you to stay.” Ilya did his best to sit up, willing the dizziness away, and trying to hold his second language in his head.

“You wanted me around yesterday.”

“And today I want you to go run charity we started. I contain multa-multin-” Fuck his fucking English. “many things. Is our charity, we can’t both be missing.” He was going to list all the other reasons they both couldn’t skip, but Shane was already steamrolling ahead with possible disasters.

“What if you trip and hit your head? What if your fever spikes? What if you choke on your own vomit? What if-”

“Hollander,” Ilya groaned, giving into the spinning world and letting his head tip forward to rest in the crook of his arm, “Panic Attack.”

“I’m not panicking! I just love you, asshole!”

“Then why are you yelling at me?”

“I’m not-” He heard Shane take a deep breath. “Sorry. I didn’t mean to yell at you. I hate the thought of you suffering here by yourself.”

It was a sweet sentiment. Very poorly executed, but Ilya knew Shane was just worried. And out of his element. And having his morning routine tossed out the window probably wasn’t helping things either. Neither of their days was off to a great start, he supposed. He was about to assure his spiralling boyfriend that he was okay enough to stay home and sleep when there was a knock on their door.

“Is everything okay in there?” Yuna pushed in without waiting for an answer, which was a very bold choice in Ilya’s opinion, given the two of them. He shoved himself up and back into Shane’s embrace in time to see her peek through the ensuite door. “I heard shouting.”

Ilya muttered an *I told you so* but he wasn’t sure what language he said it in, so he didn’t hold it against Shane that it went ignored. “We’re fine. Shane just loves me too much.”

“Oh my god, I do not love you *too much*.” The corner of Ilya’s mouth lifted as Shane tucked him tighter to his chest. “He’s trying to tell me I should leave him like this and go to hockey camp.”

“Because you should.”

“Shut up. You’re being ridiculous.”

“Shane.” Yuna had gotten down on her knees next to them and was gently cupping Shane’s elbow. “He’s right, honey. It’s the first day, and there’s press. One of you has to be there.”

“ya tebe tak govoril.” Ilya had to swat Shane’s hand away as it lightly pinched him.

“Stop saying that. I know what it means.” There was a shift against him, Shane looking over at his mom, probably. “What if something bad happens?” Ilya reached down to squeeze Shane’s hand.

“Nothing bad is going to happen moya lyubov’.”

“But-”

“Nothing bad is going to happen.” Yuna interrupted, wearing her game day face. “Take a deep breath.” Ilya felt the inhale and rolled his own body with it, snuggling back on the exhale. “Better. Okay, here’s the plan.” She reached out and stroked Ilya’s cheek, making him feel warm on all sides. “Are you done here?” Despite how badly he wanted the answer to be yes, he hesitantly shook his head. She tutted. “Poor thing. Okay, you stay put. Shane, you start getting ready. You can keep an eye on Ilya from the shower, and bring him back out to bed when you’re done. I will change the sheets, get breakfast going, and get everything ready out there. We’ll take separate cars to the rink,” She put a hand up to stall the objection Ilya could feel building in Shane. “I will stay for one hour to help with the sign-in table, and then I will come home to be with Ilya.”

It was Ilya’s turn to protest. “There is really no need to babysit me.” Yuna gave his cheek another pat.

“Don’t think of it as babysitting.” She said, almost conspiratorially, “Think of it as managing Shane freaking out.”

That got a protesting squawk of indignation out of Shane, but Ilya chuckled softly and conceded. Yuna nodded to both of them. “Good. Now, you,” she pointed at Shane as she stood up. “Hit the showers. I’ll make a smoothie.”

Despite the orders, Shane didn’t seem in any hurry to move. They had time at least; Ilya had woken everyone up before their alarms, so there was no need to rush. He tried not to let his brain seize upon the idea that everyone was putting a lot of effort into rearranging their lives for him today, but he couldn’t help the guilt that was threatening to swallow him.

“Ilya,” Shane’s voice floated above him. “Do you want to join me in the shower?” His voice rumbled through Ilya in a way that managed to pull him out of his own head. He took stock of his body, hesitating at how rocky he still felt.

“Hmmm I do not know if this is good idea. I might be sick again.”

“That’s okay, just aim for the drain.”

“What about you?” Now it was Shane’s turn to hesitate. To his credit, he steeled himself to the idea much quicker than Ilya would have guessed.

