

**this is not enough (i am not enough)**

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# this is not enough (i am not enough)

by [blankjournals](#)

## Summary

Shane's breath catches on a sob, and he muffles the sound with his hand. Everything feels like too much. He's naked, and he can feel entirely too much on his body, inside his body, and he hates how it's starting to feel gross. His head is pounding, and he can't even focus on placating his mind when his lungs are also screaming in his throat for breath.

Ilya hears, and his hands reach out to hold Shane, tension lying in every part of his body. "Shane—"

"Don't touch me," Shane snaps, more desperation than yelling as he rips his arm out of Ilyas's grasp. His tears have nowhere to go now, and they finally spill over, hot and humiliating, down his cheeks.

Ilya freezes in place, hand hovering mid-air. A myriad of emotions flicker across his face: confusion, hurt, fear. Ilya takes an unconscious step back like someone shoved him. His body curls in on itself, trying to make himself appear smaller.

He looks... terrified. Like, Shane just called him a monster, and he believes it.

OR: inspired by the fight in the long game when Ilya had told Shane he could have sex with other men because he did not believe in cheating.

## Notes

i have nothing to say besides enjoy (hopefully)

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

- Translation into 中文-普通话 國語 available: [【授权翻译】此情难满](#) by [Shiny\\_Park](#)

# Chapter 1

## Chapter Notes

FYI, not related to the other fic "love and lust". both are just inspired by the same fight but this fic does NOT take place after that fic, it is its own thing!

### Scene from the Long Game, Chapter 21, Summary:

Ilya told Shane that if he wanted to have sex with other men when they were apart, he could. Since Shane had figured out he was gay around the same time he'd realized he had fallen in love with Ilya, he did not get to explore sex beyond what Ilya could give him. All that mattered was that his heart belonged to Ilya. That's what Ilya had told himself.

Shane did not take well to the offer; he had thought it was Ilya's subtle way of letting him know he had cheated or wanted to. Ilya told him, "he didn't believe in cheating" because he didn't owe Shane. It had ended with Shane storming out of Ilya's house and driving back to Montréal, and ignoring his text for 3 days. On the fourth day, he'd finally called Ilya and said, "You really wouldn't mind if I had sex with someone else?"

That was when Ilya had realized how much he would mind it and felt sick at the idea of someone else touching Shane, and he hadn't been sure if Shane was asking because he'd already done it, or if he was about to, or what. But all Ilya had said was, "Of course not. If that is what you want." And Shane's reply was "I don't want, you fucking moron," and Ilya had been so intensely relieved his knees had sunk to the ground.

---

Ilya and Shane had talked about it. They had sorted themselves out. Just another fight, a bottle of misunderstanding. Another challenge to navigate in their relationship, like any couple. Everything should be fine. Everything *is* fine.

No, Shane does not believe Ilya cheated on him, or that Ilya wants to. Ilya is loyal to him. But apparently, loyalty for Ilya had also meant Shane could go fuck someone else as long as his heart belonged to Ilya.

As if that's how it worked. As if love and sex could just be separated like that. Like it was unconnected, or independent of each other, somehow misrelated. Are they not two sides of the same coin? Are they not different, like yin and yang, but still complete when put together?

How can Shane explain that it's not just lust and desire that drive him to have sex with Ilya? How it doesn't just feel like biology to him. *Not anymore.*

How can he explain that he hates thinking about it that way because that same thought process is what drove him to lie to himself for eight years? How he managed to deflect his true feelings for so long, ignore what Ilya really meant to him, what he has *always* meant to him.

How can Shane explain that sex with Ilya makes him feel so vulnerable, and how utterly good it feels to see Ilya take care of that vulnerability? To take it and shape it and caress it and keep it close to his heart. How undone and embarrassingly bare he feels while they have sex, how every time feels like the first time.

How sometimes he's afraid that no amount of words he says will ever be good enough. How the emotions that he tries paint his face in can never be good enough because no one can ever tell how he's feeling, no one knows what he's thinking. *He's too stoic, too closed off, too blank—*

And that maybe, just maybe, when it all falls away, when it's just him and Ilya, locked together in every which way. Pressed so close Shane can't tell where he begins, and Ilya ends. Can't tell if the condensation on his skin is his alone or if he's drowning in the salt from Ilya's skin. Can't tell if his body is burning to match Ilya's or if Ilya is cooling down to match his. Like homeostasis. Like their bodies can't help but acclimate to the other.

Maybe then Ilya can see, properly and truthfully, without filter, how Shane feels. What Ilya is capable of doing to him. What Shane wants to do to him, and for him.

Maybe it is, for other people, that simple to separate the two. Maybe this is just another thing Shane can't understand. Something he isn't wired to understand.

 *can sex and love be seperated*

Is what he types into Google cause, well, who the hell else is he supposed to ask?

## **Why sex and love don't belong in the same bed**

Olivia Fane

Sat 28 Jan 2017 06.15 GMT

*Sex is not about souls. We have sexual desire when we want to have sex, not when we love someone.*

*That... seems like a wildly unfair and blanket assumption,* he thinks, frowning at his screen. In fact, Shane feels his desire spikes most when he's emotionally close to Ilya.

Fine, he can accept the part about sex not being about souls. That's asking for a lot. He's never needed sex to be holy. But—

Sex is a neutral and colourless thing, and a higher or lower sex drive is caused by hormones that are hard to control.

Neutral? Colourless? Shane feels anything but neutral when he's with Ilya. He's not trying to be dramatic, but sometimes his orgasms hit him so hard he's pretty sure new colours get invented behind his eyelids.

Love and erotic love are two very different emotions – I would argue they are almost contrary. Love proper is to do with the other person: it is about the care, respect and understanding of that human other. Love like this grows, it cannot help it. The more of yourself you invest in another person, the more you receive. You become as one: their pain is your pain, their joy, yours too. Erotic love, on the other hand, is about wanting something.

Shane doesn't... disagree with that. But his mind is stuck on the first line. He doesn't think they are contrary. He thinks those two things are mutually reinforcing.

Is that the problem, though? Because his relationship with Ilya was built on sex. Built on erotic love that became real love? Shane's desire refusing to surrender to division. *Undivided*. Had him falling in love with the first man he ever had sex with.

He returns to his search, refusing to investigate the article further. Because there is a small pit forming at the bottom of his stomach, and he needs it to stop. Wants to ease the discomfort he feels clawing up his spine. Wants to expel the small voice in his head whispering that he's been mislabelling the definition of sex this entire time. That it is really just *hormones* and *chemistry*, and Shane is the last person in the world to finally understand it.

The people on Reddit seem to agree with him, at least.

