

you and I (not even the god's above)

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by [snoopyilya](#)

Summary

Ilya's voice was trembling, a shake deep within him, and it made Shane's heart break into a million pieces. The fact that he was struggling through something, and the language barrier was only making it worse, made him even more determined in learning Russian.

"I don't want to prove myself to the people who love you. It's—It hurts when they see you, then look me like I don't deserve you."

Shane makes a promise to Ilya, and it changes everything.

Notes

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

The silence between them felt charged in the worst way, and Shane felt—for the first time since the cottage, since they talked their feelings out, and promised to talk about what they were feeling—unmoored.

Ilya's right hand was hidden behind his curls, tugging some then letting go, repeatedly. He didn't know if he had to be the one to break the silence, the one to open this conversation, or if he needed to wait. He needed—

“Shane.”

Ilya's accent was stronger around his name, clipped near the edges, and suddenly, there were tears in those beautiful pale blue eyes. A puff of breath caught itself on Shane's throat, becoming a choked-out whine, a vulnerable noise he wasn't able to taper off.

“Ilya, I need you to talk to me. Please.” He tried to make his voice steady. Approaching Ilya, he felt his entire body tremble, focusing his whole being on the one in front of him.

“Please...”

He hated seeing Ilya's body coiled with tension, as if he were ready to quip against a rival instead of opening up to Shane. His heart was beating out of his chest, a rhythm so out of control he felt out of breath. But Ilya... Ilya looked like a little kid. Like a little kid ready to be reprimanded for doing or saying something wrong.

What happened?

“Moya zhizn', just. Listen.” That was a new one. His brain catalogued the nickname, shelved it into the increasingly big folder that was Ilya. “We need to talk about something. Been thinking about it since what happened with your parents.”

He blinked, and Ilya seemed to take it as a go-ahead.

“I don't know how to say this, чёрт возьми, I had it all planned out in my head; how to talk about this with you and try to make you... understand me? Is that the word?” At that, Shane merely nodded, the urge to bite at his nails growing by the minute. “I don't want this to make you feel guilty, or whatever the english equivalent of виновный is. Because I should've spoken to you about this sooner.”

Ilya's voice was trembling, a shake deep within him, and it made Shane's heart break into a million pieces. The fact that he was struggling through something, and the language barrier was only making it worse, made him even more determined in learning Russian.

“I don't want to prove myself to the people who love you. It's—It hurts when they see you, then look me like I don't deserve you.” A snuffle cut through his words. “I feel like I need to prove that I am достойный, fuck, worthy; deserving, of your love. As if being myself wasn't enough.”

Shane wanted to cry. His father's comment circled his head. A joke, most likely, to cut through the awkward dinner. But to Ilya, with his limited english phrases to get through, it

might have seemed something stronger, something truly meaningful.

He stopped fighting the urge and threw himself across the couch, hugging Ilya as tight as he could, covering the hand on his hair with his own, softly playing with the golden curls.

“You don’t have to fight to be loved; I love you, Ilya. Я тебя люблю. I tried not to, because I thought you didn’t, and even then, I loved you with my entire heart.” He littered kisses all across Ilya’s face, a kiss to every mole in porcelain skin, a kiss for every miscommunication. “I don’t think I’ll ever stop loving you, Ilya Grigoryevich. My heart beats for you.”

Cheesily, he took hold of Ilya’s hand and put it on top of his heart. It was beating out of control again. It earned a shaky smile from Ilya, and at that moment, Shane felt at peace. That smile, that damned smile, that made him fall deeply in love with this man. The cocky one, the soft one behind closed doors, the shy smile that he wore when he needed to get out of a situation. All of them, all of them were Shane’s. All of them made it worth it to him.

“I’m scared,” Ilya admitted. “What if someone tells you that I’m not good enough? Pike. Or his wife. What was her name?”

“Jackie.” He murmured against Ilya’s collarbone, where his head was buried, nuzzling against the smell of his laundry detergent (for sensitive skin, now that he knew that Ilya was soft as kitten) and Ilya’s cologne. “No one could take me away from you. Not now. I love you too much. It hurts, sometimes, to have so much love for someone out of reach.”

Ilya nodded, the movement pushing them closer, and Shane wondered what anyone would see if they caught them like this. Cuddling on Shane’s (their, at this point) couch, Ilya’s hand cradling his heart, while Shane listens to his, with his face hidden on Ilya’s chest.

He needed him. He craved him. It was a mutual feeling, he knew, the need to crawl into each other’s skins. The craving for each other’s taste in their mouths. It was human. It was feral. It was theirs.

“I would battle for you.” Ilya snorted at that, his whole face breaking into a stupidly charming grin, and Shane couldn’t even try to be offended. “I would! Even against Jackie, she’s scary! She’s scarier than Hayden.”

“Now that I believe, Pike isn’t that scary.” Keeping the joke going lowered the tensions, but Shane knew he needed there was more.

“It’s you and me, against whoever. Just you and me. Promise.” He put his pinky finger up, a twinkle in his eyes, and he couldn’t smother the grin that broke on his face as Ilya Rozanov, known Russian Bad Boy, grabbed his pinky with Shane’s.

“Promise.”

Jackie stared at Hayden with a troubled expression on her beautiful face. He wanted to be able to read through her, the furrow on her brow, her pinched lips. But his brain was focused on another thing at the moment.

“Rozanov? Ilya Rozanov?” His tone was far higher than he knew it could get, but the situation at hand was breaking his brain. “Shane...”

Shane shrank minutely, his body seeming small for a second. Then, as a flip switched, he turned into the Captain who carried their team into the Cups.

