Peace of Mind in the Darkness

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Peace of Mind in the Darkness

by StuffandStuff18

Summary

Shane and Ilya have been dating for months, and while they do good putting on the show of rivalry, their performance is beginning to put too much stress on Shane. Ilya takes notice, and does everything within his power to ensure that his boyfriend doesn't have to worry about anything or think about anything except for the love and care that they share.

Notes

While I was writing the fluff piece about Shane's autism diagnosis, I was also writing this. Hope you all enjoy another trip into Shane and Ilya's relationship, and thanks for all the kind words! I really, really appreciate all the support everyone has shown! :)

The fluorescent lights of the studio felt like interrogation lamps. Shane Hollander kept his hands folded neatly in his lap, a public-facing portrait of polite, professional rivalry. Across from him, perched on the edge of his own chair as if ready to spring, was Ilya Rozanov. To the world, they were centers for opposing teams, a media-friendly feud born from clashing on ice. To the two men in the room, it was a carefully choreographed performance, a dance they'd perfected over months of secrecy.

"So, Shane," the host, a woman with a bright, practiced smile, leaned forward. "Last season's playoff series was… intense. Ilya's hit in game four—a lot of people called it dirty. Your thoughts?"

Shane felt the question land like a physical tap on his shoulder. He kept his expression neutral, the way he'd practiced in the mirror. "It's a fast game. Plays happen. We moved on." His voice was even, a flat line. Safe.

Ilya's lips quirked, not quite a smile. "See? Captain Serious forgives me. Mostly." His accent, usually softened after years in North America, thickened just a touch for the cameras. It was part of the act. The charming, unpredictable Russian versus the steady, reliable Canadian. "But his slapshot in game six? That was personal. I think he still aims for my head."

A ripple of laughter from the small crew. Shane forced a small, tight smile. Personal. The word echoed. It was all too personal, and that was the problem. The space between them on the cream-colored couch was only two feet, but it felt like a chasm he was forbidden to cross. He wanted to reach over. He wanted to thread his fingers through Ilya's, or press his knee against his, a point of contact to ground himself. Instead, he sat perfectly still.

He could feel the first prickle of unease begin at the base of his skull, a familiar static creeping in. The lights were too bright, humming at a frequency that was starting to grate. The host's perfume was cloying and sweet, overlaying the sterile smell of the studio. He focused on his breathing, in through the nose, out through the mouth, a technique his therapist had suggested. But his thoughts were starting to spiral, skating away from him like a puck on fresh ice.

What if I slip up? What if I look at him for too long? What if they ask about dating and my face does that thing? What if—

"You two have a unique chemistry on the ice," the host continued, oblivious to the storm building behind Shane's calm eyes. "It's like you can anticipate each other's moves. Any secret to that?"

Ilya's gaze, which had been playing to the camera, flicked to Shane. Held for a second too long. It wasn't the challenging, mischievous look of Ilya Rozanov, rival. It was the quiet, assessing look of Ilya, his Ilya. He saw the minute tightening around Shane's eyes, the almost imperceptible way his shoulders had crept up toward his ears.

"Maybe we just pay attention," Ilya said smoothly, his voice dropping half an octave, losing its performative edge. It was a tone meant for one person. "You can learn a lot about someone

by watching them. Even the small things."

The interview wound down with more lighthearted questions about pre-game rituals and team pranks. Shane answered on autopilot, his responses clipped and correct. He was clinging to the script in his head, terrified of deviating. By the time the host gave her final sign-off and the producer called "clear," the static in Shane's mind was a dull roar. He stood up too quickly, his hand shooting out to shake the host's before retracting just as fast.

"Great job, guys," the producer said, already turning away.

Shane just nodded, moving toward the exit like a man fleeing a fire.

The cool, dim quiet of the parking garage was a physical relief. The echo of sneakers on concrete replaced the murmur of voices. Shane walked briskly, his bag slung over one shoulder, his gaze fixed on the clean lines of their rented SUV.