“I’ll dodge. It’s a big shower, and I’m a professional athlete; I have good reflexes.” He kissed the top of Ilya’s head. “You might feel a little better if you were warm and clean, love.”

Ilya knew Shane was thinking of what would make *him* feel better if their roles were reversed. It was a sweet effort. Even though they’d been together for what felt like a lifetime, this kind of caretaking was still fairly new ground. It was both amazing to be loved like this, and also made Ilya feel like he was standing in front of Shane with no skin sometimes. But he nodded, swallowing against the horror of giving into all this, and was rewarded with another kiss. “Da. Okay.”

“Okay.” Shane agreed, hugging Ilya tightly before finally breaking their hold. “Give me two minutes. We’ll sit down, and I’ll do all the work.”

Ilya couldn’t resist. “*All* the work you say?” and he must have looked particularly pathetic, because Shane didn’t even tell him to shut up.

True to his word, Shane didn’t let Ilya do anything. He turned on the water to help heat the tiles before stripping them both and settling Ilya under the rainfall showerhead. The drops of water stung his muscles before helping melt some of the stiffness out of them. The sensation was also a nice distraction from the ever-present nausea. Sighing, Ilya let his head tip forward as the spray began to loosen and darken his curls.

Shane knelt next to him, pulling bottles off the shelf and lining them up within easy reach. “Feels okay?” he asked, pressing his lips to Ilya’s shoulder. “It’s not too hot?”

“Net,” said Ilya, closing his eyes against the rivulets now running down his face. “You were right. This is good.”

Another kiss. Ilya was being spoiled with them today. “Good.” He could feel Shane smile against his skin. “Let’s see if I can make it even better.”

Ilya heard the pop of a cap and the salt mist scent of his fancy curl shampoo. Shane had started replacing his perfectly usable 3-in-1 stuff about a year and a half ago, insisting this was better.

These curls are mine. He’d said very seriously as Ilya teased him about it in the shower one day. He’d tangled his fingers in the steam-dampened mess of thick blonde hair, tugging gently at the roots. *And they deserve the best.* And then he had used his grip to push Ilya down towards his dick so fast it made his head spin a little to remember it.

Those same fingers were now scratching his scalp, and it felt heavenly. Ilya leaned into them, habitually chasing the desire that he usually felt building when Shane’s hands were on him. To his utter dismay, however, he found himself too tired, any excitement draining away with the suds being rinsed out of his locks.

Somewhere in the back of his mushy brain, Ilya allowed that he may have been overreacting, but in the moment, it was the worst thing that had ever happened to him. He was wet and naked with his gorgeous man, and he wasn’t even hard. This was some cursed monkey’s paw

scenario. A weak fluttering started in his chest and spread over his body, turning into tremors. He didn't notice the tears until Shane pulled him close, tucking his head under his chin.

"Hey, hey, I know, it sucks right now." He stroked the hair at the nape of Ilya's neck. "Just relax, I'm trying to make you feel good."

"I know, that is what is wrong." Ilya sniffed, "You are so good and so beautiful, and I cannot even appreciate it." God, he sounded pathetic, but Shane just kept petting him, moving his hands from Ilya's neck, down his back, and then up again.

"It's okay, you're exhausted. You don't have to be on all the time." He raked his nails lightly over Ilya's shoulder blades, which did elicit a small shiver at least. "You're home, you're safe. You can just sit here and have a good cry."

"Sometimes it feels like all I do when I come to cottage is cry." Ilya muttered wetly, only half joking, "Does not feel very sexy."

"I always think you're sexy."

"Liar." Ilya said, thinking back to the look Shane had tried to hide in the car yesterday as he lost his lunch. "But is nice lie, so keep telling it." He took a few steadying breaths, still hiding his face against his boyfriend's perfect pecs.

Shane took his hand, bringing it up to his lips and kissing it before guiding it down to rest against his cock, which was at half-mast. "I would never lie about that." Somehow, it was the perfect thing to do. He laughed into Shane's chest.

"Wow, I knew you were freak, but I am underestimating you."

"Shut up, you love it."

"I do." Ilya gave an experimental squeeze, and Shane hummed appreciatively, but then brushed his hand away.

"No funny business."

Ilya huffed. "You started it."

