it's like you never had wings

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by creamsicle_melt

Summary

No, Ilya isn't a martyr, but he isn't selfish either.

Tonight he wants to be selfish.

Ilya wants to use Shane. He wants to use his willingness, his body, his everything to make himself feel better.

It's a truth. Maybe an ugly one, but one that he owes to both himself and to Shane to accept. Tonight will be about him.

And Shane, for his part, is a willing participant in it all.

'I want to be useful,' he had said.

Notes

I was reflecting on how violent, and at times dirty, the real life Montreal vs Boston rivalry has gotten over the years (a brief post for some context on the IRL rivalry) and thought that there's absolutely no way that neither Ilya or Shane have been part of that messiness through their careers. Then I thought of mean dom Ilya. And then I combined both and this fic was born.

(Note: Ilya has some complicated thoughts as he wrestles with his own urge to be a sadist and a "harsher" dom. None of his internalized fears or worries of what that means about him are a reflection of my views on doms)

Timeline wise this is set the season after the cottage (canonically the 2017-18 season)

Thank you to dwisp for betaing this. She's amazing and helped so much through the tough parts of this and cheered me on as I made it filthier haha.

I want to dedicate this to my lovely friend nastierfem :) Thank you for waiting so patiently and I hope it's everything you were hoping for.

I am also co-dedicating this to all the mean doms and sadists out there. Shoutout to y'all.

See the end of the work for more notes

Raddy's smile is too loose, too easy.

It's one Ilya's witnessed countless times before; he's seen it in locker rooms as far back as he can remember, even the ones he was in as a kid, playing with other kids who saw their entire future shift between one moment and the next in a game that didn't even matter.

It's the kind of smile that can only come from the medical staff giving you something that's masking something a whole lot worse.

In the time that Ilya's been standing here talking to the trainers in a low voice and giving the kid a reassuring smile, there's already been three teammates that have come and gone, offering the kid a greeting that he's too high on painkillers to return properly. He's well liked. Talented as hell, of course, but more than that, he's a *good* kid.

He's staying with Wilson and his family while he adjusts to life in the big league and America, and as Wilson says in their conversations—Ilya likes getting his As together and checking in—he's one of the best rookies that Wilson's had stay with him. He doesn't make much of a mess but when he does, he cleans up after himself. He gets along with the entire family, including Wilson's kids. The coaching and team staff love him. He stays behind after practice and works with the skills coach regularly. He doesn't complain about Ilya's policy of carrying their own bags to the equipment managers—something that Ilya's had to have some *conversations* with rookies and newly traded players about. He's funny in the broken English he speaks and even funnier in Russian. He talks to Ilya when he needs something and doesn't get in any trouble that makes Ilya's or the team's life difficult.

And on ice, he's been a big part of the team. He's *important* to them, already playing in the top six and has a lethal shot on the powerplay. He's creative in his plays, but does the more boring stuff too that rookies sometimes avoid, like blocking shots and backchecking. He jumps into goal celebrations with exuberance no matter if it's his goal or his teammate's.

He's a good fucking kid.

Ilya knows that Raddy had a chance at the Calder this year. A long shot, sure, but a shot nonetheless. It's unexpected too. The Raiders haven't been bad enough to land themselves a surefire-top-3-in-the-Calder-race kind of rookie in years now, not since they plummeted to the basement of the league standings and chose Ilya with their first pick.

Now, all of that is gone. Not just for the team, but the kid himself. All because he got injured in front of a gasping, seething home crowd. Because Shane fucking Hollander injured the kid.

Ilya's Shane.

Shane isn't a dirty player. He's not even much of a physical player. The hit he'd thrown, the one that had knocked the kid down into the boards, made his knee twist brutally under him and slammed his head into the boards hadn't been calculated. Ilya could see that even from the bench, and the replay on the jumbotron had just confirmed it.

And Ilya knows that Shane wouldn't go out there with the intention to hurt someone. If Ilya's honest with himself, he plays far closer to the edge than Shane. There's hits he's thrown that he knew could—and did—lead to a guy having to miss time.

He's done cold calculus before. Asked himself:

If I commit this penalty, and hurt this guy, will it be worth it?

Am I taking him off the ice long enough for my team to do damage?

If I'm suspended after this, will my team be able to handle it?

Can I handle it if his team comes after me for this?

Is there a guy on his team who I can't take in a fight?

Ilya wouldn't call himself a *dirty player*, but he knows how to play dirty. He'll stoop to that level, if that's what he thinks he needs to do to win.

Shane doesn't do that kind of math. Not often, anyway, as far as Ilya knows. But Ilya also knows he'd do almost anything to win. In the heat of the moment, sometimes that looks like throwing a hit you know could end with a guy having to limp off the ice.

When Ilya thinks about it, when he considers the person he *knows* for a fact Shane is, he's sure Shane didn't actually mean to hurt the kid, isn't sitting in the locker room and laughing about it, isn't proud of himself.

So Ilya can't help but ask himself *why* then, is he so angry at Shane that his jaw is clenched tight enough to hurt every time he thinks about Shane sitting in his apartment, waiting?

Maybe it has something to do with the fact that in the game, when Marleau had been furious, snarling, 'Hollander's gonna answer for that one,' and 'I'll make sure that fucker's not gonna get away with that,' Ilya had responded without thinking.

'No you're fucking not, Marly,' he'd snapped.

Marleau had given him a shocked look, his mouth pursed. 'Roz, this is my job, it's not gonna be you.'

And *of course,* he'd thought that was Ilya insisting that he'd be the one to take revenge, that he'd fight Shane or throw a nasty hit right back. Ilya had taken that out that he'd been given, the moment to buy Shane some more time. He had nodded. 'Leave it.'

Things had gotten chippy, of course, with both teams throwing hits back and forth but Ilya's a good captain, a well respected one, so everyone had left him to deal with Shane, the way he'd said he would.

Except Ilya couldn't do *that* either. The idea of throwing a punch at Shane or purposely ramming him into the boards to take him out had made him want to fucking throw up.

So of course, he hadn't done that. He'd finished his checks on Shane the entire way, like he usually did. He'd played hard, played the way he did against any other player, but he didn't do anything more and pretended he couldn't feel his bench's confusion, couldn't see Marly's frustration.

"We can't go in the box now, boys. Don't let them score on the powerplay," Ilya had told them. It was a bullshit fucking excuse. They were down 5-2, and the game had been far from reach for the Raiders.

But Ilya still couldn't throw the late, hard, high hit at Shane the way he knew he should have, the one that any other guy would have gotten.

The most he could manage was at the scrum at the end of the game, when everyone had a partner that they'd grabbed and were grappling with. 'You better fucking keep your head up next game, Hollander,' he'd snarled. He'd been shocked by how much he'd meant those words in that moment.

His bad mood could have been that.

Or it could have been the reporters after the games, the ten different phone cameras and mics shoved in his face, gathered around his stall where his pads hung in the back, his helmet sitting there neatly.

They'd asked him about the hit, the simple 'What did you see? Do you think it was a late hit?' was easy enough to answer with the usual PR friendly responses that the Raiders had spent his entire career begging him to use. But the humiliating question, the one that had made him grit his teeth had come at the end from one of the regular reporters, the one that Ilya usually had a pretty good rapport with, who had said, 'Do you feel like your team did enough to respond to Shane Hollander?'

That too, he'd given his canned PR answer to. A response about how he felt like the team had to focus on the scoreboard and getting their revenge there, about how he hopes the league takes a look at the play, about how proud he was for the guys for their discipline (a fucking *lie,* considering the amount of penalties they'd taken the rest of the game from trying to goad the rest of the Metros into a fight).

But standing there, with the cameras shining bright on him and the team surely broadcasting his interview, he'd known what the response to Shane Hollander's hit had been: it had been fuck all.

Because *Ilya* was the one who'd agreed to handle him, *Ilya* had been the one to tell Marleau that he'd take care of it. And then Ilya had been the one who hadn't managed to do anything to Shane. Because he fucking loves Shane, and there isn't a world in which he could picture himself going up to Shane and punching him in the face.

"You'll be alright, kid," Ilya tells Raddy.

Raddy gives him a wider smile. His eyes are hazy. "Thanks Roz. You're the best captain."

Ilya gives him a tight smile and walks away. The words sit bitter in his ears, burrowing into his brain.

Fuck. He's not sure he is.

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Ilya spends more time at the rink afterwards than he usually does on these rare nights he has with Shane. He takes his time with his cool down routine, lingers while chatting with the staff, and sits in his car far longer than he should

He takes long enough that eventually his phone chimes with a text.

Jane: Where are you?

Jane: I'm so hard for you.

Ilya feels a familiar heat grow low in his stomach. But there's another feeling too, another kind of itch, this time growing in his hands, his knuckles.

It's an utterly unfamiliar feeling, when it comes to Shane.

He texts back 'soon' and leaves it. Takes a few deep breaths as he tries to puzzle out how he's feeling. How he thinks tonight is going to go.

It feels like Ilya spends half of his waking hours thinking about Shane, and a quarter thinking about fucking Shane.

Usually, by the time a game against the Metros is done, *all* he can think about is Shane.

That remains true today too. But it's not his usual hunger and need, his joy and excitement at seeing Shane.

He's angry, he admits to himself. He's *angry* at Shane in a way he's never been before. This anger isn't driven by hurt or rejection or jealousy. No, this is anger of the purest sorts.

He thinks about being inside of Shane and then he thinks about Raddy lying on the ice, clutching his knee.

He thinks about Shane's pretty brown eyes welling with tears when Ilya fucks his face too hard and then thinks about the way Raddy looks at Ilya with starstruck eyes.

He thinks about the way Raddy stands and yells in the tunnel before the games, grunting and hooting like a stupid, idiot rookie because that's exactly what he is.