**r/AskMen • Posted by GYN-k4H-Q3z-75B**

I can have sex with somebody I don't love, but a romantic relationship without sex is impossible for me. Also, sex is a bit like pizza. It's always sort of good at least. But having passionate sex with the person you know and love is an entire order of magnitude more intense. Almost nothing beats sex with the person you love after a big fight because she's important to you.

Well, the pizza analogy is one way to put it.

He stays up late, determined to piece together his understanding of love and sex. He reads think pieces, articles, and video essays. At one point, he finds himself nodding along with a blog before realizing it's a religious website, which makes him pause and reconsider everything he's absorbed.

*Yeah, let's not do that today.*

What he sort of understands by the end of it is that he's not wrong for thinking the way he does. Neither are those who think the complete opposite of him. And that, the modern definition of sex has changed a lot in the past 60 years. The liberation behind it is more about how the act itself was framed as shameful, marred by societal norms and judgment. A means of procreation only, and something that had to be done with the person you loved, or you were considered impure.

*Okay, sure, fine, he can understand that.*

But there is still one thing he can't understand: *I don't believe in cheating. I don't own you, Shane.*

There are even more views on this than Shane could imagine. Apparently, it's not so black-and-white. Lucky for him.

If Ilya cheated on Shane, what would he do?

*I'd kill him.*

The thought is so instant, it startles him, and he inhales sharply at how quickly his brain had veered towards violence.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

What is considered cheating? The internet doesn't have a straight answer. Wikipedia tells him: Cheating can refer specifically to infidelity, where arranged or consensual relationships, that often come with a social contract, are violated.

A user on a site called Quora says: I consider cheating to be anything that steps out of the boundaries I set with my partner. For example, my husband and I have a 100% honesty policy.

Fuck, he and Ilya don't have a social contract. Well, not in such an obvious way. Shane didn't set boundaries with him. Not on this. He didn't know he needed to; he didn't think he and Ilya had such drastic views on cheating.

Shane tries to organize his thoughts. He creates a table in his head. Cheating or not cheating?

1. Falling in love with someone else? Emotional cheating? *Yes, still cheating.*
2. Having sex with someone else? *Fucking yes.*

The thought of it alone makes Shane nauseous.

- 2a. Kissing? *Cheater.*
- 2b. Second base, third base? *Shane doesn't want any part of Ilya on anyone else.*
3. Flirting?

That one stoops him a little. Because Ilya does flirt. The real question is, when does he not? It's just part of who he is. How he charms his way through life. It's harmless, Shane knows this. Knows Ilya isn't doing it to lead someone on or be cruel. Knows Ilya plays it up particularly with female interviewers and sends Shane those clips just for Shane to text him back the middle finger.

Their version of foreplay.

He'll joke about seeing a *pretty fan* at the last game who was wearing his Ottawa Centaurs jersey, ROZANOV proudly displayed across her back, and how he winked at her, and she blushed. And he will say this all casually, while he's three slicked fingers deep in Shane.

And Shane would grit his teeth in irritation, something green and acidic burning low in his belly. Ilya would grin wickedly, teeth glinting, eyes going bright with mischief. It'd edge Shane on even more, knowing Ilya is waiting for this exact reaction. Waiting for Shane to push him back till his fingers slide out of him, and Ilya would not even bother to wait for a signal; he would just lie back on the bed as Shane climbs on top and straddles him. Determination burning bright across his face, in every line of his body as he reaches back to line himself up and sink back down on his cock, inch by inch till they're both breathless.

He'll joke about *threesomes* and *orgies* right before heading out to party with his teammates, or he'll text Shane about people trying to proposition him in the middle of his night.

It all ends the same. Shane pushing Ilya against the front gate before he leaves or when he comes back. Sinking to his knees, hands working clumsily to yank down his stupidly tight jeans. And then his lips would be wrapping around his cock, letting the familiar weight and taste of skin settle in his mouth, hands working the parts he can't accommodate. Ilya would curse, hands tangling themselves in his hair, pulling the strands till his scalp stings, sending a delicious shiver down Shane's spine.

And Shane doesn't mind. And he means it. Not in the way where he's putting up with something because he doesn't have strong enough feelings about it to do anything about it. He knows Ilya is not playing some sick game with him.

Shane's jealousy is something that tangles with desire, curdles into possessiveness until he's biting at the leash to be set free. Free to sink his teeth into Ilya's lip till it bruises. Free to rake his nails down his back till they leave lines of red, till Ilya's back looks like it got mauled by an animal.

He wants to see Ilya come undone and know only *he* can do that to him. The way his grip tightens on Shane's hips when he's fucking into him, pace erratic like Shane's heat is the only thing worth chasing. The noises he makes when he eats Shane out, like he's starving for it and Shane's his last meal. Like it's as blindingly pleasurable for him as it is for Shane. How he can't help but lick Shane's cock clean when he comes and then, *still*, greedily makes his way up to Shane's mouth to taste him there too. Like he can't get enough, will never get enough.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

Shane lies back on his bed, his phone back on charge on the nightstand next to him. He stares up at his ceiling, trying to make out patterns in the dark he knows aren't there. His feet twist in the sheets; his blanket might as well have been made from paper with how wrong it feels against his skin.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

Shane swallows the lump in his throat. *But I do.*

---

Shane tries to push it out of his mind. Truly, he tries. He does not believe Ilya will cheat on him, that's not really it. But if he and Ilya have two different definitions of cheating, whose to say Ilya won't do something that he doesn't even see as disloyalty?

He said he didn't want to sleep with other people. That it was about Shane, being afraid he was getting the short end of the stick since he hadn't explored much of his sexuality outside of Ilya.

But Shane doesn't want to explore. He doesn't need to sleep with half of North America to know Ilya is it for him. Physically and emotionally.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

The words haunt him, day and night. They echo relentlessly and without mercy in his head. Make his stomach turn so unpleasantly that he loses his appetite altogether, despite having only eaten a strict number of calories that day.

It's overwhelming, and Shane can't do overwhelming. Doesn't like how every part of him is racing to feel something. The heavy weight on his chest, the tingling in his hands, the way his muscles lock up like they're bracing for impact.

Ilya isn't privy to any of this, courtesy of it being a heavy month full of schedules, games and brand deals. Shane is surprised he even has time to dread so much on a singular sentence—

*I don't believe in cheating.*

**SHANE**

Do you believe in cheating

**ROSE LANDRY**

do i need to call

who am i fighting

**SHANE**

Haha.

No, i dont think I can put verbally what im thinking, texting is easier

Ilya didnt cheat, by the way

**ROSE LANDRY**

Start with that jesus, i almost bought a gun

**SHANE**

That is the American in you

**ROSE LANDRY**

shane??

