if home is a person, i don’t want a house

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by ThePromptWasntThisLong (shredded_potato)

Summary

Shane has a notes app list titled *'Safeties.'*

It's a series of physical sensations to pull him back if he drops too deep:

1. Press tongue to roof of mouth

2. Grip something cold

3. Say your own name out loud

The last one simply says:

4. Wait for him. He always comes back.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Shane's heart hammered against his ribs in time with Ilya's thrusts, a ragged drumbeat that seemed to echo all the way up his spine. The world narrowed to the slick slide of heat inside him, the steady pull of Ilya's fingers in his hair, the thick rasp of praise whispered hard against his ear. He squeezed his eyes shut, panting as Ilya folded him in half, pushing his knees toward his chest and locking him open, vulnerable, pliant. Every push in hit deep enough to spark lightning across Shane's vision, nerves lighting up like someone had dragged him raw across a sheet of hot glass.

"Eyes on me, *solnyshko,*" Ilya growled, voice low and edged, one palm braced on Shane's sternum. "Stay with me."

Shane tried. He really did. But the moment Ilya said it, he realized how far he'd already drifted. The room was muffled, distant. His own moans sounded like they were coming from underwater. The edges of his thoughts blurred, softening into something golden and hazy, no sharp corners left to cling to. Ilya rolled his hips just right, the thick length of him unrelenting, slow, deep, patient in the way that always ruined Shane fastest. Stars exploded behind his eyelids. He gasped, head tipping back against the pillow, surrendering to what felt like the greatest mercy in the world: submitting entirely, letting Ilya drive them both wherever he wanted.

"Uh—uhnnh—Il," Shane slurred, tongue heavy. His brain scrambled for words and came back with static. He felt dumb, dizzy, desperate.

"I know," Ilya soothed, his Russian accent thicker, barely there between his own harsh breaths. He dragged his thumb across Shane's lower lip, pressing until Shane opened his mouth obediently. "Shh. Just feel me."

Shane whimpered, breath hitching, some part of him still clawing for those last frayed threads of sense even as the rest of him melted open under Ilya's relentless pace.

But everything was warm, the sheets tangled around his body, his mind drifting in a wide, gentle orbit around Ilya's voice. Ilya leaned over him, mapping new constellations on Shane's body with his mouth, sucking dark marks into his collarbone, his shoulder, the inside of his wrist. Shane's voice broke completely, a wrecked keening caught in his throat. He couldn't make out anything but flashes: Ilya's hand hooking beneath his knee, the heavy, wet slap of skin meeting skin as Ilya drove into him again and again, the groan that rumbled out of Ilya when Shane clenched down desperate and tight.

"Such a good boy," Ilya rasped, sweat dripping off his brow. "Taking me so fucking well."

Shane felt weightless. His hearing went fuzzy, like his head was stuffed with cotton. He could only process touch—the scrape of Ilya's teeth on his neck, the palm slamming down on his thigh to keep him open, the cock working him mercilessly. He didn't realize waves of tears were slipping down his cheeks until Ilya kissed them away, murmuring something in Russian that sounded like a vow, a reverent promise whispered straight into his trembling skin. Shane's lashes fluttered, his pulse racing, the entire world reduced to sensation.

“Il—I’m—” Shane gasped, the word fading halfway out of his mouth.

“Let go,” Ilya urged, thrusting harder, faster. “I’ve got you. Cum for me.”

That was all it took. Shane’s orgasm hit hard enough to wrench a sob out of him, his whole body bowing off the bed. He felt Ilya’s hand wrap around his cock, pumping quick and steady through the cresting pleasure, milking it out until Shane was shaking uncontrollably. He couldn’t breathe. Couldn’t think. He felt emptied out and overfilled at the same time, a contradiction he couldn’t resolve.

Ilya followed him down, fucking him through it, groaning roughly in his ear before his hips stuttered. Shane gasped as heat spilled inside him, Ilya’s weight collapsing on top of him, heavy and solid. Their sweat-slicked skin pressed together, chests heaving. Ilya’s heartbeat matched his own, grounding and real. Shane drifted, high and far away, floating. He barely registered Ilya whispering, “Stay with me, *solnyskho*. I’m right here.”

Shane’s eyes were half-open slits. Subspace swallowed every other thought. He felt blissed out, boneless, his limbs humming. Ilya eased out of him carefully, hands gentle. The sudden emptiness made Shane whine, but Ilya shushed him, kissing his forehead, his eyelids. Shane helped as best he could—lifting his hips when asked, parting his legs again when Ilya worked a warm cloth between them to wipe him clean. Every movement felt slow, syrupy, like he was moving through water.