"I was proving a point!" Ilya was halfway to a smart remark about having a point to prove himself, but in the end, it was too much work, so he just pouted. Shane tilted his chin up towards the spray and pressed a kiss between his eyes. "Raincheck, okay?" He promised, voice much softer now. "Let me take care of you."

Ilya felt a fluttering in his chest for the second time that morning.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Putting Ilya in the emotional blender and pushing pulse 😊

Chapter Notes

Here you go, I'm avoiding doing my laundry, so y'all can have two chapters tonight.

Ilya knew he had been dreaming of his mother. It didn't matter that he couldn't remember the dream through his groggy haze; the imagined feeling of having her, and then waking up in a world where she was gone? That was a familiar ache that had long settled into his bones.

The loneliness compounded as he tried in vain to clear his head and remembered Shane wasn't there either. Even though he'd gone at Ilya's insistence, it didn't mean Ilya didn't feel the hollow in his chest at waking up to cold sheets next to him.

Post shower, it had taken more placating from both himself and Yuna that Ilya would be fine on his own for just a little while, they'd managed to bully him into the car, with the promise that Ilya would be perfectly well behaved and not leave his bed until someone returned. He'd kept his promise, even though it meant he'd had to use the trash can they'd set next to the bed.

Thinking about it made Ilya's stomach do a precarious flip, and he peered over the edge of the mattress, surprised to find the can clean and empty. He paused and could hear signs of life coming from outside the bedroom. Yuna must be home. Yuna must have been in to see him and cleaned out his disgusting mess. His already fevered cheeks heated further. God, how could he ever face her again? It was bad enough letting Shane see that.

And yet, Ilya couldn't ignore the tug he felt to get up and see her. To not be stuck alone in this room. He glanced over at the door, then anywhere else to distract himself. His eyes landed on his water bottle on the nightstand. It was only half full. He should probably go fill it up. It was important to stay hydrated after all. He was just going to get some water.

Ilya pulled himself up into a sitting position, dragging the blanket with him. Fuck, he felt like shit. His whole body was a ragged nerve and his head was pounding so bad it made his teeth hurt. As he waited for the room to stop spinning, he grabbed his water bottle and, after a moment of debating, tucked the trash can to his chest with one arm, just in case. Then, finally ready, he made his way out.

“Ilya! I didn’t hear you get up.” Ilya blinked. He’d somehow missed the kitchen and ended up standing at the step of the sunken living room, staring at Yuna, who was working on a knitting project while the tv played quietly in the background. He was unsure of how long he’d been standing there, wrapped in his comforter like a giant ghost. She put down her needles and muted the tv, focusing her full attention on him. “Do you need something, honey?”

“I just,” Water: he came out to get some water, and now that he’d seen that Yuna was here in the house, he could go to that task. “Is okay if I lay down out here?” He blurted out. it was not what he meant to say, and he winced, hating how rudimentary his English sounded on top of it all. Whatever, he didn’t have the bandwidth to remember articles right now. They were useless anyway. Ilya scuffed his toe anxiously, skin prickling for reasons other than his fever. Fuck, he should have stayed in bed. This was silly; he was a grown man, for fucks sake. But, Yuna didn’t look put out. In fact, she was smiling warmly at him.

“Of course it’s okay,” So Ilya tried not to feel self-conscious as she watched him set down his emotional support trashcan and tucked himself into the corner of the sectional, pushing away throw pillows until he had a reasonable amount. God, what was Shane’s obsession with these stupid little couch marshmallows? “Are you still feeling icky?”

Icky. It took him a minute to place the word. Icky meant gross? Bad? Ilya nodded; he felt both, whichever one it actually meant. Yuna stood up, and for a moment, he thought she was leaving to get away from his “icky,” something he couldn’t begrudge her, even if it felt a bit like a slap in the face. But just as quickly as she was gone, she was back, standing at his shoulder and handing him a hard ginger candy.

“It might help with your stomach a little.” She explained as he unwrapped the drop and popped it into his mouth. A smile spread across Ilya’s face, and his eyes fluttered shut as the flavour coated his tongue. “You like it?”

“Tastes like Shane.” He murmured around the candy. The admission made his cheeks flush as Ilya realized whom he had said that to, but Yuna laughed.

“Yeah, that boy does love his ginger.” She pulled the blanket further over Ilya, tucking it around him and smoothing a hand over his bicep that lay under the comforter. If she noticed how Ilya burrowed his face into the pillows to hide, she didn’t say anything; she simply squeezed his shoulder. “Better?” She waited for him to nod before sitting down and picking her knitting back up.