Then he thinks about his hand around Shane's throat. Thinks about getting an apology from him. Thinks about making Shane feel as humiliated as Ilya did while looking at the C on his jersey after the game.

He thinks about how much he loves Shane.

Ilya grits his teeth. He can't do this tonight. He can't touch Shane when he's feeling like this.

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Shane's on him as soon as he opens the door.

Every time they see each other after time apart, it's the same: Shane kisses him like it's the last time. His hunger is plain to see all over him, all over the urgency of his lips, his scrabbling, greedy hands.

Ilya kisses back because it's as instinctual as breathing, because he's pretty sure that any version of an Ilya Rozanov who wouldn't kiss back Shane Hollander isn't one that he wants to be.

But when Shane's hand goes to the front of his pants greedily, Ilya gently stops him and takes a few steps away.

Shane's mouth is soft and wet, shining in the low light of Ilya's living room. He's only half dressed, just a pair of Ilya's sweatpants sitting low on his hips with no shirt.

If this were any other day, Ilya would be on him by now, would have pushed those sweats down and held his hips against the wall as Ilya sucked his cock, mean and greedy and unwilling to let him come just yet.

As is, the lust that he usually feels whenever he looks at Shane still burns hot, but that now-familiar feeling, the heat of anger remains. If anything, seeing Shane like this, relaxed and soft makes it spike.

He wants to see Shane on his knees, glassy eyed. He doesn't want to be kind while getting him there.

Ilya closes his eyes, takes a deep breath and walks into the kitchen. He grabs a glass from the cabinet beside the sink and carefully doesn't slam it down on the counter. He opens the fridge door, grabs the water jug and pours himself some cold water. He takes a second to note the way the glass goes foggy and then puts the jug back, shutting the door. He does that gently too.

He takes a long sip, and then another one. Forces himself to let the cold seep into him, to try to put out the flame of anger in his chest.

When he turns around, Shane's standing by the counter. His eyebrows are furrowed in confusion and he's got his hand on top of the counter, flexing it—open and shut, open and shut. Ilya thinks about how Ilya's *supposed* to have fought Shane.

He takes another deep breath and finishes his water.

"Everything okay?" Shane asks.

His tone is careful. Shane's not always the best at picking up unspoken cues, or reading a delicate situation correctly. Ilya usually doesn't mind it, appreciates the space it gives him to

be blunt in his responses and then patient with any questions.

He usually has all the patience in the world for Shane.

Not today, though, and thankfully, Shane seems to have picked up on it.

Ilya licks his lips. He'd considered what he wanted the entire drive over. They can't fuck, not today, not with Ilya feeling this way. But it feels like too much to tell Shane that, to reject spending time with Shane altogether tonight. It's like he's doing what they promise they'd never do: bring the on-ice stuff to their relationship. Ilya will hate himself later if he doesn't greedily drink up every moment with Shane. But he can't touch Shane *that* way tonight, not when just now, Shane kissing him—one of Ilya's favourite things in the world—made him want things he has no right to take.

Ilya looks at Shane once again, makes eye contact. "I don't think we should have sex today." he tells Shane.

Shane laughs. He raises his eyebrows and very obviously lets his eyes drop to where Ilya's dick is hard and ready to go, as confused by Ilya's intentions as Shane is. "Fuck you, asshole. I'm not gonna beg this easily," he says, still wearing that smile.

When Ilya doesn't say anything, Shane stops grinning.

"You're being serious?" he asks, after another few seconds.

"Serious," Ilya confesses.

Shane opens his mouth. Then closes it. "Fuck you Rozanov," he mumbles.

There's this blankness on his face that Ilya recognizes from his interviews. He hates seeing it there when it's just the two of them but he understands why Shane feels the need to retreat to that place. Even after all these years, when Shane's hurt, that's where he goes.

But Ilya supposes it'd be hypocritical of him to get too upset at Shane for this, when right now, he's working hard not to reach back for his old go-tos from when they first started doing this. He wants to push Shane away and that's a familiar coping mechanism from when he often found himself overwhelmed by the sheer amount of emotions he had towards Shane, the enormity of everything he wanted. He used to retreat, starving himself of what he could tell he was starting to become too greedy with.

It's different now, though. Shane knows Ilya loves him. This is different.

He's not sure Shane understands, if the way he disappears into Ilya's room is any indication. By the time he comes back, he's got a shirt on and his hair is a mess like he didn't bother fixing it after yanking the shirt on. He's changed from wearing Ilya's sweatpants to his own and Ilya's stomach twists unhappily.

"Fine," Shane says, short and clipped. He sits down on Ilya's couch, all the way at the corner. His hands are clenched into fists.

Ilya sighs and follows him. He makes the decision to leave an empty cushion in between him and Shane, allowing that space for Shane to relax. He grabs a pillow too—one of the many that Shane insists he now keeps in his living room—and puts in his lap. His dick still hasn't gotten the message that nothing is happening tonight.

He and Shane watch the TV in silence. Shane has put on hockey highlights—because of course he has—but Ilya doesn't fight him on it this time, no matter how much he wants to. It would be hypocritical of him to get upset with Shane for bringing hockey back home with them today. The last time Ilya was this uncomfortable sitting next to Shane in his own house was that day that Shane had broken his heart, the one where Ilya had made tuna melts.

"Come on," he coaxes, after too long of Shane sitting too far considering how sparse these opportunities are for them. "Let me hold you."

Shane's nostrils flare, and he shoots Ilya an angry look. "Why? So you can reject me while holding me? Fucking tell me you don't want me? What, should I go change back into *your* clothes and come back half naked like some slut, you fucking asshole?"

Ilya winces. "It's not like that," he says. He wants Shane. He *always* wants Shane.

Shane shakes his head just once and then stands up. "You know what Rozanov? Fuck *you.* I'm leaving."

Ilya knows he can't let that happen. There's no doubt in his mind that Shane loves him, even less doubt that he'll try to fix any problem between them once he's calmed down. But Ilya knows Shane doesn't do well if he doesn't know what unspoken rules he's broken, that he hates it when he knows someone's mad but can't start to fix it because he doesn't know what to change.

And more than that, he knows that if he lets Shane walk out of his house today with the thought that Ilya doesn't *want* him, doesn't want to touch and fuck and feel him, then no matter what Ilya does, the thought will stay in Shane's mind for too long, will fester like an illness Ilya can't let take hold.

So he grabs Shane's wrist, doesn't let him pass.

And Shane—he stays. He makes the decision to stay. Shane's strong enough that Ilya's grip on his forearm can't keep him here if he doesn't want to be here. He doesn't want to leave, Ilya thinks with a relieved exhale.

Ilya strokes his thumb over his arm. "Shane," he says quietly, "You know I always want you."

Shane sits down. There's still an entire cushion between them but this time, Shane's tilting his body so that he's facing Ilya but he's not making eye contact yet. "So why?" he asks quietly.

Ilya licks his lips. He should have guessed that a simple '*let's not do this'* wouldn't be enough for Shane, that he'd have to explain more, figure out some way to phrase this so that it

doesn't make him sound like a fucking monster, like someone who'd hurt the person he loves.

But he hadn't prepared for this. He hadn't wrangled the correct English words to explain to Shane how he's feeling, what he's afraid of.

So he says the simplest thing he can. "I…can't be gentle today, Shane," he said. "I can't. I want to—I want to not be gentle."

Shane stares at him, his perfect pink mouth pursed. "Oh my god, Ilya, fuck off! Are you under the impression that we usually, like, make gentle, sweet love?"

Ilya's first instinct is to reply that '*it's always love when I'm with you, Shane.'* But that's not what Shane means and Ilya knows they'll get nowhere in this conversation if Ilya doesn't talk this through.

"No," Ilya says, as seriously as he can. "I am not. But I want to be…even rougher today. I want to be mean to you. I want to be mean to you for the sake of being mean and not just because you are being rude." He pauses, takes a second to consider what he wants to say next, before he speaks again. "I am upset with you and I want to fuck you and I want to make you pay. So I can't touch you."

"Make me pay?" Shane asks. "For what? Winning?"

Ilya has to shut his eyes then, take another deep breath. He can't be mad at Shane for not realizing. Except—maybe he can, maybe he *can* be mad that it's been just two hours and Shane can't seem to think of Radulov, possibly-long-shot-for-ROTY, who he took out. He can't seem to remember the *kid* that Ilya had to watch get loopy as the training staff moved him around. Hockey is hockey, and Shane has gotten hurt worse by Ilya's own teammate. But at least Ilya didn't forget then.

"It's not about the fucking two points, Hollander," Ilya snarls. On the TV, the feed changes from the three men in bad suits who were sitting around a table and now it's his own face on the screen. It's a quote graphic from him—one of the things he fucking hates because he always feels like he sounds so much stupider like this, when its just his words in a language that isn't his own along with some stupid, unflattering picture of him.

On the far-too-big screen, the quote is, 'We needed to focus on getting our revenge on the scoreboard for [Radulov]." It's a nothing quote. Barely worth reporting on. Except it *is* being reported on and he can already see the headlines, questions about team toughness and team identity and inquiries like *'do these guys play for each other?'* And those questions will come with the implication that at the end of the day, all of that comes down to Ilya.

It's not fair, Ilya thinks. He's spent years, more than half a decade in this city, on this team, giving them everything he can. He's worn that C on his chest with more pride than he once thought himself capable of. And *one* fucking mistake, *one* moment of what is apparently a not good enough response to a hit that wasn't even *meant* to be dirty is all it takes for these people to start questioning him and his room.

‘Fuck those guys, Roz,’ he can almost hear Marly saying in his head. *‘Those fuckers don’t know shit about what goes on in this room.’*

And it’s true, it’s fucking *true* but Ilya, in his heart, will know that he held back today when he shouldn’t have.