“Fuck,” Ilya breathed, eyes soft, reverent. “You’re so beautiful like this.”

Shane blinked woozily. His fingers brushed across Ilya’s forearm, searching for contact. Ilya caught his hand and kissed each knuckle, then slid into bed beside him, pulling him against his chest. Shane curled instinctively, his breath evening out. He felt a kiss pressed into his damp hairline.

“Stay,” Shane mumbled, words barely audible.

“Always,” Ilya promised. One arm banded around him, fingers tracing idle patterns across Shane’s spine. The late-night city noises outside their condo windows faded to nothing, swallowed by the soft hum of the air vent, the steady thump of Ilya’s heart under Shane’s ear. He watched Ilya breathing, felt his own body syncing in time, and let himself sink fully into the sweet, dumb haze.

The morning sun hit them sideways, glaring off the glass of their floor-to-ceiling windows. Trickles of sweat had dried along Shane’s ribs. He shifted lazily, half-buried under Ilya’s arm, dizzy with satiation. They were supposed to make pancakes, then head out to the little markets in the Exchange District, maybe stop at a tiny wine shop where the owner slipped bottles under the counter for them. No team obligations. No practices, no meetings. Just them. A rare oasis before the next away game grind.

Ilya’s phone buzzed on the nightstand.

He ignored it. Shane smiled, nuzzling into the crook of Ilya's neck. Their skin still smelled faintly like sex and soap. The buzzing stopped, then started again, more insistent. Ilya groaned, nudged Shane gently so he could reach. "Probably nothing," he muttered, squinting at the screen.

Shane watched the change happen. The small frown, the way brows drew together, the way the arm around Shane's waist tightened reflexively. "What?" Shane asked, rising up on an elbow.

"Coach," Ilya muttered in Russian. Then, louder, "They need me at the arena. Something with the PP unit, scheduling change." He rubbed his forehead. "They say is only few hours."

Shane's stomach dipped. He clamped down on the disappointment, forcing a smile. "It's fine. You should go."

"I can tell them no. Tell them we had plans—"

Shane shook his head. "It'll just piss them off. Go." He leaned in, pressed a quick kiss to Ilya's mouth. "I'll see you later."

Ilya hesitated, searching his face. "You sure?"

"Yeah," Shane lied smoothly. He shoved him lightly. "Go. Be the responsible veteran or whatever."

Ilya still looked uncertain, but he kissed Shane again, slower this time, thumb stroking over Shane's cheekbone. "I will make it up to you," he promised.

"Just come back," Shane said, only half-joking.

Ilya dressed fast—pulled on joggers, a hoodie with the Centaurs' logo, shoved his feet into sneakers. Shane watched from the bed, wanting him to stay, refusing to say it. When the door clicked shut, the condo seemed to exhale. Silence stretched. Shane rolled out of bed, wincing at the lingering soreness in his muscles, and headed for the kitchen.

He made coffee. Fed Anya. Set up his laptop at the kitchen island, determined not to rely on his phone for dopamine. He answered emails, did two loads of laundry, watered the plants Ilya always forgot existed. He even set out ingredients for the pancakes they'd planned, telling himself he'd make them anyway so the place smelled nice when Ilya returned.

But there was a soft pull in his chest, an emptiness that expanded with every minute. He told himself it was dumb. He'd been through this before. He knew the steps. He knew how to keep himself grounded when Ilya was away. He did mental check-ins, little breathing exercises, even sat on the couch with an ice pack in his hand, clamping down on point two of his 'Safeties' list.

Gripping something cold helped. For a while.

He went for a run on the treadmill in the spare room. He folded the laundry. He started organizing his notes for an upcoming charity camp with the youth team. Yet the heaviness

kept building, dense and syrupy. He felt it settle in his limbs, a sense of being too sensitive, too raw. He stared at the unmade bed, saw the indent where Ilya had slept, the faint shadow of sweat on the sheets, and his breath hitched.

Plans. Ilya's voice from the night before flickered through his head.

"We'll stay in bed till noon, order stupidly expensive coffee, do nothing."

"Just you and me, *solnyshko*. You like that?"

Heat rose behind Shane's eyes. He blinked rapidly, refusing to let tears fall. It's fine. You've had subdrop before. You know what to do. He pressed his tongue to the roof of his mouth. He shivered, pressing the ice pack harder into his palm, focusing on the sting. He said his own name out loud. "Shane." It sounded foreign. Too loud in the empty condo.

