

the way you arrive

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the way you arrive

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Summary

And he does like doing things for Shane. There are many opportunities now, after all the ones he missed before. Now is the time to catch up. He will stand here on the side of the highway, pumping gas into Shane's boring car, and think of all the new ways he will take care of him.

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The boys hit a rest stop on their way to the cottage.

Notes

first fic in about 15 years, here we go go go!

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

Shane eases out of the Tim Horton's drive-through and toward the rest stop's gas station. The sound of ice shaking in a cup clatters next to him. He glances over with a raised brow.

"It will be bad. I can tell." Ilya announces beside him. He sounds not disappointed so much as matter-of-fact. His coffee's straw squeaks as he sloshes it around, trying to mix the dark contents. "You can see by the color."

Shane pulls into a pump station. It's been hard not to look to the passenger's side the entire drive. Something about not looking enough, he'll wake up and Ilya won't be there at all. His stomach's been flipping since they left the airport, like a good motion sickness.

Shane snorts. "That's because you like your coffee to taste like a milkshake."

"Mm. Exactly." Ilya sounds like he could be turned on by the thought.

"Gross."

Ilya sneaks a grin. "Delicious."

Shane looks but doesn't see anything wrong with the color. Ilya on the other hand, lifts the iced coffee to his eyes with a squint, as though challenging it. Shane watches his nose squish onto the sweaty plastic in inspection. His chest softens. He still doesn't understand how a person could be so sexy and cute at the same time. Both parts still pump a jittery warmth through his whole body, all these years later.

"Is called a 'regular' in Boston." Ilya chews his cheek in his inspection. "When you order."

"Wouldn't that mean black coffee? With nothing in it?" Shane shuts off the engine but doesn't take off his seatbelt, settling back in his seat instead. He is admittedly in a rush to get there, to start their secluded time together. He isn't so much in a rush to rejoin the steering wheel, and not be able to fix his eyes on him.

"No. Cream and sugar. Three, I think." Ilya noisily shakes the iced coffee again.

Shane can't help but pucker his face as he slowly unbuckles, distracted. "That makes no sense. That's not even coffee."

"Says who?"

Ilya finally takes a sip. It's shit, as he expected. Too bitter and very watery. Although disappointed, he doesn't wear it. His lip only slightly curls as he relents to the taste. In truth, he doesn't need the coffee. He was wired awake every moment of the plane in anticipation to get to him.

"Says me."

Ilya makes a humming sound, liking the challenge. He enjoys it when Shane pretends to puff out his chest. "Yes. Says you." He finalizes promptly. He sticks the bad coffee between his

thighs. Shane's eyes watch it go there, because he wants to watch him everywhere.

With the car shut off he can finally touch him. He moves his fist to the knee of Ilya's sweatpants. Ilya's eyes flutter down, watching as Shane's hand presses to him. A wash of something peaceful gathers in his shoulders. Relaxed, maybe, how a hot shower feels after a long day.

"Does it suck?" Shane doesn't hide the small reluctance in his voice.

"Is not bad." Ilya pushes his head back on the seat, turning to face him. He offers a small, assuring smile. Right now, nothing can be bad. His eyelids lower from the sun interrupting his gaze. He's since hung his sunglasses on the collar of his shirt.

They sit like this for a long time. Shane thumbs the thick of Ilya's knee. Ilya needs to touch him too. He wipes his iced coffee damp hand on his leg before reaching out, grazing his thumb on the freckles below Shane's eye.

A car pulls in behind them. Shane stiffens. The world as he knows it now is slow, only orbiting for them. A whole pile-up could happen and he would still be here, wearing the biggest blinders he can wear without crashing himself. The movement around them unfortunately wakes him up.

"While we're here, I'm just going to..." Shane exits his own daze with a huff. It's really hard to do. He nearly has to work himself up for it, to pull away from him. He glances over Ilya's shoulder to the gas pump.

Ilya places his coffee in the cupholder and unlocks his seatbelt. "No. I will."

"Oh, you don't have to." Shane begins shuffling too, pulling his hand away to brace getting out of the car. He's suddenly nervous. There are people flocking everywhere, walking across the rest stop's parking lot in all directions. The gas station is right next to it. It's not like they aren't *both* recognizable, but. "I'll go. Stay here."

Ilya's already put his sunglasses back on and opened his door, pushing a leg out. "I want to."

"Okay. Thanks."

"I like to do things for you."

Shane doesn't know what to say to that. He believes him. He believes him completely. The warmth pooling through him makes his tongue all fat. He only nods and he doesn't know where his body is getting it all. He relaxes slightly, watching Ilya stand up facing the pump while pulling out his wallet.

The gas cap is on the passenger's side, so Shane can stare in his direction naturally. He falls into it so deeply he forgets to pull the fuel door release lever under his steering wheel. He only remembers when Ilya knocks gently on the car, prompting him to. Shit, his hand fumbles to even find it.

Ilya swipes his card and inserts the gas pump. A warm wind whips from the highway beside him. He stares patiently at the meter. While the numbers tick he smoothens his free hand over his hat. Eventually he drops his head slightly down, nose pointed at his shoes.