**SHANE**

Sorry

That wasnt me trying to joke about gun violence

**ROSE LANDRY**

the way i know you so earnestly mean that

ok backtrack, cheating, do i believe in cheating?

is this your way of asking if i thought you cheated on me

dating me while secretly being in love with someone else

**SHANE**

I really was a terrible boyfriend

**ROSE LANDRY**

no you werent, you were actually so devoted to me and trying to make things work, even though you were helplessly gay

and wouldve kept on dating me, had i not let you have your gay awakening

**SHANE**

Thank you for that, by the way

**ROSE LANDRY**

anytime

no shane, you didnt cheat on me. not even emotional cheating

well.

given your situation, no.

**SHANE**

So you believe in emotional cheating

**ROSE LANDRY**

yes, like , i guess attraction is a bit of a grey area but if you're fantasizing about BEING with someone else

god forbid falling in love then yeah, its cheating

**SHANE**

So not just physical

**ROSE LANDRY**

for me, both count as cheating

**SHANE**

What level of physical

**ROSE LANDRY**

you kiss someone and im mixing bleach in your drink

Shane snorts and falls back against the couch, trying to make himself comfortable.

**SHANE**

I agree.

But not everyone thinks like you and me

**ROSE LANDRY**

true, you have to set boundaries with your partner

**SHANE**

*Shane is typing...*

*Shane has stopped typing.*

*Shane is typing...*

Yeah

**ROSE LANDRY**

i can feel the 1000 yard stare behind that ‘yeah’

**SHANE**

The what

**ROSE LANDRY**

i need to make you a meme manual

**SHANE**

The internet said the same thing, about the boundaries

**ROSE LANDRY**

oh my poor baby boy, you were googling this shane?

i just want to wrap you in a blanket and put you in my pocket

**SHANE**

How would I fit in your pocket

**ROSE LANDRY**

i would shrink you

**SHANE**

How would you shrink me

**ROSE LANDRY**

magic

Stop distracting me, why are you googling essays about cheating

**SHANE**

Ilya didnt cheat

**ROSE LANDRY**

ok

**SHANE**

he told me he didn't believe in cheating

**ROSE LANDRY**

*Rose is typing....*

*Rose is typing....*

*Rose has stopped typing....*

ok if my bf had said that to me I'd probably crash out too

**SHANE**

Rose Landry

**ROSE LANDRY**

full government name damn, see i tell everyone you're the funniest person i know and they  
dont believe me

fucking losers

**SHANE**

Who says im not funny, it's Ilya, isn't it?

**ROSE LANDRY**

forget that

sorry, ok so, what did he say when you told him you do believe in cheating

**SHANE**

*Shane is typing...*

*Shane is typing...*

*Shane has stopped typing.*

**ROSE LANDRY**

hello?

Shane? did u die?

**SHANE**

I didn't tell him

**ROSE LANDRY**

shane.

**SHANE**

What am i supposed to say? I cant change his mind its unfair, we all have our  
beliefs

And the definition of sex has changed alot in the past half century

Did you know the LGBTQ community and women's rights activism played a central role in  
the sex revolution

To challenge societal norms and demand rights to a person's sexual autonomy

LGBTQ+\*

**ROSE LANDRY**

of course i dont know that, they dont teach us this shit in american schools

and i would totally watch a whole documentary on you about this, which im pretty sure you  
have 4 of them already up in queue

but back to the more pressing matters

It's all fine and dandy you dont want to force your belief on him, however you are allowed to set BOUNDARIES

that man loves you, if he found out he did something (unintentionally) that would hurt you, he'd be devastated

**SHANE**

I cant change the way he thinks, thats not how relationships work i cant force my thinking on him

**ROSE LANDRY**

youre not asking him to change the way he thinks, youre asking him to understand how you feel

how despite him not believing cheating is a real thing, you do

and that if he were to go and hook up with someone, it would hurt you

that's a hard no for you

we can only establish our rules with our loved ones

its up to them to accept, or compromise

**SHANE**

And if they don't

**ROSE LANDRY**

they deal with the consequences.

---

*I don't believe in cheating.*

*I don't believe in cheating.*

*I don't believe in cheating.*

“Shane!”

Shane startles out of his thoughts, coughing as the smell of barbecue and smoke fills his nostrils. He hastily flips the burgers over, grimacing at the sight of slightly burnt meat.

“Sorry,” he mumbles as he begins to plate the ones that are fully cooked.

“Nah, don't worry, Jackie likes them well done,” Hayden calls from beside him.

He's at the Pike residence one late evening. The Canadian weather is finally good enough after months of grey, and now every citizen has started busting out picnic chairs and grills, skin itching to go outside.

The sun is hiding behind the clouds, painting the evening sky in orange and yellow shadows. Jackie is over by the patio table, plating the rest of the food. Hayden's kids are running, giggling, and wreaking havoc across the large yard. It's nice, almost distracting, and pulls a smile from Shane. Hayden's kids are adorable.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

Shane sighs, like he's been holding in his breath all day. *Here we go again.*

“You okay, man? You've been off for a few days, don't tell me it's because you're missing Rozanov?”

“Do you believe in cheating?”

Hayden chokes on his beer, spluttering liquid everywhere as he hastily puts his can down. He slams his fist into his chest a couple of times to regain his breathing, and Shane winces, hands hovering awkwardly before he apologetically pats his back.

“Is Jackie cheating on me?” Hayden finally manages to wheeze out, eyes darting over to where his wife was standing by the table, no longer there, probably headed back in the house.

“What? No, I mean I don't think so—”

“You don't *think* so?!”

“No, I—” Shane closes his eyes and takes a big breath. “Jackie didn't do anything to make me think she's cheating on you. This has nothing to do with her.” he tells him slowly, trying to sound reassuring.

Hayden eyes him for a couple of seconds, still rubbing at his sternum, before his hand drops. He nods once and gestures for Shane to continue.

“But, if Jackie did cheat—”

Hayden groans, sounding almost pained. “Shane.”

“What would you classify as cheating? Do you believe in cheating?” Shane finishes asking.

Hayden crosses his arms and studies him for a second. Like Shane's a puzzle he can't solve or make sense of. His hands drop to his side before one comes up to run through his hair, mussing up the ends. “Yes, I believe in cheating, and I don't know, cheating is just... cheating.”

“But what *is* cheating?” Shane asks again, voice growing insistent. “Like, having sex with someone else? What if she just made out with someone?”

“Are you sure there's not something you need to tell me?”

“No, Hayden, I know it's a weird question, just humour me.”

Hayden sighs, long and suffering. He truly does look pained, and Shane feels bad that he's putting unwanted images in his head.

“I think...I might be able to look past kissing someone. If she's truly sorry. But if she were too...” Hayden makes a face and swallows once, like the words are hard to digest. “If she had sex with someone else, yeah, I would—I would call that cheating.” He pauses for a minute before he hastily adds, “I don't want her kissing anyone else. That's not what I'm saying.”