“Yes, Hayden.” He took a deep breath, staring straight at him. “Ilya.”

The said man was somewhere in the kitchen, pretending not to hear the conversation happening around him, about him. His face was as pinched as Jackie’s, and that alone made Hayden want to do his breathing exercises.

“We are happy for you two—”

In all of their years of marriage, Hayden couldn’t remember a moment where he cut his wife off, but.

“Shane.”

Jackie looked at him again as Shane turned to him. Her eyes seemed to convey a message, but he was too focused on what he was going to say, and he completely missed it.

“Shane, I don’t care that you are gay. It doesn’t change anything, and you are my best friend; nothing like this would ever change anything between us.” There was gratitude in Shane’s eyes, and Hayden felt the need to gulp down an entire glass of water. “And it’s fine, we can find you someone else—”

As soon as his words were out of his mouth, Ilya appeared with a cold can of ginger ale for Shane, who grabbed it as if it were his lifeline.

“What the fuck did you just say to me, Hayden Pike?”

Hayden startled, suddenly looking around the room. To his wife, who looked as betrayed as Shane. To Rozanov, their supposed enemy, who didn’t seem to have much going on his face. Then back to Shane. Shane, who looked like he told him he quit hockey. Shane, his best friend, was looking at him as if he didn’t know him at all.

“I just mean that...” His tongue felt too big for his mouth, his words coming out as shaky as he felt. “Shane, you could do better. I just mean that—”

“Fuck you.”

Hayden flinched. He looked at Shane, whose eyes were filled with tears, and couldn’t understand.

“How would you feel if I had said that to you when you introduced Jackie to me?”

Shane, ever considerate, even in his anger, shared an apologetic glance towards Jackie, who graciously took it and nodded towards Hayden. Ilya was watching them from afar, with a faraway look in his eyes.

“I. You wouldn’t have.” His words felt like lead. Fuck. He fucked up. Oh god. “But you knew about Jackie! You knew that I loved her!”

“And I’m sorry, but I love Ilya.” Hearing that name spoken so softly from Shane’s mouth was like a nightmare. “For a long time, I’ve loved him. In secret.”

“Why?”

“Because in Russia, Pike, people like us could get exiled. Even worse, if they see it as you flaunting it, or as a celebrity, teaching it to young kids, it could get you killed.”

Rozanov’s voice was unexpected; he had been quiet since they arrived. Now it felt like a bucket of ice water thrown over his head.

Shane stood up from the table, appearing behind Rozanov to hold him in a tight hug. He whispered something into Rozanov’s ear, and his 6’3 frame uncoiled. He blinked at the scene in front of him and pinched his arm to get out of this fucking nightmare, but the relief didn’t come.

“How long have you been together?” Jackie broke the silence with the question, and he couldn’t help but wonder the same thing. When? How? What happened?

“What about Lily, Shane?”

At his question, the couple (what the fuck?) let out a hysterical laugh.

“I am Lily, Pike.”

At that, his brain recalibrated and ended up nowhere. What? How? No.

“No.”

Shane took a deep breath, steadying himself as he usually did before his Captain speeches. “He is, Hayden. And to answer your question, Jacks, since... since forever, I guess.”

That shut up Hayden completely, and he focused on Shane, the way he was wringing his hands together to throw his anxiety off before Rozanov took hold of one of them, caressing it softly. It was so intimate.

“Since we met, I guess.” He shrugged, as if that didn’t break Hayden’s mind. “Since rookie season.”

Jackie let out a sharp gasp, and Hayden’s escaped before he could stifle it. “What the fuck. That’s a decade.” He couldn’t have kept it in even if there had been a gun pointed at him.

“That’s not right, moya zhizn'. The summer before.”

Ilya Rozanov was normally the antithesis of soft. He got into fights, he quipped against anyone and everyone, and wasn’t afraid of slamming you towards the barriers. But now, in Shane’s living room, he looked it.

He was gazing towards Shane Hollander like he was the biggest prize he had ever won. Like Shane, an admittedly awkward man, was the best thing he had ever had.

“Oh god,” Jackie whispered. “You are high school sweethearts.”

The idea was so ridiculous that Hayden almost laughed, but then saw the blushes across their skins, the way they couldn’t help but smile at each other. It burned to admit, deep within Hayden, but they looked good together. Opposites attract, didn’t they?

Hayden had always thought that they were rivals, as did everyone around the world. They traded accolades year after year, a tradition at this point, and their moments together on ice made everyone marvel, but seeing them like this made Hayden feel out of depth.

Ilya Rozanov had known Shane Hollander before Hayden Pike did. Fuck, that was a tough pill to swallow. Hayden always took pride in being Shane’s right-hand man. A footnote on Shane's biography, he thought sometimes.

But now, seeing the ease they shared between them, as he did with Jackie, it made everything click in the worst way possible.

Ilya Rozanov was Shane’s soulmate. Shane Hollander belonged by Ilya Rozanov’s side.

Not Hayden. Not anyone else. It was written in the stars before anyone had the idea of making them rivals, a rivalry that only grew when the NHL got its claws on them.

Soulmates, like Jackie and him.

In the middle of the silence, he could hear Shane whisper, “You and I, forever, I promise,” in Ilya’s ear.

And at that moment, it felt as if someone cut all the strings to his puppet. He fell into his chair with a loud thud. Forever? He felt his heart beating out of his chest, dramatically, he thought, but he felt as if he just lost Shane.

To fucking Ilya Rozanov, of all people.

End Notes

I'm SNOOPYILYA on Twitter.

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