His knuckles itch. He’ll have to fight during their next game. Just wait for someone to throw a hit he can pretend he doesn't like so he can jump in. He’s scared for his hands—he doesn’t want to break anything during a fight that isn’t even a real one that comes from something in-the-moment. It won’t be the same as today, though. Of course not. He’ll have to pick someone who *could* hurt him because that’s how that works.

In two days he’ll go into Buffalo and have to risk hurting himself because he couldn’t make himself fight a man everyone knows he’d never lose a fight to, one he has no reason to fear.

Today was his only chance to go after someone outside of his fight class, someone who has no real chance against him, because Shane Hollander would have deserved it.

But in Buffalo, he’ll have to find someone who’s going to throw punches that fucking *hurt,* someone who Ilya will *have* to throw his own punches at, regardless of fear about what he could fuck up in his hands if he doesn’t want to crawl into the penalty box with his tail between his legs.

He’ll have to fight, not with pride at responding to anger or frustration like he should, making him hold his head high; it’ll be embarrassment sitting bitter on his tongue.

All because he couldn’t make himself fight the man he fucking loves. Because he couldn’t put aside his own personal feelings for Shane in favour of giving priority to his care for his rookie.

And he’s pretty sure the right thing to do was whatever meant not punching the teeth in of the man he loves.

So why does it *feel* like it wasn’t?

Ilya doesn’t even know what he could have done differently. Maybe Boiziau should have taken the brunt of his anger, Ilya thinks, gnashing his teeth. He was on the other side of the rink when Raddy had taken that hit, but he’d skated right into the mess, ready to defend Shane from whatever retribution he was expected to take.

“Change the fucking channel,” he snarls, and grabs the remote to do it himself before Shane can.

Shane’s already seen what pissed Ilya off though, because his eyes are widening now. Realization making his pretty mouth drop into a little ‘oh.’

“Is it because of Radulov?” Shane asks.

Ilya grits his teeth. “You hurt him,” he says.

“You know I didn’t mean to,” Shane says, and it’s true, even the guys in his own room, if they were talking honestly and not through the vision of hatred for the Metros and Hollander, can admit that.

And he should be glad that that’s what Shane thinks too. As far as Ilya knows, Shane’s never hurt a guy bad enough to take him off the ice with the help of the trainers mid-game. He’s probably still processing it, in that Hollander way of his.

Ilya can try to be generous and give space to Shane for that, and he can explain how angry he is about everything that came after too. But then Shane speaks again.

“Besides, he should have been more aware. Maybe this will teach him to keep to stay on his skates and fucking keep his head up.”

Ilya feels his entire body lock up at that.

He knows Shane doesn’t mean that. They’ve talked about this before, curled up in bed and sleepily watching a game, seeing some guy who’s a friend of a friend get up off the ice after going down following an elbow to the head, watching his glazed over, dazed eyes. Ilya had talked about his own concussions, how terrifying it had been the one time he’d taken a hit up high and then played an entire game that he couldn’t even remember.

Ilya knows Shane doesn’t agree with the League’s way of handling head trauma, thinks it’s bullshit how they refuse to crack down on it, how weak the consequences are of taking a guy out by going high.

Last time, Ilya had teased him for how he only thinks that because of how often guys go for his head—“You’re small, Hollander. Fast, but weak. Playing too fancy. They think they can take you out.”—but in reality, he agrees. He feels sick every time he watches a guy go high on Shane and miss him just by that much because Shane’s faster and smarter, something that happens often enough to make Ilya's heart pound.

Shane’s lying to himself here. He doesn’t believe the words he’s saying but that doesn’t stop Ilya from feeling the same red-hot anger he would on ice, if some other guy said that to him while his rookie lay on the ice.

“Fucking *bullshit,* Hollander” he snaps. Then, after a few seconds, because he can feel anger crawling up his throat in a way he knows means he’s going to have to do *something* to distract himself, he grits his teeth and forces out his bitter words. “Maybe you should leave after all.”

He can see the regret on Shane’s face right away but Ilya needs to pour himself another glass of water, try to cool the fiery anger in him so he makes his way back to his kitchen.

He performs the entire ritual again, ignoring the glass that’s already sitting on the counter. He stands by the sink and takes a long sip, then another and then another, one hand clenching tight on the edge of the counter.

“Ilya,” Shane says softly. Ilya's never before been able to resist that soft way Shane says his name and he’s not about to start now.

He turns around, crosses his arms and leans back against the counter.

Shane's got a bruise forming on the middle of his lower lip from how he's been gnawing at it. “I—I'm sorry. I didn't mean that, you know I didn't mean that.”

Ilya nods, an acknowledgement. “I shouldn't have said it. I'm sorry,” Shane says. He leans against the counter himself too. Every last line in his body is stiff, and he looks uncomfortable, none of Ilya’s purposeful and fake relaxed posture reflected even as they take similar positions—and that's always been the difference between them hasn't it? Ilya feels just as uncomfortable as Shane looks. They just mask it differently.

“I'm not—” Shane pauses. Swallows. “I'm not proud of myself. I'm not happy I hurt him. You know that, don't you?”

Ilya nods, just once but enough that Shane relaxes just a little.

“But…” once again, Shane stops talking. Again, he swallows. It's visible to Ilya from where he's standing and he pictures himself pressing his thumb against Shane's Adam's apple. “You're gonna fucking hate me for this,” Shane says.

And if there's one thing Ilya can guarantee, it's that there's no world in which that's true. Even back when Ilya wanted to, when it would have made everything easier, he couldn't actually hate Shane. “I won't hate you.”

Shane closes his eyes, takes a few deep breaths. “I know I'm not as sorry as I should be,” he says. “Because all I could think about was that we won. That I couldn't even remember to care about what it would mean for the kid. For you.”

Ilya tries to keep his face neutral but he can't help his involuntary flinch.

“I know,” Shane whispers, closing his eyes for a second before blinking them open. “I’m sorry. I wish it wasn’t like that. Like, I don’t wish I could give back the win or those points but I wish I wanted that. For you.”

“Shane, is *not* about the win,” Ilya says, frustrated that Shane still can't understand. “Is not about the fucking points or about your goal. It's—fucking everything.”

“What do you mean ‘everything’?” Shane asks. There's real frustration in his voice, clear sign as any that he doesn't *get it*, that he needs this spelled out. He’s not going to get there on his own, not unless Ilya gives him time that they don’t have.

Ilya exhales, long and loud before he speaks. “No one fought you,” he says, voice shaking. “I did not let Marly go after you. I told him I would.” He pauses, spits out the next words through his teeth and shame. “And then I didn't. For my team or my fucking rookie. Because I couldn't fight you.”

Shane's mouth drops open, realization sitting clearly on his face. “Oh,” he says softly.

“Media asked me fifteen different questions about it,” Ilya says, unwilling to shut up now that he's started talking. “Tomorrow they will ask more. The fucking rookie thanked me for being such a good captain. Will he still think the same when he realizes I did not fight you?”

Shane could say any number of things to that, Ilya knows. He can see a hundred different ways this fight can continue.

He could say *‘but I never asked you to do that so how's it my fault?’*

And *‘fine, so just fight me next time. I can take it.’*

Or *‘the media will make up whatever narrative they can about you and your leadership no matter what.’*

He could say any or all of it and it would be true.

But that's not what Shane does. Instead, he walks over to Ilya, grabs his hand and squeezes tight. “Do you want to use me to make yourself feel better?” he asks quietly. “I know you said you don't want to touch me because you want to hurt me, but…will hurting me make you feel better?”

Ilya's mouth opens. Then closes. Because the truth is that he *does* think it will help. The power, the control. The ability to purge all his anger out.

But—

“It's a terrible idea. We should not play these games when I am this upset."

“That's not a no, is it Ilya?” Shane says softly.

Ilya blinks hard, tries to swallow back a wave of emotion. He does want that, Ilya realizes. He wants to use Shane.

“Shane,” Ilya says, slow and soft, because he loves Shane very, very much. And because he can still hear the words that came out of Shane's mouth, the honesty about how he felt and the cruel words he had to say about *Ilya's rookie* and tonight’s win and the points in the standings.

“You don’t understand. I want to do—” he pauses, almost unwilling to finish it. But the reality is that he owes Shane his honesty, as ugly as it is. “I want to hurt you more than usual. I want to slap you harder than I do other times and I want to call you—things. I want to make you cry for me because it hurts. I look at you and I think about…”

Again, a pause. Again, another painful truth. “I could not stop thinking about fucking you with just spit. Do you know that? I was driving here and I was not thinking about holding you. I was thinking about fucking you like that.”

Shane stares at him, his beautiful eyes shining. “You could,” he says softly. “If you think it wouldn’t take me out of my next game. You could.”

Ilya clenches his fist. He doesn't think he's ever been harder than this, standing here and listening to Shane. Shane, who is telling Ilya that he *can* do something as cruel as that if *he* thinks it'd be fine. That Shane won't bother giving an opinion on if he should. As if, despite every ugly truth Ilya's spit out, Shane still trusts him to walk this line, just like always.

"I'll need to leave in the morning with the team but I can stay the night. We have three days off between games," Shane tells him. "There's a mandatory practice on the third day but the other one is optional. That's two days to recover."

These rare long breaks between games, the ones that the league seems to give every team a few times a season, are supposed to be used for recovery and rest. This late into the year, Shane is supposed to take this time to heal his body so that he can wreck it all over again for his team.

And instead, Shane is willing to hand over this time for *Ilya* to wreck his body some more.

Ilya swallows. He's always been good at taking, at snatching away things that aren't his, stealing wins that he didn't deserve—a goal in the dying seconds of a game, a beautiful boy whose hotel room he almost didn't make it to—but he's not so good at accepting what's being so freely given.