Shane nods in understanding, mauling over his words. He knows for a fact that if Ilya kissed someone else, he'd consider it cheating.

“What if she fell in love with someone else?” Shane finds himself asking before he can stop himself.

“Jesus, Shane, you're killing me!” Hayden whines from beside him, throwing his hands up in the air.

“My bad.”

“*My bad*, is that all you have to say for yourself? I don't know. Okay? I don't know what I would classify that as. I don't think it matters much.”

“It doesn't?”

Hayden looks over as Jackie steps out of the backyard door again, balancing trays in her hands.

“I don't think I'd be able to stay with her if she did any of those things. It would be hard to forget.” Hayden's jaw tightens once, before he unclenches. “Or forgive,” he adds quietly. And then he's jogging over to Jackie, kissing her cheek once and grabbing both of the trays from her hands. Jackie raises an amused eyebrow before she leans up on her feet, kisses Hayden back, and pats his cheek affectionately.

Shane watches the scene for a moment before he turns around and begins turning off the machine. He grabs the plate of burgers as he makes his way to the table, nearly falling over as one of Hayden's daughters zooms past him, undeterred.

*Yeah, I don't think I can forgive it either. Or forget.*

---

*I don't believe in cheating.*

It echoes in his head as Shane does his laundry.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

As Shane does the dishes.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

As Shane packs his clothes.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

As Shane eats.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

As Shane runs on the treadmill.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

As Shane's parents talk across from him.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

As Shane skates on the ice, shoots and scores a goal.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

As Shane skates on the ice, shoots and misses a goal.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

As Shane listens to Ilya celebrate a win on the phone, promising he won't be out too late. Promising he won't miss his flight tomorrow, the one that'll bring him back to Ottawa, to Shane.

---

Shane thinks he'll be fine, that all he needs to do is see Ilya, in the flesh, real and present. Needs to hold him in his arms, needs to smell his familiar scent; the underlying smell of tobacco that he hates but has unfortunately gotten used to, cause its *him*.

He just needs to see him, and it'll stop. The taunting in his head will stop. The misery he feels so achingly deep, it has decided to make home in the marrow of his bones, will finally stop.

All he needs to do is see Ilya, and the anxiety will stop. Because Ilya has some sort of magical fucking superpowers, where Shane's brain allows itself to turn off just for a bit, where he's able to forget and just exist and trust Ilya to take care of him.

The anxiety will stop, before Ilya can even notice, cause no one needs to see this. No one deserves to be burdened by Shane's utter lack of control, his failure to regulate his emotions. Ilya has done so much for Shane's sake, all for what, for Shane to not trust him in return? Because what, he can't comprehend the way Ilya thinks? Is that who Shane is? So close-minded that he can't even let others have their own opinions? Is he so...

Bigoted? No, too harsh. Godmatic? Maybe. *Obstinate?*

The words hurt his brain. But not as much as the idea of Ilya cheating—

Shane snaps out of his thoughts when he hears the familiar jingle of keys unlocking the front door. And moments later, in steps Ilya, travel bags swinging in both hands, mesh snapback on backwards, blonde curls still managing to peak through. He looks tired, in the way that playing a game and immediately having a flight the next day would do to you.

But that fatigue seems to slip away when he finally sees Shane, and their eyes lock; a smile breaks across his face, and his mouth opens in a grin. His eyes soften in a way Shane never understood before, because what do books ever mean when they say his gaze softened—

*I don't believe in cheating.*

Fuck. God. Not right now. *Please—*

Ilya's bags drop to the floor, his keys following shortly and dropping carelessly somewhere. His foot kicks back in a practised move, and the door shuts close.

Shane has half the mind to tell him to pick up his keys, to leave his shoes on the rack, to lock the damn door, but all thoughts leave the room when Ilya confidently strides across the room to him, like a man on a mission.

There's desperation in the way his feet pick up in pace, like he's afraid Shane's going to disappear. Desperation in the way he finally grabs Shane's face when he's close enough, hands warm to the touch. Desperation in the way he leans down and kisses Shane. Hard.

*I don't believe in...*

Shane's hands move how they always move, practised and sure because he's done this so many times. One hand shoves away at his hat so he can grab onto his curls, the other settling behind his neck to pull him closer. Their teeth clash with the force of it, and Shane has to grip Ilya tighter so he doesn't sway over.

*I don't believe....*

Ilya tastes like bad coffee, shitty airline toothpaste, and home. Shane doesn't care. Not when his thoughts are finally turning slow, thick like molasses. Doesn't care cause his thoughts are

finally tuning out, decreasing in volume. And the only thing running through his mind is *he's here and I love you and fuck its been so long and I love him I love him I—*

*I don't...*

He wants Ilya closer. He wants Ilya to be his and his alone. He wants Ilya's hands on him, he wants Ilya's mouth to only seek his out, he wants Ilya's eyes to never stray too far from him

---

*I...*

Shane wants all of him. For himself only.

Their clothes were discarded without care, a fact Shane knows will bother him later when he has to go looking for them, like it's a damn treasure hunt. They almost don't make it to the bedroom, but Ilya stops him with a growl, "I am not going to fuck you on the staircase after not seeing you for a month."

And well, what was Shane supposed to do other than listen to him? Even if he really was tempted to just get on his knees and get him off right in the middle of the hallway.

They make it to the bedroom, barely.

---

It never stops feeling like this; this intense pressure that fills him so deeply that he's afraid he's going to pop. He's surprised every time how much room his body has, how much space it makes for Ilya's cock to slide in.

He throws his head back, voice choking on a whimper, and Ilya takes that opportunity to attack the skin on his neck. Nipping at it till it bruises in shades of purple and blue, marks Shane's going to complain about later, but he secretly pleased about. Bruises that will sting deeply when he presses on them till they blanch under his fingertips.

There's no rhythm or rhyme to their movements. This isn't about making love. There is *love*, yes, but this is not *lovemaking*. This is a month's worth of pent-up energy. A month's worth of longing. Of a need so visceral it burns under their skin, thrashes behind their ribcage, gnawing at the bones to get out.

"God, *fuck*, Ilya, I missed you so much," Shane pants between them, eyes blinking rapidly as they search for the man above him.

"*Moy lyubimiy*, I missed you too," Ilya says back, voice hoarse. His face is flushed, pinched in concentration as he thrusts into Shane with reckless abandon.

*His moles stand out so much more when his face is all red*, Shane thinks hazily, eyes trying to focus on a single point on Ilya's face, even as they keep fluttering shut in pleasure.