It's not so much hiding he does right now. People are everywhere, yes, but they are living their own lives. It's a calm, quiet moment to himself. His feelings have been very loud inside him. He doesn't want to escape them, necessarily. He would never want that. It's only very new, that he can sit in them and not feel they are making things worse.

And he does like doing things for Shane. There are many opportunities now, after all the ones he missed before. Now is the time to catch up. He will stand here on the side of the highway, pumping gas into Shane's boring car, and think of all the new ways he will take care of him.

The sound of a car door causes Ilya to raise his head and look over his shoulder. Shane has gotten out, his hand smoothing hesitantly down his shirt. He watches Shane slip his sunglasses back on. They are a bit big for his face. Still, very expensive. These two things are Shane exactly. Ilya pinches him a questioning look.

"I'll be right back." Shane tells him hesitantly over the hood of the car.

"Where?"

"Just gonna use the washroom."

Ilya nods and returns his gaze to the meter. He feels a hesitation too. Not to the level of Shane's, he suspects. When Shane picked him up from the airport he had parked at the very back of the car line. There were only so many ways they could explain traveling together.

Ilya doesn't realize, Shane goes left toward the Tim's and not the rest stop entrance. Ilya's mind wanders. He wonders about the cottage. For much of the first hour of the drive, he tried to build a picture around the little he's heard of. The clearest picture has been of them, of Shane curled beside him. Of sleeping next to him, wrapped up together. Of fucking him in the daytime, in the nature seclusion. Fucking him outside. He has thought about that a lot. Kissing him as much as he wants, with the sky sitting above them.

The door to Tim's chimes as Shane enters. It was only a partial lie he told. He does have to use the washroom. The one in here will probably have less people.

His steps fumble, surprised by the size of the line inside. It feels longer than it is because the shop is small. Shane stutters, to no one in particular, and follows quickly to a hall beside the counter, to where the bathrooms probably are. It's a single stall, and locked. It feels like the longest minute of his life.

Once he comes back out the line is shorter. He takes a bottle of water for himself. He suddenly feels stupid for wearing glasses inside. The cashier is an older woman with a thick accent. He's glad it's not a young person. The person in the drive-through sounded younger, which he assumed meant more likely to recognize him.

Shane wouldn't tell Ilya this, but he pays in cash on purpose. It feels weirdly safer. He feels stupid for that after. He takes his order and goes.

Ilya doesn't get back in the car when the gas tank is full. He thinks stupidly about smoking a cigarette. Mostly he doesn't because it is very illegal to do so by a gas pump. He also does not want to bring the smell with him into the car. He is intent on being very good today, and for the next couple weeks. He will not create any chances for Shane to change his mind.

Ilya takes his time getting back in. He fastens his seatbelt, and takes another sip of the terrible coffee. He wears the bad of it on his face much more when he's alone. For the next few minutes twists looking over his shoulder, watching the people coming in and out of the rest stop. It feels long. He dreads the idea that Shane has been stopped for pictures, knowing it would rattle him. As the time passes his stomach begins to drop. He believes that it's happening more and more.

The sound of the highway does not let him hear Shane approaching from the other side. Ilya turns around to see him, confused. This confusion turns to tenderness when he sees what Shane is carrying.

A much lighter coffee in one hand, a paper bag in the other. Tucked under his arm is a plastic water bottle.

"Sorry. There was a line."

Shane wears a sheepish grin. Ilya shakes his head in both wonderment and disbelief, as he leans over to open the driver's door.

"Round two." Shane folds back into the car while holding out the cup. Ilya takes the new iced coffee with both hands. It's exactly the right color, a very light brown. He gives it a small shake. A ripe heat ripples to his ears. There is a word for this.

"Milkshake coffee? For me?"

Shane tucks his water bottle in his door, and places the paper bag in the center. "I had them put some maple thing in it."

"Very Canadian." Ilya noses curiously for the bag but doesn't take it. "What else did you get?"

Shane doesn't answer that yet. "It's a syrup, I think. Plus the sugar. And lots of cream. Like, way too much cream. I'm actually concerned for you."

Ilya takes his first sip, a much longer one than with his first drink. He sighs, and once he swallows even groans. It is perfect. So perfect that he whisks back into his seat in cherishing it, the cup pulled to his chest. He smiles contentedly, and for a moment closes his eyes. Shane watches him in relief, while he stretches the straw to his mouth for another sip.

"Is it good? Better than the other one?"

Ilya opens his eyes to stare fondly at him, a reverence melting in them. "It is very good." He sees the burn on Shane's cheeks as he flusters and touches the steering wheel.

"Good. I'm glad." Shane feels that blush all the way to his cheeks' insides.

"Taste it?"

Shane laughs that right out of the question while he restarts the engine.

"Oh no. That's not happening."

The much better coffee is tucked between Ilya's thighs. Rather than shake it at him, Ilya curls teasingly to face him, pressing his ear on his seat's edge. "One taste."