"Ilya," Shane says, running his thumb over the back of his hand. "I'm saying yes. I trust you and I want to be useful."

"You will stop me if it's too much?" Ilya asks, cupping Shane's face, brushing his thumb over Shane's beautiful freckles. He can picture himself doing this later tonight, but this time it's not just a gentle stroke of his thumb, but him smearing tears, rubbing them into Shane's skin instead. He wants it badly.

Shane turns his face, presses a kiss against Ilya's palm. "I will," he promises.

Ilya kisses Shane, curling his fingers around Shane's jaw and pressing their mouths together, slipping his tongue inside Shane's mouth when Shane opens for it sweetly. When he pulls away, it's reluctantly, but with an idea taking shape in his mind, the beginning of a plan for how the night can shape up for them.

"I need some time," he tells Shane, rubbing his thumb across Shane's lower lip. "Come to the bedroom in ten minutes and we will start. Can you do that?"

"Yeah," Shane says, his tongue darting out to flick at Ilya's thumb.

"I will start right away Shane," he reiterates. "No…no normal us, okay? I love you and I will always love you but I can't be…loving. I can not be even…regular mean."

It's a plea.

A '*please leave if you need to.'*

A *'I can't be loving with you tonight, even though I love you.'*

A *‘this will be ugly so if you think it will make you hate me, please don’t stay.’*

“Okay,” Shane says. He doesn’t look away from Ilya as he presses one more kiss against Ilya’s thumb.

— — —

Ten minutes feels somehow like it’s far too long and too short all at once.

When Ilya had given himself that time, he’d thought to use it to plan out what he wanted to do, to test out different scenarios in his mind and see which he wanted to go with. Instead, what he spends that time doing is standing at the sink of his ensuite, leaning over on the counter and staring at himself in the mirror, trying to clue out what he feels, what he’s hoping to get out of this night.

Ilya isn’t a selfless creature, let alone a martyr when it comes to sex. It’s not like the nights they’ve spent together—or, back at the start, the *moments* they spent together—were never about Ilya’s pleasure or been on Ilya’s terms. It’s not like Ilya ever walks away after having sex with Shane feeling unsatisfied.

It’s just that usually, he thinks hard about making whatever they’re doing something that will make Shane writhe with pleasure and not just for the sake of how much Ilya likes it. It’s that even when he’s got Shane on his knees for an hour, holding Ilya’s cock in his mouth and keeping it warm, he’s hoping it will be able to silence the noise in Shane’s head, satisfy this *thing* in him that demands something in his mouth to keep him feeling tethered while at the same time allowing Ilya to revel in his power.

No, Ilya isn’t a martyr, but he isn’t selfish either.

Tonight—

Tonight he wants to be selfish. He wants to make this about him. He loves Shane and he doesn’t want Shane to be truly upset and unhappy during any of it. But he thinks that there’s a hunger in him right now, a need to *take take take take* that almost requires seeing Shane uncomfortable, watching him writhe and cry and suffer beautifully.

Ilya wants to use Shane. He wants to use his willingness, his body, his everything to make himself feel better.

It’s a truth. Maybe an ugly one, but one that he owes to both himself and to Shane to accept. Tonight will be about him.

And Shane, for his part, is a willing participant in it all.

‘I want to be useful,’ he had said.

He can be.

‘Do you want to use me to make yourself feel better?’ he had asked.

Ilya does.

— — —

Shane's sitting on the bed when Ilya comes out of the bathroom. Ilya stands at the doorway, leans against the wall and takes Shane in, making eye contact with Shane, makes sure he's looking right at Ilya before trailing his gaze down Shane's body, then up again.

"Take it all off," Ilya says. "I want to look at you."

Shane's practiced at this by now, isn't shy the way he used to be. Shane takes off his shirt and Ilya speaks again, this time driven by the cruel thing inside Ilya that demands penance. "You do not get to fold everything you take off. One thing only. You can choose what. Drop the rest."

That same creature inside Ilya purrs at the way Shane's gaze darts towards him. His mouth opens, but closes just as easily, flattening into a displeased line. But he nods.

He's clearly uncomfortable as he drops the shirt on the ground, letting it lie crumpled where it falls. But he doesn't stop stripping, pausing only to fold his sweats. Ilya brings his hand to his chest absently, scratching over where the C on his jersey would fall. He remembers how looking at that had made him flinch as he'd gotten out of his gear to end the game.

"On your knees," Ilya instructs, pointing towards the middle of the room, when Shane is finally bare in front of him.

Some part of Ilya wants to make Shane stand there and then walk a slow circle around Shane, inspecting every single part of him while he squirms.

But the biggest part of Ilya, the one that screams at him to be selfish, wants to get off. Ilya is allowed to give that part of himself what he wants.

"I want you to get me off with your mouth," Ilya tells Shane.

Immediately, Shane's eyes drop to where Ilya's already hard, just with the anticipation of what's about to happen.

"Okay," Shane says, the word airy on an exhale.

"Do you remember how?" Ilya asks.

Shane laughs at that. "Yeah, pretty sure."

"I don't believe you," Ilya says.

That makes Shane pause. His smile drops a little. "What do you mean?" he asks cautiously.

Ilya shrugs. "I want you to show me," he says. Extends his hand towards Shane, two fingers out, the rest curled in, almost as if he's beckoning Shane closer. He is, in a way.

Shane stares at his hand for a few seconds, then nods. He shuffles forward on his knees, and for a moment, Ilya regrets that he isn't further away, that it's not enough of a distance to justify making Shane crawl.

But there's something appealing about this too: Shane Hollander, usually so smooth on the ice, all grace and lethal elegance, knee-walking towards Ilya, undignified.

"What do you want me to do?" Shane asks, when he's in front of Ilya.

Ilya raises his brows and crooks his fingers again, pointedly. It's easier for Shane sometimes, if Ilya just orders him to do things—things he thinks are slutty, or needy, or any of those things Shane's tied himself up into knots about. And Ilya will be issuing plenty of orders tonight, but this won't be one.

If Shane wants what he wants, then he's going to have to take Ilya's fingers into his mouth all by himself.

It doesn't take more than a few seconds for Shane to figure that out either. He has enough pride in him to give Ilya a baleful look as he sucks Ilya's fingers into his mouth, but Ilya doesn't mind it, not with Shane's warm, wet mouth wrapped around him.

Despite his earlier plays at innocence, Shane clearly knows what Ilya wants him to do, almost immediately, he purses his mouth around Ilya's fingers and tucks his tongue under them.

Having Ilya's cock in his mouth is one of Shane's favourite things, and he's become a fucking pro with it. The first time they'd ever hooked up, Ilya had been shocked by how quickly and easily Shane had dropped to his knees, but knowing what he knows now about Shane and his need to have something in his mouth all the time, it makes perfect sense that the first thing Shane had wanted to do with Ilya was give him a blowjob.

Ilya likes giving Shane head too. He likes that extra little bit of power. He likes how vulnerable Shane is in his mouth, how little teeth it takes to make Shane whine, how easily he can use just his tongue to make Shane moan. He likes that it seems to drive Shane insane.

Shane, on the other hand, seems to derive his pleasure from making Ilya feel good and, almost on a physical level that Ilya doesn't quite understand, he just simply likes having his mouth full. Giving Ilya a blowjob seems to take Shane out of his head more easily than anything.

Ilya doesn't quite feel like letting Shane out of his head.

He fucks his fingers into Shane's mouth, not too hard at first, but rough and unexpected enough that Shane isn't prepared. His eyes widen and he stares up at Ilya, but he doesn't put up a fight, just takes Ilya's fingers in his mouth, opening up like he's trying to make it easier.

Ilya doesn't want easy. He wants Shane to work for it.

Ilya pulses his fingers in, strains to put them as deep as he can. He feels the back of Shane's throat, bends his fingers to follow the curve of his tongue down.

This time, Shane chokes loudly. Ilya smiles, fucks his fingers in and out. He isn't gentle, but he doesn't keep them in for too long, making sure that he doesn't trigger Shane's gag reflex enough to make him make a real mess.

But Ilya could. He could make Shane do something truly humiliating.

"Should I?" he asks Shane, smiling when he doesn't seem to understand. "Should I keep my fingers in your mouth, Shane Hollander? Should I hold them there even after you start gagging harder and harder? See what mess you make?"

Shane's eyes widen. He shakes his head. "Please," he says, garbled through half of Ilya's hand in his mouth. "Please don't."

Ilya smiles, pulls out his fingers, gently wiping them on Shane's face. "I won't," he tells Shane, leaning down to kiss his forehead. "Be grateful and say thank you."

"Thank you," Shane parrots back immediately.

Ilya hums. "My cock now."

Shane immediately drops open his mouth, panting up at him eagerly. Ilya stares at Shane's mouth for a second, traces his eyes over the soft insides and thinks, *I want to fucking wreck you.*

"I will fuck your face," Ilya says. "I will do the work this time." Then, because Shane's infuriating words about Ilya's fucking *rookie*—words he didn't even mean—are still sitting fresh in his mind, he adds, "I think you have done more than enough with your mouth so far, yes? All that fucking talking."

Shane moans softly, and leans in to nuzzle against Ilya's thigh. He knows better than to go for Ilya's cock without permission. It's cute, almost, how he rubs his face against Ilya's skin. He looks like a soft little puppy, one who wouldn't know how to bite even if it was commanded to.

But Shane isn't a soft puppy. He knows how to dig his teeth in and snarl, how to tear chunks out. How to be dangerous.

But he doesn't get to be dangerous. Not here, not on his knees in front of Ilya.

"Hands behind your back," Ilya instructs, when Shane goes to grab him. Shane doesn't say anything, but does take a second to give Ilya a searching look.