Ilya sits up a little, hands moving from Shane's hips to instead push and bend his knees further back, fold him on himself. The angle changes and—

“Fuck! Fuck Ilya, I'm—if you keep—I'm not—”

Shane's hands fall, and he clenches the sheets around him till his knuckles go white. Every graze of Ilya's cock against his prostate has him jumping like he's been electrocuted. Every nerve under his skin tingles with sensation, his muscles contracting in anticipation. Everything feels raw to the touch; one blow of the wind and Shane is going to dissolve in his sheets.

“Always come so fast, Hollander, all these years, and you still can't control yourself.” Ilya teases, hands coming to wrap around Shane's cock, flushed and swollen, begging for release. Ilya's thumb teases at the slit, collecting the precome to make the slide of his hands smoother.

Shane tries to glare, really he does, but then Ilya moves his wrist in a certain way, and Shane's head falls back in defeat, a startled gasp leaving his lips.

“Fuck you,” Shane manages to mutter in a shaky voice.

“I'll fuck you any day,” Ilya whispers above him, voice strained as he too gets close to his release.

Shane clenches down around him in retaliation, and Ilya curses, his rhythm faltering.

“Fuc—you play dangerous game, Hollander.” Ilya's hand moves faster, wrist twisting till it aches. “Shit, come for me. I want you to come for me.” Ilya urges him.

There's no buildup when Shane's orgasm finally hits. That's not what it feels like. It feels like an explosion, sudden and unexpected. Like, all this time it was just waiting for Ilya's permission, one flip of the trigger.

Shane sobs as it hits, liquid fire that burns through him. He gives in to it, lets himself free-fall. His mind goes white, and he distinctly feels the weight of Ilya's hips stuttering, cock throbbing and pulsing inside him as he finds his release as well.

Shane's mind completely blanks out. His head is somewhere in the stratosphere, somewhere heady, where he feels like he can float. Just him and the weight of Ilya still on top of him, still inside him. Their hearts beating in tandem, blood rushing so fast in his veins he can almost hear it.

He lets the world narrow to a single point, just this pocket of space between them. Let himself fall into the safety of Ilya's arms.

---

“Hi.”

Shane blinks awake, eyes fluttering till the stars behind them disappear, and Ilya's flushed face comes into view. He gives him a dopey little smile and leans up. Ilya takes the hint without further prompt and tilts down to give Shane a chaste little kiss that warms him from the inside out. His fingertips mindlessly come up to trace Shane's freckles in hypnotic circles.

“Hey,” Shane mumbles in return. “Has to be some sort of record, I don't even think we greeted each other when you walked in.”

“That's why I'm doing now, it is polite thing to do. But you could not resist me.” Ilya says, nipping at Shane's jaw.

“Fuck off, you kissed me first.” Shane shoots back, pushing the latter back. Ilya doesn't even flinch, just grabs Shane's hands and interweaves their fingers and presses them between their chests. His lips move up, till they kiss at the corner of his mouth, his cheek, the space under his eyes where his freckles are scattered in heavier concentration.

Shane sighs at the feeling, his body going loose and weightless like gravity had let go of him. This is always his favourite part, the aftercare. How Ilya would murmur sweet things to him in Russian. How his hands would move up and down the length of his body, fingers caressing in apology where he left bruises. The kisses, *God* the kisses. Small and soft and gentle and all over till Shane feels giddy with every emotion imaginable.

“The airline lost my luggage,” Ilya tells him, pulling away, propping his head on one hand. His hands have found their way home to his chest, finger grazing over his nipple in lazy flicks, and Shane hums at the sensation, body still sensitive.

Ilya's still inside, and Shane knows he has exactly five minutes before the feeling of Ilya comes trickling out of him starts feeling more bothersome than hot. But for now, he lets himself enjoy it. The intimacy of having Ilya so close like this, a part of him inside of him like this.

“Shit, did you make a complaint?” Shane asks, eyebrows furrowing in concern.

“Yeah, yeah, might be in Paris now,” Ilya replies, rolling his eyes in annoyance.

“Paris?”

“Mmm, that is what customer service lady said. They even offered a 5-star hotel stay till they could get my luggage back.”

“Hm, should've taken the offer, I would've tagged along.”

“Really? You would have risked paparazzi and shown up at a 5-star hotel where I was staying?”

“Okay, fine, good point.”

His come is definitely dried by now, and Shane is starting to feel every drop of the sticky mess on his chest and belly. *Maybe they should start cleaning up—*

“I think the lady had... different intentions?”

“... Ulterior motives?”

“Yes! They lost Bood's luggage too, but they didn't offer hotel to him. Only me. I think if I took the offer, she would not have been happy to see you.”

Shane's pretty sure he got fucked so good, he literally can't think straight right now. Can't think about anything other than the fact that Ilya's come is still inside him, and it's veering into *this feels weird* territory, and *I feel like I need to use the toilet*—

“What do you mean?”

“I think she wanted to fuck me, was offering a hotel for us to meet up.”

Shane blinks at him. Well, Shane understands that. “Oh,” is all he's able to say.

Ilya continues, none the wiser, wanting to see the familiar set of Shane's furrowed eyebrows, his eyes narrowing with nothing but murder behind them. Definitely trying to rile Shane up for round two.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

Shane, honest to God, almost flinches, like someone tried to punch him but missed at the last minute.

“But ah, maybe she would've been happy to see you, too. What is better than fucking one hockey player, fucking two.” Ilya says, holding up his pinky and then his ring finger as he counts, mouth turning up into a playful smirk.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

“Well, it's a good thing you didn't go, and I stayed here at your house.” Shane forces the words out, turning his face and closing his eyes.

*Fuck, fuck, he can feel it.* Creeping in like a dreadful creature from the place that shall not be named. He feels his body temperature drop to freezing, and the heavy press of something sharp and jagged against his chest. There's a pressure behind his eyes that he's hoping will disappear if he keeps his eyes shut for long enough. And there's still fucking come on him and in him, and it's starting to feel—

“Could always invite her here.” Ilya goads him on. “If you ever change your mind about threesomes, I know lots of interested women.”

*I don't believe in cheating. I don't believe in cheating. I don't believe in cheating. I don't believe in cheating. I don't believe in cheating. I don't believe in cheating.*

There's a sound, wounded and hurt, like an animal that's trying not make any noise, not trying to alert the wrong predator. And Shane doesn't even realize it's clawing out of his throat until it finally pushes past his lips and into the room.

“Shane?” he hears a voice call, but it sounds so far away, like he is underwater or someone's stuffed cotton in his ears.

His name is called again, and Shane finally forces his eyes open, blinking back the tears until Ilya's confused face sharpens before him.

“Shane?” Ilya says, louder now, alarm curling under his voice. “What's—”

“*Getoff*” Shane mumbles, hands coming up to create distance from himself and Ilya.