Ilya poked his nose out from his nest, eyes focusing on the steady motion of Yuna’s hands wrapping the yarn around the needles as he finished sucking on the candy. She must have noticed him staring, but gracefully didn’t bring attention to it.

“Why are you making hat in middle of summer?” He asked. The rhythm of the clacking needles was very soothing, and the quiet of the moment made him feel lax, bringing out his natural curiosity. “hmm wait, not hat. There is silly Canadian word for it.”

“Toque.” She smiled, not looking up from her work. “I’m just trying to get ahead on Christmas gifts. It sneaks up on you if you’re not careful.”

“Ah. That is because your Christmas comes so early. If you had Christmas on right day, you would have lots of time.” Her huff of laughter made Ilya feel warm inside, even more so than it always did. He nodded slightly towards the half-finished hat. “This is for David, yes?”

Yuna looked up in surprise. “How could you tell?”

It was hard to shrug inside his blanket cocoon, but Ilya did his best. “The colours.” The yarn was a light gray, with patches of cornflower and lavender mottled throughout. “This purple is favourite, yes? But he won’t wear it alone. Needs to be mixed with other colours. You Hollanders are very particular.”

He was about to say more, but he noticed that Yuna’s hands had paused their work and she was staring at him. “You’re very observant, aren’t you?”

Ilya didn’t know how to take this, but Christ, it felt like she was staring right into him for some reason. He shrugged again, burrowing further into the back of the couch. “I am good at paying attention.”

“To David?”

“To fathers.” Hmm, Ilya hadn’t meant to say that part out loud. The attention was making him flustered, but his brain felt all soft and gooey. “To everything. Makes me good captain.” He tried to paper over the almost admission. He felt out of his depth. “And David is nice, boring man, so I only notice nice, boring things. Likes purple, is going to need progressive lenses soon, those things.” He clenched his jaw, trying to shut himself up.

Yuna’s eyes had not left him as he rambled. She was wearing a carefully soft and neutral expression. It was the same one Ilya had noticed Shane would try (and often fail) to school his features into when he felt overwhelmed. “Did you have to notice certain things about your father?” She asked, voice barely above a whisper.

“Ah,” Ilya said thickly, unsure of why the words were still spilling out of his mouth, “he was, less nice than David. I had to...I had to watch out sometimes. Be...careful.”

Ilya cursed his stupid fuzzy fever brain for letting things slip out. It was this stupid fucking flu, and this stupid cozy house, and this nice lady who loved him, for some reason, making him feel safe and spill all kinds of things. “*Blyat*.”

He blinked hard, trying to sharpen his gaze, which had gone bleary on him. When he opened his eyes again, Yuna was directly in front of him, kneeling next to where his head lay on the couch.

“Ilya,” her voice was achingly gentle, which was not helping to clear his vision at all. “I want you to listen to me, okay?” He nodded, doing his best to look into her unflinching gaze. “You don’t ever have to be careful here. Not with David, not with me. You are so loved here.” Ilya felt pinned by the earnestness in Yuna’s eyes, unsure of how to move or what to do with the hot feeling that was filling the hollow in his chest.

He watched her hand lift, hovering above him and, at his slight nod, come to rest in his sweaty hair. The damn broke as soon as she touched him.

Ilya had apparently cried himself to sleep, because the next time his eyes opened, the shadows had shifted and there was a different hand stroking his hair. He smiled weakly at Shane through droopy eyes that felt like they were filled with grit.

His boyfriend was sitting cross-legged in front of the couch, chin propped on the cushion, his face so close that his and Ilya's noses were practically touching. Not close enough in Ilya's opinion, so he wiggled just enough to nudge them together. The soft delight in feeling the huff of Shane's laughter against his skin almost brought tears to his eyes again, and he was forced to scrunch them shut against the oncoming blur as Shane kissed his nose, then peppered a few more featherweight kisses across his cheeks and forehead.

"Mooorrrree," he demanded, letting the touch ground him in reality a bit. He reached up to the hand that was still petting his hair and tugged, trying to get Shane fully on the couch with him. Shane laughed again and seemed happy enough to oblige, wrapping around Ilya and letting himself be settled and arranged until they were perfect.

"Good now?"