"Is there a problem?" Ilya asks, raising his eyebrow. Shane shakes his head, instead just tips forward to take Ilya's cock into his mouth, just the head of it to start so that he can suck where he knows Ilya likes it, can use his tongue right away to start coaxing precum for him to taste.

Ilya lets him start, giving him a minute to remember how Ilya feels in his mouth but his generosity runs out quickly when Shane starts bobbing his head and taking Ilya in deeper.

“Enough,” Ilya says. Immediately, Shane stops and stares up at Ilya for instructions.

Fuck.

“All you have to do now is keep your mouth open and try to swallow when my cock is in your throat. Do you understand?”

“Yes, Ilya,” Shane says, except the words are misshaped, muffled by Ilya’s cock in his mouth. The distorted words have no right to be as hot as they sound.

“Be good,” Ilya prompts Shane, grabbing his head with both hands so that he can keep it still as he starts rocking his hips, gentle, steady strokes to start with, licking his lips at the wet noises of Shane’s mouth.

When Shane pushes his tongue out, holding it flat so that Ilya’s cock can rub against it on every slide, Ilya starts going deeper, moving a little faster. “Good little mouth. Good hole.”

Eventually, Shane chokes but he doesn’t close his mouth and Ilya moans as he feels everything get wetter. Every thrust finds Ilya’s cock pushing against the back of Shane’s throat but he doesn’t let Shane stop long enough to adjust the angle. It’s a mean thing to do but Shane doesn’t protest.

Even when Ilya stops, takes his cock out long enough to let Shane catch his breath, Shane doesn’t say a word, just pants for air, blinking his pretty, wet eyes up at Ilya.

He waits an extra second, giving Shane time to say something and when he doesn’t—when he just kneels there, the corners of his mouth wet with drool—Ilya smiles.

Use me, he hears Shane’s voice from earlier.

Ilya will.

“Faster now,” Ilya warns Shane, pushing inside and starting to move at a quicker pace right away. Where earlier he’d been rocking his hips, now he allows himself proper thrusts, moaning as his cock pulls out more but also pushes in further, as Shane’s throat opens up to take Ilya.

The noises are *filthy* now. It’s like when they use too much lube when they fuck, when fucking Shane’s hole sounds more like fucking a pussy that Ilya spent hours eating and fingering and playing with.

Except this is even better, because Ilya can see Shane’s face screwed up in concentration. He’s flushed, and if Ilya stopped to touch his cheek, caress that soft skin the way he usually does, he bets that it’d feel hot.

“You will take it all for me,” Ilya tells Shane, grabbing his head tighter. “Open up all the way and take everything I want to give you, yes?”

It’s not like Shane can say anything in response, but Ilya gets his answer in the click of Shane’s throat as around Ilya’s cock.

Ilya moans again, and thrusts harder, listening as Shane's throat makes wet noises. He wonders how Shane feels, kneeling in front of Ilya with his throat protesting, every thrust fucking out more and more thick, frothy spit from the opening gape of his mouth.

He moans again. "All of it," he repeats, as he pulls out to reposition Shane's head, tilt his throat just right while Shane keeps his mouth wide, pretty lips swollen, cheeks and chin covered in drool.

The next thrust doesn't stop until he's all the way down Shane's throat, his balls touching Shane's face. Shane moans, or tries to anyway, but it's a cut off noise because Ilya's cock is blocking his air. His throat protests again loudly but he doesn't bring his hands forward to try to push Ilya away. Ilya snarls, withdraws, then fucks right back in, just as deep.

The hungriest, most greedy part of Ilya's brain demands he gives more, that somehow he gives Shane more inches than what he has to give.

He grabs Shane's head and holds it in place, stares down at where Shane's got his eyes squeezed shut and nostrils flaring for air as Ilya refuses to let Shane's throat push him out.

"Such a good trick," he tells Shane, purring the words out before finally he lets go and slides out of Shane's mouth with a wet noise, dragging out more thick spit with it.

Shane gasps for breath and Ilya settles himself by smearing what's dripping down Shane's chin and neck into his skin. "Good," he praises, when Shane settles back into place, sitting up again and letting his mouth fall open, head tilted the way Ilya had put it earlier. There's tears running down his face, and his mouth is swollen red, but he meets Ilya's eyes and nods.

He curls his hand around the back of Shane's neck and pulls him up, moving him around until he's on the bed, his head hanging off the edge.

They rarely do it like this, because Ilya usually likes to look into Shane's eyes as he fucks tears out of them. But today, he wants to watch Shane's throat, wants to watch it bulge. Wants to rub his fingers over it and hear Shane moan, muffled because Ilya's balls are pressed against his face.

"Best mouth in the fucking world," Ilya moans out, ducking to press a kiss against Shane's hip, because he wants to and because he can. "Much better for saying sorry like this than your words."

He thinks of how furious the team had been then, the way he'd barely held back Marly from going after Shane, the rage he knows Raddy will feel when he can remember enough to be angry, and— "But no one else gets to have it," he snarls. Shane could owe anyone any number of apologies, could owe the biggest debt in the world, but he doesn't get to use this as payment.

This is Ilya's.

Shane is all Ilya's and Ilya can do what he wants with him.

Ilya pulls out just in time and cums, his entire body tensing up as cum spurts out of his cock and onto Shane's face, but fucks back inside before he's done. He wants Shane to taste it and he wants to ride out the end of it somewhere tight.

It's such a good orgasm that it's nearly fucking painful, dragged out from deep inside him, making him shudder as he grinds his hips against Shane's face, trying to get further in, the way he would in Shane's hole, fucking his cum impossibly deeper.

Shane gasps for breath when it's over. He's filthy, covered in a mixture of spit, cum, and his tears when Ilya steps away from him so that he can look.

Again, Ilya's reminded of how *particular* Shane can be about messes, how finicky he is about what he's willing to put up with when it comes to feeling dirty. And he's reminded again of how Shane puts up with it anyway—no, seems to *relish* in it—when he's blowing Ilya nice and sloppy, plenty of spit to ease the way.

This is more than usual, even, and Ilya wonders: is this too much for Shane, even by those standards?

He finds his answer in the ensuing silence. Shane's lack of admonishment and complaint speaks volumes. He doesn't say a word and Ilya doesn't ask. Shane's an adult, a big boy, big enough to make his decisions.

Sitting back up, urged there by Ilya's hands, Shane doesn't say anything at all.

He looks like a mess. Wet and pink like his cock gets for Ilya.

"You look like a fucking mess," Ilya tells Shane honestly, using his fingers to gather ropes of cum from Shane's face that he pushes into Shane's mouth. "My messy slut. No worries, I will help you clean up."

Shane closes his eyes and tilts his head like he's giving Ilya an even better view of his face and without meaning to, his neck. *I love you so much,* Ilya thinks as he gets the last of the cum off Shane's face and rubbed onto his tongue instead.

He wants to dig his teeth into the vulnerable slope of Shane's exposed neck and leave a mark as proof of that love. He could, if he wanted to, but he won't. Shane hates having to explain marks like those, especially the kind visible not just in the locker room but to the entire world.

Ilya might be able to get away with it tonight. He's been able to before, when they both are too worked up to hold back, when Ilya's honestly slipped in the moment.

But this would be purposeful, a choice made to make life harder for Shane. Even with how he's feeling, Ilya can't make himself do that.

He can mark up Shane in other ways, though, and he proves it by grabbing Shane's nipple and pinching hard. Shane yells, always sensitive, and tries to jerk away but moves back in place before Ilya can say anything.

“Always so sensitive here,” Ilya tells him. Ilya likes having his nipples played with too, always appreciates it when Shane touches them while blowing him, but it's nothing like the way Shane seems to go crazy for it. He likes it rougher than Ilya does.

Ilya wants to see just how rough he can go.

In the past, Ilya has gotten Shane cock drunk and needy and then spent hours with his mouth on Shane’s tits, sucking the perfect peaks of his nipples between his lips, biting every once in a while to hear Shane’s pretty whimpers.

He bites harder now, taking one between his teeth and the other in his fingers, feeling warmth fill him as Shane *whines,* the kind of noise he only makes when Ilya’s pushed him to the edge over and over.

“I want this to be swollen. Big and red,” Ilya tells Shane, pinching both nipples now, tugging away from his heaving chest. “I want you to feel this. Feel that actions have consequences.”

Consequences. An English word he’d learned early on from speeches given to him by his own front office. They were all given before he could even do anything to earn a lecture-disguised-as-a-conversation. His father’s assertion of Ilya’s laziness must have counted for something to the front office, weighed more than any of the testimonies from his coaches, even the most hardass ones, of how hard Ilya worked, how much he put into hockey.

‘If you don’t take this seriously Ilya, there will be consequences on and off the ice,’ his GM had said, like Ilya had gotten where he had by not understanding hard work, by coasting on the physical gifts he was given.

‘If you play lazy hockey, you won’t get as much ice time, I don’t know what you’re used to but there’s consequences here,’ his coach had said, like Ilya didn’t know, like Ilya wasn’t one of the best prospects to come into this league in decades, like his accent and birthplace made him stupider than his North American peers.

But they’d all been right about one thing. Every action has a consequence.

Ilya, at 19, deciding to jerk off in a shower next to a beautiful, uptight Canadian hockey player means he got his heart broken at 25 when that same boy walked out on him after Ilya moaned his name into his mouth.

Ilya, at 25, in a hotel room with that same beautiful boy—a man now—confessing that he wanted more and daring to dream about it led Ilya this moment here, at 26 playing hard for a team he knows he is going to leave.

Then Shane, earlier today, deciding for whatever reason to hit a 21 year old kid in the wrong spot leads to Shane here, a few hours later with pained noises coming out of his throat as Ilya brings his hand down hard over Shane’s tits, first one side and then the other, then repeating that, spanking them like he’s trying to leave marks.