He heard Ilya's longer strides catch up to him, but didn't slow. The passenger door unlocked with a soft chirp. Shane climbed in, dropped his bag at his feet, and stared straight ahead through the windshield. He methodically buckled his seatbelt, the click loud in the silence.

Ilya got in, started the engine. The soft purr filled the space. He didn't pull out immediately. He just sat, one hand on the wheel, the other resting on the center console. He didn't look at Shane, but his presence was a focused, tangible thing.

They were on the highway, the city lights streaking past in blurred ribbons of gold and white, before Ilya finally spoke.

"Your tells are getting better," he said, his voice quiet against the hum of the road. "The interviewer didn't see a thing."

Shane didn't answer. He watched a truck's taillights merge into the river of traffic.

"Shane." Ilya's voice was gentle, but firm. It wasn't a question. It was a prompt.

"It's nothing," Shane said, the words coming out brittle. "Just tired. Long day."

"Mhmm." The sound was skeptical, warm. Ilya's hand left the gearshift and settled, palm up, on the console between them. An invitation. A silent command.

Shane looked at that hand. Ilya's knuckles were dotted with faint scars, old souvenirs from fights and blocks. A strong hand. A safe hand. With a rush of air he hadn't realized he was holding, Shane placed his own hand in Ilya's. The contact was electric, a jolt of pure real in the haze of his anxiety. Ilya's fingers closed, not tight, but secure. Anchoring.

"Now," Ilya said, his thumb brushing slow circles over Shane's wrist. "Tell me."

The touch was a release valve. The careful walls Shane had built all afternoon began to crumble. He swallowed, his throat tight. "It just… it freaks me out sometimes. All of it."

"The hiding."

“The hiding,” Shane echoed. The words started to tumble out, low and rushed. “What if I mess up? What if I’m talking to a reporter and I just… say your name wrong, or look at you like… like that, and they know? What if I accidentally touch you during a press conference? What if the world finds out and they…” He took a sharp breath. “What if they don’t like me anymore? What would everyone think? My team, the fans, my… everyone. They think they know me. They don’t. They have no idea.”

The fear hung in the air, stark and vulnerable. Ilya was quiet for a long moment, just driving, just holding his hand. His thumb never stopped its slow, rhythmic motion.

“First,” Ilya said, his voice a low rumble. “If you look at me ‘like that’ in public, I will be a very happy man. It is a good look.” He squeezed Shane’s hand, a brief pulse of reassurance. “Second. The people who matter? They know. Your parents know. Rose knows. They like you. They love you. The rest?” He shrugged, a movement Shane felt through their joined hands. “They like an idea. A story. They do not know the man who needs the pillows on the couch arranged just so, or who counts the ceiling tiles when he cannot sleep, or who makes that little frustrated noise when he cannot find the right word.” Ilya glanced over, his eyes catching the gleam of a passing streetlight. “They do not know my Shane. And that is their loss.”

Shane felt something hot prick behind his eyes. He blinked rapidly, looking out the side window. The fear didn’t vanish, but it softened at the edges, soothed by the certainty in Ilya’s voice.

“I do not care what the world might think,” Ilya continued, his tone leaving no room for argument. “As long as I get to be with you. All of you. The Captain Serious and the man who gets lost in his own head. They are both mine.”

They drove the rest of the way in a more comfortable silence, Shane’s hand resting in Ilya’s, the connection a steady current between them. The apartment building, with its discreet entrance and private elevator, felt like a fortress. A sanctuary.

Inside their apartment, the familiar scent of clean linen and the faint, lingering hint of Ilya’s cologne wrapped around Shane. He dropped his keys in the ceramic bowl by the door with a dull clink, his shoulders finally slumping as the last of his public persona slid away.

Before he could toe off his shoes, Ilya was there. He turned Shane gently by the shoulders and pulled him into a hug. It wasn’t a casual embrace. It was full-bodied and firm, Ilya’s arms wrapping around him, one hand splayed across his back, the other cradling the back of his head, tucking Shane’s face against his neck. Shane melted into it, his own arms coming up to clutch at Ilya’s jacket. He inhaled deeply, the wool of the coat, the scent of Ilya’s skin, the fading trace of studio makeup. Real. This is real.