"Great." And it mostly was. He couldn't help but be aware of how gross he felt. Shane probably thought he was gross too, but he was sleepy and comfy, and no one was pushing him away, so he greedily soaked up the comfort of his boyfriend's body against his.

"Hayden and Ryan say get well soon."

"Do they?"

"Everyone does actually. But you know, those two passed it along through me specifically."

"That is sweet." Ilya sincerely doubted Hayden Pike wanted him to get well soon. Probably more like *I hope you die of flu so I can set Shane up with literally anyone else*, but he didn't feel up to opening that can of worms, so he just accepted the polite remarks along with the back rub that was making him melt further into Shane's warm embrace. They lay like that in the quiet for a while until Ilya felt a kiss against his messy hair.

"Mom said you were having a tough day."

Ilya took a deep breath, the scent of Shane's laundry detergent surrounding him, pushing out his own smell of sweat and sick. "Is better now," and then, because he was too tired to talk about it again, he changed the subject. "I learned new word today."

"Yeah?"

"Mhmm. Icky. Is fun to say, but turns out, that is where the fun ends."

"Aww, sweetheart." The pet name came out with more confidence than this morning, and Ilya hummed happily into Shane's chest.

“That is nice. Call me more nice things, please.”

He could feel Shane looking around to make sure the coast was clear before warm breath ghosted against his ear. “Oh, so *you* want to be called a good boy now?”

Ilya took it as a sign of improvement that, even exhausted and feverish, he felt a stirring inside. “Careful Hollander, don’t start things you don’t intend to finish with your mother in next room.”

“Please,” Shane chuckled, raking his nails up Ilya’s scalp, making him moan softly. “You couldn’t untie my drawstring right now, let alone anything else.”

“Fucking watch me.” But even Ilya knew it was all bravado. His hands wouldn’t even move from where they had the back of Shane’s t-shirt in a vice grip. “Hmm,” He mumbled, the steady rhythm of Shane’s heartbeat already lulling him back to sleep. “Okay, just say the words, please. I will earn them later, I promise.”

“Oh love,” He felt himself being held tighter as he drifted off. “You don’t have to earn anything.”

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Thank you everyone for following along with this fic that basically started because I was pissed off at the lack of emotional depth and tragic nerfing of Shane's character in The Long Game (sorry, I love all content with those boys, but I'll never forgive Rachel Ried for that.)

I've loved all your comments, thank you so much for engaging with this! I've got some more stuff planned, so stay tuned!

Ilya's fever ebbed and spiked drastically throughout the night. It was concerning enough that his mom barely fought Shane that morning when he'd told her he was staying home. After five minutes of half-hearted arguments, she'd just gotten on the phone and started making rearrangements, telling the other coaches that Shane had caught whatever Ilya had. They'd been around each other all week, preparing for camp, so it would make sense that the bug might have been passed on; no one would question it.

Hayden had texted to check in, and Shane had given him the real story, glad to have someone to confide in after his long night. Where he had been sleepy and pliant throughout the day, Ilya's mood had turned restless in the evening. He was needy in a way that brushed up against his usual hyper-independence, which made him obviously self-conscious about being cared for. While Shane had still been happy to do it, it was exhausting work. Surprisingly, Hayden had sent genuine well-wishes to both of them, saying he hoped they'd be back before the end of the week. He'd also compared Ilya to his two-year-old, but Shane still considered it a win for the pair of them.

Honestly, Hayden was probably happy to have an anxious Shane off the ice. He'd been practically useless yesterday, and he felt terrible about letting the kids' experiences suffer because of it. He'd barely been able to keep his mind off of how Ilya was feeling, and if he was doing okay, especially after the episode in the shower. He'd seen Ilya cry before, sure, but this flu had him on edge in a way that seemed to totally wipe him out. Shane was doing his best to keep it all together, but he couldn't help but feel like he was missing something important, failing in some way.

His brain was still working overtime around this as he tiptoed back into their bedroom, carrying a bowl of cold water and a fresh washcloth. Ilya stirred as he sat down on the bed, setting the bowl on the nightstand. He looked more lucid than the last time he'd woken up, thankfully, but he still reached out to brush his fingers against Shane's thigh, as if trying to decide if Shane was really here. He squinted at the sunshine that managed to filter through the curtains.