He is. He’s trying to bruise them.

“Oh god, oh *fuck,* Ilya,” Shane cries out and Ilya realizes, almost too late, that he’s close, leaking so much precum that it looks like what Shane’s cock gives up when Ilya’s already made him come a second time and is going for a third.

“No, no, no,” Ilya scolds, grabbing Shane’s red cock and squeezing it tight at the base. Holding back his orgasm, pulling him away from the edge roughly.

Shane cracks. This time, his tears come with sobs. “Please,” he cries.

It's the first time he’s begged for anything all night. Ilya is proud. Usually, Shane is easy. Quick to beg, even if he knows he’s not going to get what he wants. Ilya can tell that today he’s held out until he absolutely *had* to, when he thought he might actually have a chance at cumming.

He doesn’t. Ilya squeezes his cock to remind him. “No,” he tells Shane. “Not yet.”

And when it *is* time, Shane’s going to cry for him even harder. But not yet.

“But I can start touching this, if that’s what you would like,” Ilya offers.

Shane gives him a look like he doesn’t trust Ilya—he shouldn’t*,* it's a good instinct not to believe a predator when it approaches you pretending to be a friend—but he nods, slowly. “Please. Thank you,” he says.

“You beg so pretty,” Ilya coos, giving Shane a kiss, soft and far too sweet for how he squeezes his hand around Shane’s cock.

It’s an extreme form of power to hold Shane like this, cradled and vulnerable in his hand. Squirming and twitching because it’s too rough of a grip but still not fighting him.

“Hands behind your neck,” Ilya prompts. He takes a second to admire the view when Shane does as he’s told. His biceps are bulging, the strong muscles in his arms, so well defined and trained. A product of hard work.

All that strength made useless, just because he’s following Ilya’s orders.

Ilya spits into his palm, biting back a smile as Shane stares at Ilya’s hands and bites his lip. Ilya knows he likes them, likes them on his body but likes even just looking at them and fantasizing about what they can do, what they *have* done.

He grabs Shane’s cock, gives it just one long stroke, slowly going up, and then sliding right back down before he stops, smiling at Shane’s moan, low and almost pained.

“Tell me when you’re close,” he commands.

When Shane only hums his agreement, Ilya tightens his hand on Shane’s cock. “Hollander,” he warns.

“I will,” Shane gasps. His voice sounds fucked out, and Ilya’s reminded of his view from just a little bit ago, the bulge of his cock in Shane’s throat, the home it carved out there. The

marks it left behind, evident in Shane's shredded voice.

"I mean it," Ilya says and gives Shane another one of those slow, tortuous strokes. "You will not like what happens if you don't."

"I know, I know," Shane whines again. "Please. Please please just jerk me off, please. I won't come."

You will, eventually, but you'll wish you hadn't, Ilya thinks.

Ilya readjusts his grip, curling two fingers and his thumb around Shane's cock to start jerking him off. He smiles at Shane's little whine, makes sure that he's giving him the long, even strokes he likes when he's starting off, paced perfectly uniformly, not too fast or too slow.

It's almost meditative after a moment, jerking Shane off like this and staring down at it. Shane's cock makes a pretty sight, pink as it peeks through the tight circle of Ilya's fingers, wetter with Shane's precome.

He gets *so* wet. It's one of Ilya's favourite things about him. Even when Shane tries to hide the truth, tries to shy away from how much he wants every filthy thing Ilya does to him, his cock gives him away. Sometimes, Ilya wonders how he even manages to cum as hard as he does when Ilya finally gets him off, considering how much he leaks before he even gets there.

Ilya already knows how many times he can make Shane cum before he starts cumming dry. He wants to see what will happen if he spends time edging him, making all that precum leak first.

"I'm close, I'm close, I'm close," Shane cries out, jerking Ilya out of his state of concentration.

Ilya immediately lets go and watches Shane's cock twitch, as if it's trying to find where Ilya's hand went.

And Shane, well, his face is even prettier than his cock. It's flushed and his eyes are trained on Ilya's face, looking at him pleadingly with his damp lashes framing them. And his *mouth,* fuck, his beautiful mouth is red and swollen from getting fucked.

He's the most beautiful thing Ilya's seen. Ilya could never fight him, not even on the ice where violence comes easy as anything, when guys will drop the gloves against a former-teammate who they plan on going out later because they all get how the game works.

Shane's beautiful, he's the love of Ilya's life, and Ilya could never hurt him that way. Never. But there's other ways he can get even using Shane's body.

He starts jerking Shane off again.

"Please let me cum," Shane begs.

"Why should I?" Ilya asks, tilting his head down at Shane.

“I was good,” Shane says.

“Why would that matter to me now?” Ilya questions. He can see Shane thinking that through. Ilya usually doesn’t like Shane thinking when they’re fucking, prefers him fuck-drunk and out of it, but today he wants to see what Shane can come up with.

It’s the wrong thing; “I’ll go see Radulov tomorrow and apo—”

Ilya’s hand darts out without his permission, gripping Shane’s face and squeezing. “Do *not*,” he says quietly, staring Shane down. “Don’t talk about that.”

Shane shuts up. Ilya knows it’s not the fingertips digging into Shane’s face, but Ilya’s words. Usually, the instant acquiescence to Ilya’s orders would feel good enough to make him ease up.

It doesn’t now.

He’d planned on edging Shane a few more times, really drawing it out, taking Shane close and then refusing him the relief until Shane begged and begged and begged so that when Ilya made his final move, he’d have how much Shane begged to mock him with.

He doesn’t want that now.

“I will make you cum.” He starts jerking Shane off again, smiling a little at the grateful ‘thank you’s that spill from Shane’s mouth.

“Consequences,” Ilya says quietly to himself, too quietly for Shane to hear. Even all these years into touching each other, all these years of getting used to doing this over and over again, Shane doesn’t ever take long to come, especially not the first time; worked up as he is from Ilya edging him and the blowjob he had given earlier, he’s even closer to the edge.

“I’m gonna cum,” Shane says, his voice cracking on a moan, “Holy shit, Ilya. Please. Fuck. Please I’m gonna—fuck, I’m gonna cum, please, please let me, please.”

“Okay,” Ilya says, and keeps going, working to push Shane past the point of no return.

“Oh god, I’m cumming, Ilya, I’m fucking—” Shane cries out.

Ilya sees things fall into place in a way that feels as clear as if he’s on ice.

It’s like he’s carrying the puck from his own end of the ice to the other, skating through the forwards and defensemen that he’s been pissing off all night. He has the puck on his stick and he’s shifting it to his backhand, faking a pass to his teammate who’s flying up the ice behind him before he shifts it quickly to his forehand, shoots and watches the puck fly into the net, just in between the smallest of gaps that the goalie left open.

The perfect play.

He makes the perfect play. Stops jerking Shane’s dick and lets go of it entirely right as he starts cumming. It’s far too late for Shane to stop himself.

Ilya wouldn't let him anyway.

It looks just like any other orgasm—Shane's cock pumping out cum, slapping against his belly as he makes a mess—but Shane's reaction isn't the same as it would be.

Instead of the usual bliss and the little smile he gets, when Ilya looks at Shane's face, his eyes are wide in shock, mouth dropped open in a soundless scream. Soundless at first, at least, because a moment later, he lets out a keening little noise, a wail, a cry from deep in his chest.

Ilya watches him, the worst parts of him purring happily as he watches Shane sob, look over at Ilya like he's betrayed him.

"I know, sweetheart," Ilya soothes, the kindness ruined by the smile he can feel forming on his face.

God, Shane is beautiful. He always is, but he's even more beautiful now, Ilya thinks as he coaxes Shane down onto the bed, letting him pull his knees up a little and turn to his side in what seems like instinctive self defense.

"Ruined orgasm," Ilya tells him, giving him a name for what they've done. He'd discovered it by accident with Sasha. They had been fooling around and Ilya had had his dick in hand, determined to make him cum after Sasha had pulled him into a quiet, isolated room and bratted at him until Ilya had snapped and pushed him down onto his knees. Sasha had been so, so close and Ilya had been looking forward to making him lick his cum off of Ilya's hand and maybe the floor. Then they'd heard footsteps close by and Ilya had panicked, let go of his cock and jumped back as he waited for someone to come in, like the distance would hide what they were doing.

After a moment, the footsteps passed and no one had come in, no one had caught them, but when Ilya had looked over at Sasha, he'd been crying silently, his hand over his mouth to muffle himself as his cock leaked cum.

He had felt bad, of course, but Sasha had stared at him with wide eyes and dark pupils and Ilya had felt so fucking powerful too. He'd never forgotten that moment, never forgotten how Sasha had described it to him later, sitting on Ilya's cock and pleading for Ilya to let him cum properly this time, the fake orgasm draining him of all his usual brattiness. He'd never forgotten the twist low in his gut when he realized the power he could hold this way, yet another element of this power-play he liked to engage in.

Shane looks more beautiful in this moment than anything Ilya's seen before. He's crying now, but he isn't hiding from him, just pressing his head closer to Ilya's thigh for comfort.

"Shh," Ilya says. He tugs Shane's head back by his hair because he wants to *see,* wants to watch what he's done, what he's reduced Shane too.

After the hit from tonight, the cameras on Shane's face during the game would have caught the blank look in his eyes, the one he gets when he's still processing something and doesn't want to show it. The cameras shoved in Ilya's face post-game probably only caught the sharp,

unapproachable look Ilya pastes onto his face when he doesn't want to give the bloodthirsty, quote-hungry media something to work with.

But no camera, no other person gets to catch any of this. No one gets to see the smile Ilya can feel on his face, the one blooming because he loves Shane enough to be vicious and Shane loves him enough to be willing as Ilya processes the emotions too big to hold in his body. No one gets to see Shane's eyes, half lidded but looking at Ilya like he's the entire world—indifferent, and cruel sometimes but ultimately the creator of Shane's universe, the decider of his fate, the north star he can anchor himself with.