His chest tightened, a cinch he couldn't loosen. The living room spun a fraction. He'd been in worse headspaces. He'd handled this without Ilya before. He swallowed, trying to soothe the burn of panic licking at his throat. Get a blanket. Put on a movie. He grabbed a soft throw from the couch, wrapped it around his shoulders. He still shook. He couldn't stop thinking about how Ilya had been there last night, eyes on him, voice close. The silence now hurt. Every corner of the condo looked deserted. Anya padded up on the back of the couch, whining softly, like she knew something was off.

Shane got down on the floor, pressing his forehead against the cool hardwood. He counted his breaths. Four in, four out. He felt stupid. Spoiled. He loved Ilya, he trusted Ilya, and yet his skin prickled like acid had replaced his blood. He wanted—Ilya's hand closing around the back of his neck, Ilya's rough thumb dragging across his cheek, the solid weight that promised safety. Warm tears spilled before he could stop them.

He scrabbled for his phone. He typed and deleted half a dozen messages. 'Take your time.' Delete. 'No rush.' Delete. 'Doing fine.' Delete. His fingers trembled. His stomach twisted. He didn't want to be a burden. He wanted to be strong. He wanted to handle this alone. The pressure built, tightening like a vice. His throat closed.

He fumbled another message. The words blurred. His thumb hit send before he could second-guess it.

'pl s cme home'

He stared at the blue bubble like it might dissolve. Shame washed over him. He set the phone aside and climbed onto the couch, pulling his knees to his chest, wrapping the blanket tighter. He pressed his tongue to the roof of his mouth. He squeezed a frozen water bottle in his left hand. He whispered, "Shane," voice hoarse.

His phone rang. Ilya's name burst across the screen, insistent, relentless. Shane inhaled shakily and let it go to voicemail. The ringing stopped, then started again. He covered his ears, curling tighter. The phone rang a third time, then a fourth. By the fifth call, his resolve crumbled. He swiped to answer and pressed the phone to his ear.

“*Solnyshko*? Shane?” Ilya’s voice crackled through, all clipped urgency. Shane clapped a hand over his mouth, muffling a sob. He didn’t want Ilya to hear him like this. He didn’t want to sound needy, pathetic.

“*Shayna*. Talk to me.” Ilya’s voice softened, but there was still that undercurrent of command. It sparked across Shane’s nerves, familiar and anchoring. Shane hiccupped, trying to breathe quietly.

“I—I’m okay,” he lied, the words disintegrating on his tongue.

“Breathe, baby,” Ilya murmured, switching to gentle Russian endearments, words Shane couldn’t fully translate but understood in his bones. “I’m driving home. Ten minutes. Stay on the phone.”

“You—you have to stay—practice—” Shane stammered.

“I left. They will live without me,” Ilya snapped. “Focus on me. Where are you?”

“Couch,” Shane whispered. “I’m fine. Just—just feeling weird.”

“I know. I know. You are not alone,” Ilya said firmly. “Touch the couch. Tell me if it’s cold or warm.”

Shane’s fingertips skimmed the cushion, grounding in the texture and the slight chill of the leather. “C-Cold?” he whispered.

“Good. Now breathe with me. In for four. Hold for four. Out for six. We’ll do it together.” Ilya counted, steady, unflappable. Shane tried to match him, lungs shaking. He could hear the hum of the car engine, the click of the turn signal. Then he heard Ilya curse in Russian at another driver. Shane let out a wet laugh that dissolved into another sob.

“Better,” Ilya said softly. “Keep breathing. I am almost there.”

“‘m sorry,” Shane murmured.

“For what?”

“For—texting. For being—like this.”

“Stop,” Ilya said sharply, voice dropping. “You will never apologize for needing me.” He paused. “Say it.”

Shane squeezed his eyes shut. “I’ll never apologize for needing you,” he whispered, shaky.

“Again.”

“I’ll never apologize for needing you.”

“Good. Keep saying it until I get there.”

Shane repeated the words under his breath, like a mantra. By the time he heard the condo door open, he was whispering them hoarsely, the syllables blurring together. He didn't look up. Heavy footsteps crossed the hardwood. The couch dipped. A warm hand slid across the back of his neck, thumb pressed firmly at the base of his skull, the gentle pressure that always brought him back into his body.

"Hey," Ilya murmured, voice low and close now. "I'm here."

Shane cracked an eye open. Ilya crouched in front of him, hoodie half-zipped, hair mussed from the wind, cheeks flushed from the sprint upstairs. His eyes were soft but intense. He reached up, thumbing away the wetness on Shane's cheeks.