Ilya bends his head down, ears straining to understand. “Shane, what did you say? What's wrong—”

“Get—move I—Ilya, please move,” Shane repeats louder, voice shaky, trying to move his mouth clearly around the syllables.

The words register, and Ilya finally starts to move, face tight with concern. He pulls out carefully with a wet squelch, and Shane grimaces at the feeling.

*Should've fucking got up when I wanted to*, he hinks irritably.

Before Ilya can say anything else, Shane scrambles off the bed, even though his hips protest. His legs still feel like jello, and he stumbles, trying to kick his feet into feeling solid again.

“Shane, *Shane*, wait, what's wrong?” Ilya calls from behind him, running after him.

*I don't believe in cheating.*

Shane's breath catches on a sob, and he muffles his mouth with a hand to keep the sound in. It's too much. Everything feels like too much. He's naked, and he can feel entirely too much on his body, inside his body, and he hates how it's starting to feel gross. His head is pounding, and he can't even focus on placating his mind when his lungs are also screaming in his throat for breath. His skin is still buzzing, but no longer with the little zaps of pleasure. No. All he feels now are pins and needles.

Ilya hears, of course, he hears, his hands reach out to hold Shane, tension lying in every part of his body. “Shane—”

“Don't touch me,” Shane snaps, more desperation than yelling as he rips his arm out of Ilya's grasp. His tears have nowhere to go now. Too heavy to be held by his eyelashes alone, and they finally spill over, hot and humiliating, down his cheeks.

Ilya freezes in place, hand hovering mid-air. Shane watches, his vision blurry, as a myriad of emotions flicker across his face: confusion, hurt, *fear*. Ilya takes an unconscious step back like someone shoved him. His hands twitch, like they want to reach out and catch every single one of Shane's tears. His body curls in on itself, trying to make himself appear smaller.

He looks... terrified. Like, Shane just called him a monster, and he believes it. Believes he's a big, scary creature, and he needs to hide himself before he hurts anyone else.

*Sorry God I'm sorry I didn't mean to—I'm just—I'm feeling too—*

Shane turns away, tripping the rest of the way to the adjoining bathroom. He locks the door behind him and slides down till he feels nothing but the cold bite of the porcelain tiles beneath him.

## Chapter 2

### Chapter Notes

thanks for waiting guys, sorry about ch 1, i just had to hit you with a cliffhanger.  
nervously hits publish.  
hover over russian (or click if on mobile) for translations!

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

Shane doesn't know how he manages to get himself off the floor. But he forces his body to move on autopilot. Routine, he can do routine. Every movement is a one-word step.

Move. Step. Knob. Turn. Water. Hot. Wash. Clean.

He gets dressed in Ilya's dressrobe, the one that still somehow smells like him even after countless washes. Probably cause he used to smoke while wearing it, has done it a dozen times. Shane wraps it around himself, belt tightening like it's a shield. He lets himself take a few deep breaths as he psyches himself up.

He didn't mean to come undone like that. He should've talked to Ilya about how he was feeling weeks ago, no matter how stupid it felt to be bothered by it. He should not have let it fester like this. Because now it was out, raw and rotten, ugly to look at.

When Shane finally opens the door and steps out of the bathroom, Ilya is pacing the length of his bed. He looks like he grabbed sweatpants and a tank top at random from his closet and threw them on. Belatedly, Shane notices the clothes they had discarded earlier, on the first floor, on the sitarcase, somewhere in the hallway; Ilya had gone and retrieved those as well, and folded them neatly at the center of the bed. The bedsheets have been changed, too.

Shane almost smiles. Ilya knows him so well.

And then that lame excuse of a smile disappears when Ilya finally turns around, and Shane watches as his body lurches to go near him, but stops halfway. It was as if an invisible rope was tied around his midsection, holding him back from moving forward, out of slack. The look on his face is back. Terrified.

Not of Shane. Of *himself*.

Shane's eyes fill with tears again. *Fuck I made him feel like that Ilya I'm so sorry I'm—*

Ilya recoils at the sight of Shane's tears, mistaking them for something else, for being directed *at him* and not *for him*. He steps back, hands raised in surrender, and his voice comes out rough.

“Shane—don't be afraid. I won't move closer. Okay? Sweethe—” Ilya cuts himself off sharply before he can finish the term of endearment. “I stay here.”

*I don't want you far away I want you close please come closer—*

The tears spill over, and Shane can't get past the lump in his throat to talk. To explain, to tell Ilya he's sorry, to tell him it's not what he thinks.

Ilya blanches, and he steps back even further, shoving his hands behind him. He looks stricken, and so fucking lost. *God*, he looks like he's on the verge of crying, too. “I will leave Shane, I promise I will leave, I will leave this house, I just need you to tell me if I hurt you —”

“Don't—” Shane manages to choke out, hands hastily coming to wipe at his eyes in frustration. Frustration with himself. “No, please don't go.” Shane's voice cracks on the last syllable, words coming out in a plea.

Ilya pauses, swallowing hard. His face eases a tiny fraction. “Okay—okay. I won't go.” Ilya promises him, voice wavering. “Anything you want.”

Shane stares at him. It doesn't feel like Ilya is standing just across the room from him. The distance feels like a chasm. One wrong step and he'll tumble into the abyss.

“I want you closer,” Shane whispers, and he hopes Ilya can hear him.

“Closer?” Ilya asks hesitantly, face colouring in disbelief, not trusting his own ears.

Shane answers that disbelief by crossing the room towards him, closing the distance till he's standing right in front of him. Ilya holds himself still, body rigid, afraid to make one wrong move. He opens and closes his mouth, throat working around the words. “Can—” Ilya starts to ask, trembling hands coming up and stopping in front of him. His eyes say everything his lips can't. *Can I?*

Shane closes his eyes and nods.

Ilya takes a cautious step forward, and Shane feels the heat radiating off him before he feels the touch itself. His fingers move carefully to wipe the wetness from his cheeks, and Shane shudders when he feels his arms erupt in goosebumps.

“Shane,” Ilya says quietly, voice gentle so he doesn't spook him. “Tell me nothing else but this. Did I hurt you?”

Shane immediately shakes his head. “No,” he answers firmly, looking up at him.

Ilya's body deflates, like a puppet held straight for too long by strings, finally cut loose. The relief washes over him in waves, wanting nothing more than to drown in its tranquillity.

“Are you sure, sure I didn't hurt you?” Ilya asks again, searching his face, eyes flickering down to his body, searching for any sign of injury.

Shane nods again, and he moves his head back, out of his hold. Ilya instantly drops his hands, letting them fall to his sides, clamping tight against his sides to keep them at bay. Afraid of making one wrong move, afraid of his touch causing pain. Afraid of it destroying every precious thing around him.