Ilya wraps his hand around Shane's throat, keeps it loose, meant only to ground him while he presses their mouths together, pushing him onto his back so Ilya can lean over him more easily. Shane's mouth is open, only half kissing back while Ilya practically devours him, sucks Shane's tongue into his mouth and pushing his own into Shane's, attempting to get a piece of himself inside Shane in all kinds of new ways.

Which—

"Open your mouth, Shane," Ilya prompts. "Stick out your tongue."

Shane follows the order without a pause. Ilya doesn't stop to think either, pushes two fingers from each hand into Shane's mouth and pulls it open even further, tilts Shane's head back and spits. It lands on Shane's pink tongue and he stares, fascinated as it drips down, gravity helping fill Shane of even more parts of Ilya. He does it again, because he can.

"Shane Hollander the whore," Ilya says and keeps his voice low, mean. Shane just moans in response.

"Do you want me to get you off *again*?" Ilya asks.

"No please," Shane says, something frantic in it, scared enough to make Ilya chuckle.

"Do you want to make me cum?" Ilya asks, because he's hard again, ready to fuck more tears out of Shane.

Shane nods. "Yes," He grabs at Ilya like he's at risk of Ilya running away from him, like he's going to have to work to make Ilya want to fuck him.

He won't, but Ilya doesn't stop him when he starts begging. "Please use me, Ilya," he pleads.

Ilya doesn't mind—likes it, even—when Shane gets a little bratty, when he snarks and bites back just to get Ilya to make him behave, but there's something undeniably beautiful about this version of Shane, the one that can only think about pleasing Ilya.

Staring down at him and running his hand over Shane's head, Ilya feels the spike of hunger-need-want again. He'd thought he'd sated it, but he supposes it makes sense that indulging it hadn't eaten away at it after all, just made it bigger.

He feels wild, feels out of control.

He needs more. Just a little bit more to sate himself.

Ilya kisses him until they're stopping to breathe into each other's mouth more than they are kissing, kisses him until he feels like he's had something close to enough of Shane's mouth. Just *close* to enough though, because it'll never actually be enough for Ilya.

"My second favourite place in this entire world is your mouth," Ilya says, presses the words against Shane's ear and smiles when Shane shivers. "But my favourite will always be your hole."

"It's my favourite place to have you, Ilya," Shane replies, managing to give Ilya a loose smile. Ilya remembers, just for a second, the smile that Raddy gave him.

He expects to feel the jolt of anger that's come with the reminders of what happened earlier that night, but instead there's just pleasure, a strange satisfaction. *He* did that to Shane. It was because of the decisions he made, the power and control he exerted that Shane is smiling like this.

"That's sweet of you," Ilya says, stroking his fingers over Shane's jaw. "Will you let me have it now?" His hand is already trailing down Shane's body, groping at his ass, squeezing as he strokes his fingers over Shane.

"I'll let you have anything you want, Ilya," he says softly.

This time, it's Ilya who shivers. He closes his eyes, presses his forehead against Shane's. "You should not offer things like that," Ilya says. "You don't know the kind of things I want from you."

Sometimes, the enormity of how Ilya wants Shane scares him. The ways he wants Shane scares him too. The control, the orders he uses with Shane, the ones that came so naturally from their first time are all easy to keep doing, and more than satisfactory to tide him over as Shane takes to them like he's blooming under the sun.

But sometimes—and maybe more often than Ilya wants to admit—*this* kind of want-need strikes too. It's dangerous to have indulged himself tonight, he realizes. He's not sure he'll be able to forget the way it felt to have it, the ways in which Shane responded.

But he's going to enjoy it while he has it, while Shane has offered it up so fucking sweetly.

"I will open you up for me now," Ilya tells Shane, grabbing the lube from where he keeps it in the side table.

"Thought you wanted to fuck me with just spit," Shane says.

It feels like a punch in the stomach. God, what has Ilya done to deserve Shane?

"No," Ilya says, then amends, "Not today. I will have to be slow so I don't hurt you, and I don't plan on being slow."

Shane moans. He clenches where Ilya's lube slick fingers are starting to stroke him, his leg folded up to allow Ilya space.

Ilya kisses him again, presses his face into the warmth of Shane's neck, the vulnerability of his throat, and says, "But I also don't want to wait too long. So we should try to make this quick, yes?"

Shane makes all the pretty noises that Ilya could have expected and more as he presses two fingers inside Shane, ruthless from the start. "You're being so mean to me," he says, but it's not a complaint. There's a little smile on his face when Ilya glances at it.

And the smile is pretty, but Ilya wants something else, so he grabs Shane's nipple and pinches, staring as the already bruise-hot skin gets redder and Shane's face twists. "You belong to me," Ilya tells him, finally letting go. He rubs his thumb over the indent of fingernails left. "I can treat you how I want."

"Yes," Shane says, and clenches around Ilya's fingers. The smile is gone, but the need in his gaze isn't.

Ilya spends his time fingering Shane open with two fingers, but doesn't give him a third, the way he needs to be comfortably open. Shane catches on to Ilya's intentions quickly as Ilya wipes his hand off on Shane's thigh.

He's breathing heavily, making little huffing noises that Ilya knows Shane well enough to know that are from excitement.

He licks his lips as he coats his cock with lube, more generous than he would be usually because today they will need it. Then he presses the head of it against Shane's hole where it still looks impossibly tight and wonders if he should ask again if this is okay.

'You could,' Shane had said earlier. Had told him that he could use his judgement. That Shane trusted Ilya, all the ugly, vicious parts of him and all.

He lets that part of him drive him forward, push past the feeling that he shouldn't, that he needs to be kinder, that this is Shane and he shouldn't want to watch him cry on his cock because it hurts.

But Ilya's let himself enjoy that before, hasn't he? Liked fucking tears out of Shane because he's cum too many times, liked fucking tears out of him when Shane had a terrible day and needed to be pushed out of his head.

What makes this so different? Is it Ilya's monstrous need? The itch under his skin?

Ultimately, does it matter?

Ilya doesn't know. All he knows is that he needs, more than anything, to get inside Shane. That's exactly what he does.

The noise Shane makes has a distinctly pained quality about it, something a little more high pitched than usual. Ilya doesn't stop, but he does slow down, moving painfully gently as he

bottoms out, pressed all the way inside Shane.

Shane's noises change. They're still not the kind of noises he makes when he's feeling so good that he doesn't know what to do with himself, when Ilya's spent a whole night dedicated to making him feel like he's liquid. But he's not trying to push Ilya away, and there's a low rumble in his chest in response to Ilya's cock in him.

After another minute, Ilya asks, "Would you like me to wait to move?" When Shane blinks his eyes open, beautifully rimmed with tears again, Ilya tries to smile at him as genuinely as he can muster now. "You can answer honestly."

"I—I just need a minute," Shane admits.

Ilya, on another day might have accepted the answer. He doesn't, today. "Do you *need* a minute or do you *want* one? No wrong answers. You can tell me. I will listen either way."

Shane's breath catches in his throat. He swallows. "I want one. If you're fine with that."

Ilya smiles again, This time, he makes sure it's the kind he gives his opponents on ice, right before he knows he's about to do something that will ruin their night.

Shane's breath catches. Clearly, he recognizes it.

"No problem," Ilya tells Shane. "I will wait until you're ready. But until I do, I will stay busy."

He doesn't give Shane a chance to reply before he's leaning over, forcing himself even further into Shane, fire licking under his skin as the angle shifts, causes another low moan in Shane's chest followed quickly by sharp yell as Ilya catches one of his nipples—the one that he hadn't been torturing before, because he's *nice* like that—and sucks it into his mouth.

He laughs as Shane yells out again. He likes this, he realizes. He likes giving Shane enough slack so that he can put himself in situations where Ilya can be even meaner.

He grabs Shane's other nipple with his fingers and pinches.

"I'm ready, I'm ready, Ilya," Shane says, after Ilya's bitten down, thrilled to discover the way it makes Shane's hole go tight around his cock. "Please, I'm ready to go. Please fuck me now, Ilya. Please."

He's gotten better at the dirty talk. These days, his voice barely even shakes as he begs. But today it trembles, driven there by Ilya's cock and his teeth and his hands. It's delightful.

"You sure?" Ilya asks, letting go.

Shane's got these beautiful tears already running down his face. "I'm sure," he says, then lets out another loud sob.

It's still not as loud as he was when Ilya ruined his orgasm. And Ilya wants to hear him get that loud again.

He hadn't lied earlier. He doesn't fuck Shane slowly at all, fucks inside hard, every thrust accompanied by the slap of skin on skin, a little sloppy. Almost how he fucks Shane once Shane has come and Ilya is only chasing his pleasure.

And that's technically true, isn't it? Shane *has* already come and Ilya *is* chasing his pleasure.

"On your hands and knees," Ilya prompts Shane, pulling out with a hiss. Shane listens, like he always does, but this time there's an extra sense of urgency, a palatable relief that comes with it.

It takes Ilya half a second to figure out what's happening; Shane thinks his chest is safe now from Ilya's touch.

Ilya grins and puts a hand flat on Shane's upper back, pushes until his torso is down. The sudden pressure on his chest must trigger every single ache that Ilya's put there because Shane cries out, again.

Ilya grabs Shane's ass and spreads him, takes a quick look to make sure he isn't actually causing any damage. A moan punches out of his chest when he sees Shane's hole. It's red, and looks like it's well on its way to being swollen. Looks tender. But right in front of Ilya's eyes, it clenches hungrily. He lets go and trails one of his hands up, spreads it across Shane's back, applying even more pressure. He hopes it makes Shane's nipples hurt even more.