"Look at you," Ilya murmured, not like a judgment but an awe-filled observation. "Doing so much work on your own."

Shane sniffled. "Didn't want to bother you."

"You can always bother me," Ilya said, lips twisting with faint exasperation. "Come here."

He opened his arms. Shane practically fell into his lap, burying his face against Ilya's chest. The scent hit him immediately—fresh air, cologne, whatever body wash Ilya had grabbed from the shelf that morning. Ilya held him tight, rocking slightly. "There," he murmured. "Breathe."

Shane inhaled shakily, his nose pressed to Ilya's hoodie. Everything clicked back into place one by one. The world reassembled itself around Ilya's heartbeat. "I have my list," Shane muttered eventually, voice muffled. "It helped, but—"

"But today needed more," Ilya finished, rubbing the base of Shane's neck. "That is not failure. That is knowing what you need."

Shane tucked his face into the crook of Ilya's neck, breathing in warm skin and everything that meant home. His heart still fluttered painfully. Ilya's fingers found the back of his hair, scratching lightly, soothing. "Talk to me," Ilya coaxed. "What are you feeling?"

"I—I know it's irrational," Shane stuttered.

"Doesn't matter if it is rational. Feelings aren't a debate," Ilya countered.

Shane laughed wetly. "You sound like my therapist."

"Maybe therapist should tell you the same thing I am telling you," Ilya said, a teasing lilt in his accent. "Keep talking."

Shane swallowed. "You promised we'd have today. I knew you had to go. I knew it was important. But when you left, it felt like the bed was empty all the way through. Like I'd fallen through it into—nothing."

Ilya nodded, pressing kisses along Shane's temple. "You're doing good."

“I know you didn’t want to leave. I know that. I just—” He gripped handfuls of Ilya’s hoodie, the fabric twisting in his fists. “I’m still floaty inside. I keep thinking about last night. How safe I felt. How my brain just—went quiet. Now it’s all buzzing. I tried to distract myself. It worked for a while. Then it didn’t. It just hit me suddenly, like someone pulled a plug. I felt so alone. I know I’m not. I know you love me. I know this is stupid.”

“Is not stupid,” Ilya said firmly. “Look at me.”

Shane raised his head. Ilya’s thumb brushed his cheek, eyes steady and bright. “You were feeling a drop. Is real, it’s terrible, but we get through it together. That is all.” He tugged gently until Shane was straddling his lap, thighs wrapping around Ilya’s hips. “You did everything right. You grounded yourself, you tried things that worked, you called me when it got too big. That is very brave.”

Shane swallowed, throat raw. “It still feels like I’m failing.”

Ilya nodded slowly. “Then we make feeling into a *pirozhki,*” he said, completely deadpan.

Shane blinked, the tears in his eyes momentarily forgotten. “A… what?”

“*Pirozhki,*” Ilya repeated, as if it were the most obvious solution in the world. “Feeling is dough, we stuff it with meat and onions and bake it until golden brown. Then we eat it. Problem solved.”

A wet, startled laugh burst out of Shane. “You’re insane.”

“Is not insane. Is practical,” Ilya insisted, a smirk tugging at his mouth. “You are sad? Fine. We take sadness, we wrap it in pastry, we put it in oven. When timer dings, you have delicious snack and no more sadness. Genius.”

Shane shook his head, burying his face in Ilya’s shoulder as another helpless chuckle shook him. “That’s the dumbest thing I’ve ever heard.”

“You are laughing,” Ilya pointed out, sounding immensely pleased with himself. His hands rubbed up and down Shane’s back. “So, maybe not so dumb. Maybe we start with your anxiety. I think it would be good with cabbage filling.”

He shifted, scooting back against the couch. Shane eased with him, draped across his lap like he belonged there, because he did. Ilya spread the blanket, cocooning them both, turning his body into a barrier against the rest of the world. He started humming under his breath—some old Russian lullaby Shane recognized from other nights when the world tilted too hard. The low vibration traveled through Ilya’s chest, straight into Shane’s bones.

“Tell me what would help,” Ilya murmured. “You want warmer? Tea?”

Shane shook his head. “This is good,” he whispered, curling smaller. “Just need you.”

“Then you have me as long as you need.” Ilya dropped his hand to Shane’s thigh, rubbing slow circles, careful not to overstimulate. “Do you remember what number four on your list is?”

Shane huffed out a shaky laugh. "'Wait for him?'"

"And?"

"He always comes back," Shane whispered, lashes damp again.

Ilya's fingers tightened. "Always. You are never asking too much." He pressed a kiss to Shane's jaw. "Thank you for trusting me."