Shane doesn't let him spiral any further. With a shaky inhale, he steps forward into Ilya's space and wraps his arms around his neck. His head finds the familiar junction between his neck and shoulder and breathes him in. Hints of his spicy perfume still manage to bleed through the salty smell of skin.

Ilya tenses for a second, and then the breath rushes out of him as his arms circle Shane back, pulling him closer. "I'm sorry, moy lyubimy my beloved," Ilya whispers, "Whatever it is, I'm sorry."

Shane shuts his eyes and shakes his head, pressing even closer, till he has no option but to crawl inside him. "I'm sorry, Ilya, I didn't mean to scare you."

"I don't get scared that easily. I am—how you say—not impressed by danger."

Shane huffs out a tiny laugh, and the faintest hint of a smile graces Ilya's face at the sound. "Not easily phased?"

"That too."

A couple of minutes pass like that, Shane and Ilya wrapped in each other's embrace, hearts beating in sync, slowing and tapering off into equilibrium.

"You do not have to tell me anything," Ilya says slowly, his hands making slow passes over Shane's back, fingers feeling over the soft fleece of his bathrobe. His bathrobe that Shane is wearing. "We can go to sleep and wake up late. I will also shower because I know I smell like the airport. And then later, when I have fed you three tuna melts—"

"Three?" Shane asks, slightly amused.

"Yes, three and you will break your diet for me and eat three, we will talk. Or not. We can talk tomorrow. Or the next day. Or next week."

"No, I—" Shane leans away and looks at Ilya, at the crease between his eyebrows, the way his mouth is caught between a frown and a reassuring smile. The redness in the corners of his eyes, eyes that look so utterly worried, and still a hint of fear behind them.

"I don't think I will feel better till I tell you," Shane tells him, a little wearily. "It's been eating at me for a month—"

"A month?" Ilya interrupts, eyes going wide.

Shane grimaces. "Yeah, I know, I'm sorry I should've said something sooner—"

"Hollander, hey, *hey*, you do not have to keep apologizing, okay? Let's go sit down, moy pomidorchik my little tomato."

Ilya coaxes him to turn and tugs him so they can both sit on the edge of the bed.

“Hm, tomato?”

“My little tomato.”

“Shut up, I am a big tomato.”

“Little tomato to me.”

Shane bumps his shoulder against him as they sit down, in a *fuck you you're so annoying I love you* gesture.

They sit down, and Shane suddenly remembers that he actually has to talk. Verbally. Put into words the codes running in his head, translate them into simpler terms and speak them out loud. He needs to actually open up to get anywhere. Why can't they just do this over text? Shane feels so much smarter when he's typing.

He clasps his hands in front of him and stares down hard at the floor. Okay, he made a list. It had points and subpoints. Rose said boundaries. The internet said open communication. *Alright, don't cry. Not yet. Actually, just don't cry at all. You already cried, don't go crying again, just be normal—*

“Hollander,” Ilya calls for him, breaking him out of his thoughts, a firm hand coming to rest on his knees, which had started to bounce up and down.

Fuck, Shane didn't realize how badly this was eating at him, clearly evident with how his once perfectly obedient body, the one that knows how to sit still, how to not give anything away, has completely abandoned him and left him with an abundance of restless energy.

“Shane, you are shaking. It is just me, okay? You can tell me anything.” Ilya reminds him, trying to comfort him.

It's not *just* you. It's *you*. *It's because it's you that I'm so nervous—*

“I don't want to have a threesome.” Shane finally manages to say, and then cringes internally at himself. *What a way to start this conversation.*

Ilya stares at him, the hand he had on Shane's knees squeezing once before it relaxes. His eyes flicker in confusion before realization dawns on him, and he winces, guilt washing over his face. “Shane—fuck, earlier, that was a joke—very bad joke, I don't want to—”

“No—oh my God,” Shane interrupts his rambling, his hands moving to rest over Ilya. “Sorry, that's not—okay, well, yes, I do *not* want to have threesomes, but it's—it's something else—um.” Shane forces out a sigh, eyes trained on where his hand rests over Ilya's.

“A few weeks ago, you told me—you were okay with me... sleeping with other men, when we are apart.”

“I’m not.” Ilya blurts out, his hands spasming under Shane’s, mouth twisting into an odd expression. “That was stupid of me to say. I would murder anyone who touches you,” Ilya says, his voice low.

Shane’s lip twitches, and he tries not to get sidetracked by the low rasp of Ilya’s voice, the possession behind those words. *Oh, so we’re both violent when it comes to this?*

“I know we already talked about it. There’s just... something you said. And, it’s been bothering me for the past few weeks, and I just—” Shane’s voice falters, and he looks down again, trying to blink back his tears, before he looks back up. “Ilya, I trust you, I really do, always. And I hate how there’s a part of me that’s making me doubt. I’m so sorry. God, I’m sorry—”

Shane finally looks away, voice catching on a silent sob. Ilya instantly moves his hands to cup Shane’s face, wiping away at the wetness. “Hey, *hey*, it’s okay. I told you, no more sorries. I am sorry you are feeling this way. Tell me, what did I say? I promise I can fix it.”

Shane takes in a shuddering breath and says, “I was informed I need to set boundaries in my relationship.”

“Boundaries?”

“Like, imagine our relationship is a contract, and we have rules.”

“Okay, I accept, I will sign.”

“You didn’t even read the contract.”

“I don’t have to, where do I sign?”

A laugh escapes Shane, shaky and wet. “You can’t just sign without reading. What if I’m trying to impose my viewpoint on you?”

“Hollander, I need you to show me the contract in writing. I don’t understand, what is *impose*?”

“Like, force my opinion on you, make you change what you believe.”

Ilya studies him for a couple of seconds, an unreadable look on his face, then very seriously replies, “I accept all your opinions. From now on, we think the same. Where do I sign? I will sign with my blood.”

Shane groans, and then he’s tipping his forehead till it thuds against Ilya’s chest in defeat. *Ridiculous*, his boyfriend is so ridiculous. And Shane fully regrets not bringing this up weeks ago.

“You told me you did not believe in cheating,” Shane finally reminds him, turning his face to the side so his words aren’t muffled in the fabric of Ilya’s tank top. His fingers come up to trace over the crucifix necklace resting against his chest. “But Ilya, I do. I believe in cheating.”

Ilya is quiet as he wraps his arms around Shane, staring at the far wall, trying to make sense of what Shane is saying. Before he can say anything, Shane continues, “Cheating to me is—is everything. If you have sex with someone else, even if you give someone a handjob, it is cheating. Kissing is still cheating. Falling in love with—” Shane’s voice goes quiet, “Falling in love with someone else, cheating. Flirting is... okay. Maybe, not too much. Not if it means something.”