"Ready for me? Or do you need another break?" Ilya teases.

He doesn't wait for an answer as he pushes back in, grateful for the extra lube he used because the visual it adds is nearly breathtakingly obscene. Ilya's cock pushes in, and lube pools around Shane's hole, making it sloppy.

It looks like he's doing something impossible, like fitting his cock inside somewhere that small is a magic trick. But Shane, again, takes it. His hole still clings to Ilya's dick, tight, but it lets Ilya in all the same. It always does. *Shane* always does.

"Fuck," Ilya pants, grabs Shane's hips with his hands and starts fucking him.

Everything else disappears. All Ilya can think about is Shane. How perfect this is. How perfect this feels. How perfect *Shane* is.

"My beautiful boy," Ilya says, and means it. Adds, "Sweetheart," and means that too as Shane moans. Shane brings his hands behind his back, crosses his wrists and whines even harder. He's supporting himself fully on his chest and shoulders now, willingly handing over his hands to Ilya. So Ilya does what he's supposed to, what he likes doing, what they both like for him to be doing and gathers Shane's wrists in one hand, pins them in place and tightens his grip on Shane's hip with the other to drag Shane back on his cock.

"Scream for me, sweetheart," Ilya prompts and that seems to be all the encouragement Shane needed because the room fills with shouts, loud enough that Ilya would be concerned about neighbours calling the cops if he didn't know just how good the soundproofing is. Loud

enough that Ilya thinks he should probably be a little concerned, slow down and check in on Shane but instead all the screams do is feed his hunger, fill him with satisfaction.

I love you so much, Ilya thinks, and wishes desperately that he could spit in Shane's mouth in this position.

He can't, but he can do the next best thing. "Turn your head," he orders through panting breaths.

Shane's side profile is as beautiful as the rest of him. And when Ilya leans over and spits on Shane's face, the way the spit lands on the side of Shane's nose and starts dripping makes it even prettier. Ilya does it again.

Shane moans like he's being given a precious gift when Ilya runs his fingers through the spit and sticks them into his open, gasping mouth.

"I'm going to cum in you," Ilya tells Shane, keeping his voice low like it's a secret. "Going to fill you."

Shane moans. "Please, Ilya," he begs and clenches tight on Ilya's cock.

It doesn't take much more than that. Not when Ilya's so high on Shane's submission, on all the things he's gotten to do, on the way Shane gave over his wrists to Ilya without asking, on the way he knows Shane's nipples are going to bruise, on the way his spit is running down Shane's face.

Ilya's pretty sure he whites out the moment that the orgasm hits him. It's like his brain is leaving his body, all the stress and worries of the day draining out with every pump of his cum into Shane's perfect hole.

When he feels like he can see straight again, Shane's whimpering under him, shifting a little in what he must think are subtle thrusts.

Ilya sighs in satisfaction and turns Shane over onto his side so Ilya can see him.

For a second, Ilya's struck with awe as he looks at Shane's face. He's even more of a fucking mess. There's drool all over his face, and Ilya's spit has done nothing to help it. Ilya knows for a fact that there's snot and Ilya's cum from the first round there as well. His eyes are wide and wet, lined with tears that are still falling. Ilya wants him so fucking badly.

"You look like my perfect mess, my toy, my sweetheart," Ilya tells him, not really sure how much sense he's making but knowing the words feel important to get out.

Shane gives him a shaky smile. "Can I please cum?" he asks.

Ilya smiles. He leans in and kisses Shane, licks into his mouth like he can try to taste the back of the throat he's bruised with his cock.

When he pulls away, he holds Shane's face in hand and makes eye contact. He's known the answer this entire night. Knew it even before Shane came into this room.

“Maybe,” he answers, stroking his thumb over Shane’s lower lip as it quivers. “That depends on you.” Ilya pushes his thumb into Shane’s mouth, smiles as Shane immediately opens up and lets Ilya play with his tongue, humming in confusion as he waits for Ilya to go on.

“Depends,” Ilya says, keeping his eyes on Shane’s face because he wants to watch his reaction clearly. “I will let you, but the only way is another ruined orgasm. Do you want that?”

The result is just as beautiful as Ilya had imagined.

Shane’s mouth goes slack, loosening around Ilya’s thumb and letting it fall out as his eyes fill up with tears again. Ilya’s in love with those eyes.

“Please Ilya,” Shane says. His voice is shaking. “It’s not fair. Please I was so good, it’s not fair.”

Ilya sighs, satisfaction finally filling him all the way up as he brings Shane’s hand to his mouth, kisses his palm. “Yes, you were very good. But I still am saying you won’t cum unless it is a ruined orgasm. Do you want that? Tell me now, yes or no?”

“Ilya,” Shane tries again.

“I will not ask again, Hollander. Do you want me to decide? You know what I will choose. You know how much I liked it before,” Ilya warns.

Shane whimpers. A prey animal, showing its belly. “No,” he whispers. “I don’t want to cum.”

Ilya smiles and lets his pride in Shane, his happiness at Shane’s submission shine through. “Good boy,” Ilya says. “Very good.”

Shane exhales and closes his eyes. He nods. “Thank you,” he whispers.

That sweetness, the pure acceptance makes Ilya want to kiss him, so it's exactly what he does, presses their mouths together.

Shane remains pliant, his beautiful mouth open wide but only a little responsive and all at once, Ilya knows they’re both done. It’s over.

Shane can’t take more and Ilya doesn’t need more now.

He’s soothed and settled. The events of the night still sit heavy in his chest, and he’s still concerned about Raddy, but the shame that was making it hard to breathe, the anger that was pouring from every inch of him is gone.

Instead, all that he feels is a bone deep sense of satisfaction. The kind of thing that comes after a close game that was a grind to win, one that was left up to the little details, the small things that Ilya just was better at than the guys playing against him.

He doesn’t think he’s ever loved Shane more than he does right now.

Ilya shows that to Shane by taking care of him the way only he can, letting the endorphins soothe him as he carries Shane over to the bathroom where he can grab towels to clean him up.

He knows to do this now, knows that both of them will feel untethered and unhappy if he doesn't take care of Shane. So he does what he knows works for them; after cleaning Shane up and throwing the towels back in the laundry basket, he goes to the kitchen and quickly grabs the water bottles with the electrolyte mixture that Shane always seems to crave after these nights, and a plate of fruit cut up just how he knows Shane likes it.

He takes a second to remember that there had been a moment today when he'd thought that the night would end with him sadly standing at the counter, glaring at the beautiful granite and chewing them down resentfully, with Shane in a hotel room with Hayden fucking Pike of all people.

"Is your brain back?" Ilya teases, once Shane starts getting impatient with Ilya handfeeding him and starts reaching for the pieces himself until Ilya has to gently slap at his hands to stop him.

"Fuck you," Shane mumbles. It's half hearted at best.

Later, he climbs into the bed and pulls Shane into his arms. All the lights stay off except the dim, low lamp closest to Ilya. Usually, he likes to be fully in the dark when he sleeps but right now he needs to be able to see Shane, pick out the shapes of his every feature. He knows Shane likes to be able to have the option to see him too.

"I love you," Ilya tells Shane, throwing his leg over Shane and pulling the blankets up. "I love you so much."

He repeats the words in Russian; he thinks he'd learn twenty more languages so he could tell Shane *I love you* in those as well.

Shane smiles. "I love you too."

They both breathe together, and Shane closes his eyes, exhausted by the game and the night that followed. Ilya watches him a little longer before he dares to close his own eyes, wrapping his arms around Shane too.

In the morning, he wakes up to Shane staring down at him.

"Good morning," he mumbles.

"Ilya," Shane says, serious, and Ilya's heart pounds in his chest, waiting for Shane to say something about last night and it being too much, maybe.

"You know you're gonna have to let someone fight me in the next game, don't you?" Shane says and Ilya almost laughs at his relief.

Then the words register and he lets out a soft noise before he can control himself, shakes his head. "No." He pulls Shane closer like if he does it now, the next time their teams meet, they

still will have to go through Ilya to get to Shane.

Shane sighs and presses a little kiss to Ilya's shoulders. "You do, sweetheart," Shane says, softly, and Ilya wonders how long he's been awake. "If you don't, they'll come after me all game. It's best to get it done with, isn't it? I know how this works."

Ilya rubs his face all over Shane's face and lets out another sigh of his own. "I know," he admits quietly. It's what needs to be done. They both know what the unspoken code is, what the inner logic of the game and the players requires. "I do not like the idea of someone else hurting you," he admits. "The idea of someone else leaving you bruised hurts me."

Shane smiles. "I know. But maybe later…" he trails off.

Ilya pulls away just enough to look at Shane, curious. "What?"

Shane bites his lip. Then, very visibly makes the decision to be brave and steels himself. "Maybe later, after the game, you can…you can make your own bruises on top of them?"

Ilya's eyes prick with tears. Shane's staring back at him, rapidly blinking like he's feeling the same thing. Ilya grabs his face and squeezes, for the sake of being able to touch. "Oh sweetheart," he says, awed by this man he loves. "I would love to."

End Notes

I really hope you guys enjoyed this, it's the second Hollanov fic I started writing and again, this fought me but I made it through and I'm very pleased with the results. Please let me know in the comments how you felt!

I'm on tumblr at creamsiclemelt where you will find me being a domtop rights advocate. You can always message me about this and any of my other works or fandom opinions. I have many thoughts on many things!! I make HR graphics & gifs too.

Additional note: You don't need to know too much about hockey to enjoy this fic but personally, I think having some knowledge on why Ilya not fighting Shane matters so much will help you understand this a bit more. I wrote a short post on my tumblr for some of the big picture questions you may have. Feel free to send me an ask if you have any more!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!