“What is time?” He asked, face scrunched in confusion. Shane bent over to kiss his forehead, gently pushing him back against the pillows.

“Still morning,” he said vaguely, trying to avoid what was probably an inevitable argument. He laid the washcloth on Ilya’s brow, watching him sigh in relief at the coolness. Maybe he could keep Ilya distracted until he fell back asleep.

“What hour?” No such luck.

Shane flipped the washcloth to the side that was still cold, sliding it down to dab at Ilya’s pink cheeks. “Don’t worry about it.”

“Shane...” He said, eyes opening just so he could glare up at Shane, but it lacked any of its usual fierceness. Shane pushed the cloth over Ilya’s eyes, aiming for playfulness, but Ilya batted it away, not to be deterred. “You should be gone by now, yes?”

If Ilya was going to be stubborn than two could play at that game. “I’m right where I need to be.” he said, replacing the flannel on the side of Ilya’s face with his hand. He could see his boyfriend was torn between leaning into the comfort or remaining annoyed at Shane.

“I am fine. You do not need to stay here.” He said, turning out of Shane’s touch.

Shane sighed, losing patience with this argument they’d already had several times yesterday evening and throughout the night. “You’re not fine,” He said, trying to keep his tone even. “And I’m not leaving.”

“I do not need you to baby me.”

“Then stop acting like one.” It was the wrong response, and Shane knew it the second it was out of his mouth. He watched as Ilya retreated back into himself, something switching off behind his glassy eyes. Shane cursed himself. Ilya was so much better at taking care of him than the other way around. He did his best to take a grounding breath. “I didn’t mean that,” he said carefully. “I’m just tired, and I’m worried about you.”

The admission coaxed Ilya back into himself a little, “I do not want you to worry,” he said, ghosting his fingers over Shane’s kneecap. “I want you to go have fun with kids, keep up good cover, for us. You being here is supsi-spaci-...harder to hide.”

Shane’s brow furrowed as he frowned down at Ilya. “Is that why you want me at camp so badly?”

“Camp is important to secret, and secret is important to you.”

“I thought this *secret* was important to both of us.” This was beginning to feel like the same fight they picked up and put down every few months. Shane’s jaw clenched as he slid into a role that felt frustratingly familiar. He hated it; nothing ever actually got resolved. How could it? They could push at each other all they wanted, but the situation was never going to change.

“Da.” Ilya muttered, halfheartedly, “Sure, it is.”

“What the fuck is that supposed to mean?” Shane snapped, voice rising. He expected Ilya to raise his voice in turn, or make one of his well-worn snarky comments, but to his surprise, something shifted. He watched Ilya’s throat bob as he squeezed his eyes shut, trying to put up his usual walls, in spite of how bad he clearly felt.

“Nothing.” Ilya said finally, “It means nothing. I am just tired; English hard. I do not know what I say.” It wasn’t the first time Ilya had used English as a way to deflect, but this was different than their usual song and dance. Ilya was raw in a way he rarely saw, and it was starting to scare him. The fight drained out of Shane, replaced rapidly with concern.

“Hey,” Shane said, doing his best to soften his voice, but he couldn’t keep the shakiness out of it entirely. “No, it’s not nothing. Tell me what’s wrong, please?” But Ilya just rolled over to face the wall, curling in on himself.

Shane sat on the edge of the mattress, unsure of what to do. “Do you want me to go?” he asked, dreading the answer. “Not to camp, but if you need some space, I can go sit in the living room.” There was a moment of silence, and then Ilya’s clammy hand reached back for his, tugging him forward.

“I never want you to go, not really.” He whispered, voice thick. So Shane crawled back into bed, wrapping around Ilya’s uncomfortably warm and trembling body from behind. “Everyone is always going.” Ilya’s voice was so quiet, it almost got lost in the duvet. Shane would have missed the words if he hadn’t been close enough to feel them.

“What’s that?” He tried to turn his boyfriend towards him, to look at his face, but Ilya shook his head, stubbornly burrowing further into the covers.

“Or I am always leaving.” Shane rested his forehead against the back of Ilya’s neck, kissing the top vertebrae when it brushed against his lips.

“Ilya, where is this coming from, love?”

“Don’t know. Everything is...loose.”

“Loose?”

“Words. They keep falling out.”

“Have...have you been trying to keep them in?” He felt Ilya shrug against him. “I want you to tell me things.”