Shane looks shyly over, one arm on the wheel. He shakes his head.

"I'm okay. I got myself a water."

Ilya's brow pinches slightly, as though wounded. Pouting, practically. Shane's stomach flops again.

"C'mon. You know that's not my thing."

Ilya nuzzles further into his seat's edge. "You can taste another way."

Shane is slow to things at first. He realizes what he means when Ilya leans over, nosing closer. Slowly Shane feels Ilya's damp hand press lazily to his cheek. He shudders. It's only a little bit from the cold of the coffee cup on Ilya's fingers. His warm cheek makes it feel freezing.

His hand is cold but his mouth is hot pressing against him. He can taste the sugar, and maple, and the slightest bit of coffee when they kiss.

Ilya makes sure that he will taste it. He rolls his tongue deeply into Shane's mouth, deep and slowly. Shane meets his tongue back. It's a long, lazy kiss. It leaves Shane's breath stuck in his throat when they part. Their noses still touch.

"Good, see?" Ilya purrs against his lips.

"Very good." Shane agrees, sounding a little delirious.

Ilya seems pleased with leaving him this way. He returns to rest in his seat. He takes another sip, humming his satisfaction, then places his coffee in the cupholder next to the terrible one. “Do you see, Hollander? Sugar is not the enemy.”

“Shut up.”

Ilya does. Shane can feel the wicked grin he wears as he finally turns back to the road.

They join the line of cars to return to the highway. Shane’s mouth feels swollen, how much it buzzes from having him there. He doesn’t know if he can withstand not kissing him for the next hour. Maybe he’ll have to pull over to use the bathroom again.

He glances over shyly a moment, and then back to the road. “That’s yours too, by the way.”

Ilya looks down at the paper bag Shane had also returned with. He suspected so. Shane would not eat anything you can buy at a place like this. “You spoil me.” He pulls the bag from the console into his lap.

“Try not to make a mess.”

Ilya untucks the bag and sticks his nose down inside. He had been hungry ever since he landed, but he wanted to respect that Shane would likely not want any eating in his car. He licks his fingers wet and reaches in. Out he pulls a monster of a puffy, sticky thing, covered in frosting and sugar specks. He brings it to his eyes like a specimen. It smells like he will want five more of them when he’s done.

“It is a donut?”

They finally start to merge back on the highway. “Kind of? It’s an apple fritter. My dad likes them. There’s like, apple goo inside. Or apple chunks. I don’t remember.”

“A donut on steroids.”

Shane laughs. “Sure.”

Ilya pulls the thing out of the bag. It’s much bigger than he expected. Funny almost, how big it is. His grin is also big, stretching in excitement and mischief.

“When I was a kid, I used to eat them at the rink before practice. I’d get one of those and a hot chocolate.” Shane steals a look over. Ilya kind of looks like a kid at Christmas. “God, I was so gross.”

“I don’t believe you.” There are napkins in the bag Ilya doesn’t take. Instead he makes a cup with his hand to catch the mess. He takes his first big, obnoxious bite.

Shane might crash the car if he watches the whole moment. He begins to travel carefully over into the middle lane. He realizes he doesn’t have to see, since Ilya groans and flops back into his seat. There’s crumbs and frosting flakes covering his shirt already.

“I will marry this.”

It's stupid, but that word still sends a shockwave of nerves to Shane when he hears it, even if it's a joke. "Glad you like it."

For a few moments there's only the hum of the road, and Ilya's content eating sounds. Shane thinks about putting music on. He decides to keep it like this for now, only enjoying each other. They return back to a proper driving speed.

After noisily licking cinnamon off his thumb, Ilya ends the quiet with a request.

"I want to drink hot chocolate and eat steroid donuts with you."

Shane can't think of a way to say 'yes' and 'no' at the same time. He can only feel flush and grin. It's very against his driving precautions, but he leaves one hand on the wheel and the other reaches over, to pinch gently near Ilya's chin. It's sticky. The car will probably end up just as sticky.

He feels his fingers get even stickier, when Ilya tucks his mouth down to brush them, softly kissing them.

Shane looks briefly to the passenger's side. What's left of the fritter is sitting on the crumpled bag in Ilya's lap. Ilya's light eyes are soft facing the road ahead of them. They look so bright and calm, saturated by the sunlight. Shane suddenly feels tight, like he could cry.

He wiggles his fingers by Ilya's mouth. While he drives he feels teeth gently nibble at the end of them.

"First I will eat this. Next I will eat you."

The words are warm and muffled against Shane's fingers. He laughs a small, breathless laugh. "Let's get there first."

Ilya slowly nuzzles Shane's palm open with his nose. His sugar and apple goo sticky mouth brush a kiss in its center. It is an okay mess to leave, he thinks. The low and constant hum of the highway syncs with the hum in his chest.

End Notes

a little canon mush insert as we kick it to the cottage! would love to play around in more in-between moments like this. i'm a boston kid and would love to riff more on fun new englandisms vs canadianisms. thanks much for reading!

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