Minutes stretched. Shane felt foolish for how hard he'd spiraled, but the ache in his chest began to loosen one knot at a time. Ilya kept up the steady touch, anchoring him, murmuring bits of nonsense in Russian and English alike. He reminded Shane to drink water, coaxing him to take slow sips from a glass he fetched, holding it to his lips. He wiped sweat from Shane's temple, tucked stray strands of hair behind his ear.

"Do you want to talk about what it feels like for you?" Ilya asked after a while, voice quiet. "Not now if it's too much. Maybe later, when you are calmer. I want to understand."

Shane blinked at him, the question soft and open instead of prying. "It's different each time," he murmured. "Sometimes it's physical. Sometimes it's just—emptiness. Today it felt like someone unplugged me, and my body didn't know how to exist without you." He flushed, embarrassed by his own honesty. "That sounds creepy."

"Is not," Ilya countered. "You are honest. And you handled it well. You didn't push it away or pretend it wasn't happening." He cupped Shane's face, thumbs warm at his jaw. "If this happens again—whenever it does—you don't hide it from me. You don't have to explain anything. Just tell me. I don't want you dealing with it alone."

Shane's voice was quiet. "What if it keeps happening?"

"Then it keeps happening," Ilya said. "And I'll still be here."

Shane nodded, leaning into the touch. "I like that."

They sat like that for a long time. Eventually the trembling eased. Shane's shoulders dropped. He let out a slow breath, a real one, not the choppy gasps of earlier. Ilya noticed immediately, smile crinkling the corners of his eyes. "There you are."

Shane sniffed. "Hi."

"Hi," Ilya echoed, teasing. "Do you want food? You have not eaten since breakfast."

Shane made a face. "I tried to make pancakes. Got sad halfway through."

Ilya chuckled. "Then I will make you new ones. Stay here." He coaxed Shane off his lap, tucking the blanket around him. "Five minutes."

Shane watched him move around the kitchen, borderline graceful even when he was rummaging for mixing bowls. The domestic mundanity helped, grounding him further. Ilya called over his shoulder, "I will humiliate you with the fluffiness of these pancakes." He

cracked eggs one-handed, whisked flour and sugar, poured batter onto the skillet. The sound of sizzling batter, the faint scent of butter browning, filled the condo. By the time he returned with a plate stacked high, Shane's stomach grumbled in earnest.

"I put blueberries in them," Ilya announced, sliding beside him again. "Because antioxidants."

Shane snorted. "You sound like the team nutritionist."

"No, I am sexier," Ilya retorted, feeding Shane a piece with his fork. Shane chewed obediently, the warm sweetness spreading through him. He leaned his head on Ilya's shoulder, eating slowly. Anya hopped up onto the back of the couch again, curling against Shane's neck. "Thanks," Shane murmured.

"For pancakes?"

"For coming back," he whispered, voice barely above a breath. "For not making me feel dumb."

Ilya's hand squeezed his knee. "I would never."

He set the plate on the coffee table, then turned, nudging Shane until he lay back against the arm of the couch. Ilya crawled in behind him, spooning him close, chin on Shane's shoulder. "We can watch whatever you want," he offered. "Even those unbelievably boring documentaries about architecture."

Shane's laugh shook through both of them. "They're not boring."

"They are coma-inducing," Ilya deadpanned, and Shane laughed harder. The sound was still rough, but real. He relaxed fully, body melting against Ilya's. His eyes fluttered shut, the tension completely drained. The drop had receded, replaced by calm, by warmth, by the feeling of being thoroughly cherished.

"Can we nap?" Shane asked drowsily.

"We can do anything you want," Ilya whispered. "I don't have to be anywhere else. I am yours all day." He pressed a series of kisses along Shane's shoulder blade. "I stay right here."

Shane nodded, breath deepening. He exhaled softly. "Ilya?"

"Mm?"

"I love you."

"I love you too," Ilya said, voice thick. "Always." He tightened his arms. "Sleep. I'm not going anywhere."

Shane let go, the last tendrils of anxiety fading under the weight of those arms. He drifted off with Ilya's heartbeat in his ear, the condo quiet and sunlit, plans forgotten, yet somehow everything they needed was right here.

End Notes

This is my first attempt at writing subdrop/subspace haha I hope I didn't butcher it 🙏

This fic is posted on twt if you want to share!

P.S. to the person who bullied me (lovingly) into writing subdrop, i want u to know that ive been studying about it religiously for the past 24 hours with 27 open tabs, zero sleep, and the confidence of someone who absolutely should have gone to bed. i hope u like it hahhahahshsjjk

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