“I don’t know how. You will be upset, sad. Do not want.”

“I’ll be more upset trying to figure it out without you telling me.”

“Sorry.” Shane shushed him gently. He remembered the night in front of the fire, coaxing pieces of Ilya’s childhood out of him bit by bit.

“Can I try asking questions? Would that help?” Another shrug, but this time he brought Shane’s hand up from his hip to his chest, tangling their fingers together. Shane took it as an

affirmative.

“Have you been lonely lately?” A small nod. “For how long?”

“...Since Boston I guess.” Shane’s heart plummeted.

“The whole time?” He asked, trying not to sound utterly wrecked by the admission.

“Not always, but lots of time.”

There was a moment where both men seemed to be holding their breath. Then it was like turning on the water at the cottage in the spring. Shane could almost hear the words clanging through the pipes of Ilya’s brain, and suddenly they were gushing out. “My heart is in Montreal, and I am stuck in Ottawa. Is not bad. Team is nice, I am liked, but I go home to empty house and empty bed. My friends are in Boston; they do not understand why I leave, and I cannot tell them, so I hurt them. I do not want to lie, so I do not call them. Then they stop calling too, and I cannot blame them, but I am alone so much.”

“Oh, Ilya.” Shane squeezed the hand that was caught in his, but Ilya wasn’t done.

“Sometimes,” he sniffed, “I feel like little island in big sea of lonely. You come to visit, but then you go away, and the lonely is so big I think it will swallow me, like ocean.” The back of Ilya’s t-shirt was doing a terrible job at soaking up Shane’s tears. “And now I make us both sad moya lyubov’.”

“Oh no,” Shane tried to turn Ilya towards him again, but this time, when it didn’t work, he half crawled, half rolled over him so they could be face to face. He pressed his cool forehead against Ilya’s hot one, swiping at his tears and swallowing his strained sorries with kisses. “Ilya, no. No apologies, I want you to tell me things like this. I want to know how you’re feeling, even if it’s sad. I want to know everything about you. I love you.”

There was a long stretch where Shane just held Ilya to him and let him cry himself out, whispering soft assurances, letting Ilya ruin his t-shirt with salt and snot. Finally, after what was either five minutes or possibly an eternity, he heard Ilya take a ragged breath.

“I’m so tired.” He whimpered.

The words sounded like a deeper confession, but Ilya was so worn out that Shane just kissed the top of his head. “I know, sweetheart. Try and get some sleep. We’ll figure this out when you’re feeling better, I promise.” He tried to focus on letting his boyfriend be the one to freak out in this moment. He would have plenty of time to spiral while Ilya slept.

Ilya’s fever broke in his sleep about an hour later, but Shane refused to leave his side. There was no scenario in which he let Ilya wake up alone. He reached over and grabbed the washcloth from the now warm bowl of water, wiping the worst of the sweat away.

By the time Ilya started to rouse several hours later, they were both sticky with sweat, the duvet having been kicked down to the end of the bed in favour of the thinner, lighter sheets. Shane's mind had been running in circles around every moment of the last two years, and the more he thought about it from Ilya's perspective, the worse he felt. He was still going over everything when his boyfriend pushed against him with a groan, searching for a cooler, drier corner of bedding.

"Hey," Shane said, finally breaking their hold. "How are you feeling?"

"Goryachiy" Ilya rasped, making grabby hands for the water bottle on the nightstand. Shane obliged, passing it over and flipping up the little rubber straw so Ilya didn't have to sit up as far to drink. "I am sweaty, and little bit spinny," he said after a few sips. "But better."

He smiled tiredly up at Shane as he handed the water bottle back, his eyes clearer than they'd been in days. It was enough to make Shane forget how gross the sheets felt under him as he lay back down and kissed Ilya's dopey grin, morning breath and all.

"You stayed," he mumbled around Shane's lips. "Even though the bed is all dirty." Shane kissed him again.

"I didn't want you to wake up alone." Ilya frowned, trying to recollect their conversation; a pained look came into his eyes as he remembered.

"Fuck. I scared you. I am sorry, moye serdtse." Shane shook his head.

"Don't be sorry." He said, trying to keep his voice soft and open. "But I do want to talk about it." Ilya reached up to stroke Shane's hair reassuringly.

"It was just the fever making me, how you say, over emotional. I am okay, I promise." Shane took the hand on his head and brought it to his lips before bringing them to rest between them. He looked seriously into Ilya's eyes, which had gone tight and sad.