Shane moves his head back from the safety of Ilya's chest, and his body screams at the loss of heat. “That is just what I believe, and I—that is a boundary for me. I can only ask you to—to understand it. And accept it, or compromise on it. You don't have to see it the same way. Just.... yeah.” Shane finishes, voice going breathless. He bites his lips nervously, eyes darting across Ilya’s face to gauge his reaction.

“Shane,” Ilya finally says, voice gone impossibly soft but still edged with a firmness that says, *please listen to me*. “I will not cheat on you. I don't need boundaries for me not to do that. I will never. Never in a million years.”

Shane is quiet for a couple of seconds before he speaks, “How can you promise not to do something if you don’t believe in it?” he asks hesitantly.

Ilya puts up a hand in a lazy gesture. “It was... childish way to think about it. Not so simple, I understand. Doesn't matter what I think—”

“No Ilya—” Shane interrupts, squeezing Ilya’s hands, “It *does* matter what you think, this is what I am—afraid of. Making you feel what you think doesn't matter because I don’t understand something the way you do.”

“Okay, okay,” Ilya tells him calmly, squeezing his hands back. “It matters what I believe. I am still not so sure what I believe. I think maybe I was trying to make it easy for myself when I said it was okay for you to sleep with other people.” Ilya pauses for a second, mouth turning into a grimace as he searches for words. “It’s what I believed when I slept with other people. That we do not own each other, so you can do whatever you want. But you and me, its not the same as that. We are... committed. And that other word. Starts with 'm'?”

“Monogamous?”

“*Monogamous*. Just you and me. It matters what I believe, but Shane, for me, it matters more that you believe, and you would be sad. And I would never, ever do anything to hurt you.”

Shane stares at him blankly. He tries to read Ilya’s face for any hint of hesitation, annoyance, or that exasperation that precedes someone before they unenthusiastically agree to whatever you're trying to say, so they can just move on from the topic at hand.

But Ilya doesn't look like that, not one bit. His eyes shine with determination and quiet understanding. With the kind of love and acceptance that doesn't make Shane feel like a burden, like he's asking for too much or being too much. He looks, honestly, a little confused at why Shane is so worried—

"Moy lyubimy," "My beloved," Ilya says, "Was this—was this what you were worried about? Shane, what did you think I was going to do? Make fun of you for simple request?"

Shane doesn't say anything, and Ilya's face drops even further. He releases a string of curse words in Russian before switching to English. "Stupid, it was stupid thing to bring up Shane, I do not mean it. I don't want you sleeping with other people. I don't want to sleep with anyone else. I don't want to have a *threesome* with the airport lady, okay? I do not want you cheating on me, and I will never ever never cheat on you." Ilya promises, sincerity laced in every sentence.

"I know," Shane says, squeezing his hands back. "I believe you, I just—I don't know. I guess I got too caught up in my own head about it. Like I would be stripping you of your voice or something. *Fuck*. It's embarrassing. I made it so much worse in my head," he laughs, but it's not funny. Not really, given the month he's spent in misery, agonizing over a single sentence. Questioning his relationship with sex and love, and whether he has just grown to be some sort of intolerant piece of shit who doesn't know how to respect a different perspective.

"Rybka, pchylka, zayka, tsvetochek." "Little fish, little bee, bunny, little flower." Ilya mutters, faster than Shane can understand. He thinks he hears a *bunny* somewhere in there. But he can't make out the words clearly enough, not with the way Ilya presses a kiss to his face with each word, the corner of his lips, across his cheek, his nose and finally his forehead. Every press of his lips loosens the final bit of tension in Shane's body till his muscles surrender under the weight.

His heartbeat is finally calming down to an acceptable rhythm. The weeks of static in his brain finally turned down low enough so that it's just pleasant background noise. The relief of it all crashes into him, a delayed response, and Shane almost feels like crying again.

*God, he did it.* He did it, and the world didn't end. He talked it out with Ilya, and Ilya didn't look at him like he was crazy. Just took his ball of anxiety and helped him shrink it down to something more manageable, something that didn't prickle his fingers when he held it.

"I am still sorry, you have been worried about this for many weeks. Shane, I must not be doing good enough job if you think this will scare me away. If you think this is asking for a lot. I wish you would ask for more because I want to do more. I want to give you everything."

Ilya says it so sweetly, so painfully full of devotion, it makes Shane's heart ache with how badly he loves him.

"Thank you for saying that. I am still sorry too, for not talking with you sooner." Shane looks into his eyes and smiles softly, "I don't need you to do anymore, you have already done enough, more than enough, Ilya. I love you."

"Ya lyublyu tebya," "I love you," Ilya replies back, and he tugs Shane forward till he's in his arms again, resting against his shoulder. Shane feels the last remnants of Ilya's worry leaving as well, his shoulders loosening and jaw relaxing above him. Shane pushes against him, and Ilya pushes him back till they're grinning stupidly and rocking back and forth.

“You didn’t tell me, you are forgetting something,” Ilya says to him.

“Tell you what?” Shane mumbles, eyes closed as he continues to rest against Ilya.

“The contract, where do I sign your boundary contract?”

Shane laughs against him, the sound bright and warm in Ilya’s ears. “Shut up, it was just an analogy.”

“I take your boundaries very seriously. I will sign.”

“Verbal contract will do, Rozanov.” Shane deadpans.

“I just want to be sure, Hollander. No room for doubt.”

“No doubt, I promise.”

“But you secretly want a contract, don't you? Fifteen pages, double-sided, point 10 font—”

“That’s too small,” Shane says, rolling his eyes in amusement.

“You would have Yuna double-check. You would like that very much, I can tell.” Ilya teases, poking his hips till Shane squirms and laughs again.

“Okay. Only if you sign it in blood.”

“Deal.”

## Chapter End Notes

wow i did not expect the response the first ch got wtf. yall leave the funniest reaction comments i was actually rolling on the floor.

the ending resolution was already written i just needed to polish it up. so now im just hoping its not disappointing and i did a decent job.

my biggest fear is making a character come across as a villain or "baby-ing" them too much. or making resolutions like one-sided, leaning towards one character and ignoring the other. so i really hope i was able to do that.

anyways. i tried.

moy lyubimiy - my beloved

pomidorchik - little tomatoe

rybka, pchyolka, zayka, tsvetochek - little fish, little bee, bunny, little flower

thats all folks.

tw: [link](#)

## End Notes

ch 2 will be out soon folks. give me like 24h.

this was supposed to be small but then I got really into it oops.

still reading all your comments on "all the things he did" and i truly appreciate every single one.

also the article and reddit and quora qoutes are real LOL era accurate. oh and i forget when in book 2 rose actually finds out about ilya but we will pretend she knows already for the sake of this fic.

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