"No, Ilya, we can't go backwards on this, please." He took a deep breath, sorting out what he'd thought about while Ilya had been sleeping. "I'm sorry, I should have noticed you were struggling with this. And I'm sorry you felt like you couldn't tell me."

Ilya's gaze dropped to Shane's throat. "Is okay," he said, "I know it's hard for you too."

"Yeah, but I have people. I didn't realize how one-sided our inner circle was."

"Is fine. I like your parents. And the Pikes, minus Hayden of course."

"Ilya, no." He gently drew Ilya's face up until they were looking each other in the eyes. "You have to let me apologize, okay? I messed up. You can't just be okay with letting me hurt you; that's not fair to either of us." Ilya looked at him for a long time, tired blue eyes still rimmed with red. Shane wondered briefly how many people had actually ever apologized to Ilya in his life, and the thought sent a crack through his heart.

"Okay." Ilya said, finally. "But I can still forgive you, deal?" Shane smiled softly, brushing his thumb over the skin near his favourite mole.

“Deal. As long as we can work on a solution together.” Ilya’s face fell.

“What solution?” His voice was sad, but resigned. “We are in the same boat today as we were yesterday. We cannot do anything about it moya lyubov’.”

But Shane had been thinking of almost nothing else for hours, and with this new point of view from Ilya’s side, he’d come up with an idea. “Do you want to tell Marleau?” Ilya’s eyes widened in surprise.

“You would be okay with that?”

“I would be.” Shane knew Marleau was one of the few Raiders who had kept in contact with Ilya, post-transfer, although he wasn’t sure how frequently. But he knew that, despite how different it looked, Cliff and Ilya had shared something like the closeness he and Hayden did. “Ilya, I don’t ever want you to feel like you’re alone, so whatever we need to do, we’ll do.”

“I-” Shane waited as Ilya struggled to find the English words to say, before he gave up and just kissed him. “I love you.” he said simply.

“I love you too.”

They stared at each other for a moment, as Ilya’s eyes darted around his face, warring with something internally. “Can I ask for one more thing?”

“Anything.”

“Svetlana.” Shane tried not to let the name freeze his blood. He did his best to school his features into a neutral expression, but from the look Ilya gave him, he knew he had failed. “I know you do not like that we have...a history,” he said, “but she is my oldest friend. And I have been lying to her for so long.” Ilya’s throat bobbed in a way that would have been distracting if he hadn’t looked so sad. “And I miss her.”

Shane would have given Ilya the fucking moon in that moment if it meant he’d never again have to hear the way his voice broke at the end of that sentence. Which is why Shane found himself taking a breath and nodding. “I trust you,” He said, “So if you trust her, I can be okay with it.”

“Really?” Ilya’s eyes were shining, hope so evidently written across his face it broke Shane’s heart a bit. He could do this. Besides, he reasoned with himself, his friendship with Rose didn’t really give him much of a leg to stand on. He nodded again, face softening at the wide grin that broke out on Ilya’s face.

“Whatever we need to do, my love.” Ilya rolled on top of him, kissing him with a passion he hadn’t felt up to in days. It left them both a little winded. Shane watched from below as Ilya pushed himself up on shaky arms, trying to playfully bounce the mattress beneath them in his excitement. He couldn’t keep from laughing when Ilya collapsed back on top of him with a grunt as the muscles in his forearms gave out. “Easy! Don’t get yourself too worked up.” He wrapped his arms around Ilya’s waist, pinning his boyfriend to him. “You’re happy with this plan then?”

Ilya hummed from where he'd buried his face into the crook of Shane's neck. "Very happy." He poked his head up, kissing the corner of Shane's mouth. He was still smiling, but his eyes had softened. "Thank you, Shane." Hearing his name in Ilya's accent never got old. "I know it is a lot. Are you sure..."

"I'm sure." It surprised Shane how true it was. Alright, he wasn't thrilled about the Svetlana of it all, but seeing how excited Ilya was about letting two people into their world made Shane want to scream it from the rooftops that Ilya Rozanov was *his*.

He knew it wasn't the end of this conversation, that eventually they'd have to talk about the current that ran under Ilya's loneliness, but for now, he was content to try and convince his boyfriend to hold off until they had both showered at least before facetimeing people.

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