“I do not care what the world thinks,” Ilya murmured again, his lips moving against Shane’s temple. The words vibrated through Shane’s bones. “You are mine. Here, you are just mine.”

They stood like that in the entryway for a long time, until Shane’s breathing settled into a rhythm that matched Ilya’s. The static had receded, replaced by a weary, buzzing fatigue. But underneath that, a different kind of awareness was stirring. The safety of Ilya’s arms, the

solidity of his body, the quiet authority in his voice… it all acted like a magnet, pulling Shane out of the chaotic spiral of his thoughts and into the tangible present. Into them.

Ilya slowly loosened his hold, but didn't let go completely. He leaned back just enough to look into Shane's face, his eyes searching. His hands came up to cradle Shane's jaw, thumbs stroking over his cheekbones. The touch was infinitely tender.

"Are you still in there?" Ilya asked softly. "Or are you back with me?"

"I'm here," Shane whispered. His voice was rough.

Ilya nodded, his gaze dropping to Shane's mouth for a second before returning to his eyes. A silent question hovered in the air between them, thick with understanding. The dynamic they had been exploring, the one that lived only within these walls, was a tool. A language they were learning together. It wasn't about the game on the ice; it was about the one in Shane's mind. And Ilya knew exactly how to play it.

"Do you need some help?" Ilya asked, his voice dropping into a register that was for Shane alone. It was calm, steady. A captain's voice, but for a team of two. "Getting out of your head again?"

The offer wasn't pressure. It was an open door. Shane knew what lay on the other side—a space where he didn't have to think, where he could just feel, where the noise would be replaced by a single, guiding voice. A space where he could surrender the crushing weight of control he had to maintain every minute he was outside this apartment. The need for it, for that peace, welled up in him, sudden and sharp.

He looked into Ilya's blue eyes, seeing the patience, the unwavering focus, the deep well of care that he, and only he, was allowed to see. He didn't have to be strong here. He just had to be honest.

His breath shuddered out. "Please."

The single word hung in the quiet apartment. A surrender. A request.

A slow, beautiful smile touched Ilya's lips. It wasn't his media smirk or his on-ice grin. It was private, warm, and filled with a pride that made Shane's chest feel too tight.

"Good boy," Ilya said.

The words, so simple, so specific, sank into Shane like a stone into still water. A ripple of pure, warm relief spread through him, melting the last shards of tension from his muscles. His eyes fluttered shut for a second.

When he opened them, Ilya was leaning in. He kissed him. It was soft, achingly so. A brush of lips that was more promise than passion, a re-establishment of connection. Then it deepened, slowly, inevitably. Ilya's mouth moved over his with a soothing, possessive rhythm that left no room for thought, only sensation. The scratch of Ilya's stubble, the warmth of his

breath, the faint taste of coffee. Shane's hands, which had been fisted in Ilya's jacket, relaxed, sliding up to curl around the back of his neck, holding on as he kissed him back.

It was a kiss that said I have you. It was a kiss that was only the beginning.

The kiss broke, but the connection didn't. Ilya's forehead rested against Shane's, their breaths mingling in the quiet space between them. The world outside—the cameras, the expectations, the fear—had dissolved into a distant hum. Here, there was only the warmth of Ilya's skin and the steady, grounding pressure of his hands on Shane's face.

"Do you want to take this to the bedroom?" Ilya asked, his voice a low rumble that vibrated through Shane's skull.

Shane didn't hesitate. The word was out before he could second-guess it, a clean, simple truth. "Yes."

A soft exhale, almost a laugh, brushed Shane's lips. "Come on then."

Ilya took his hand, not with the gentle invitation from the car, but with a firm, guiding grasp. He led him through the familiar dark of the apartment, past the orderly living room and down the short hall. The bedroom door was ajar, the soft glow from a bedside lamp spilling out. Ilya guided him inside and stopped just past the threshold, turning to face him.

The room was theirs. The bed was neatly made, Shane's doing from that morning. A book lay splayed on Ilya's nightstand. It was safety. It was home.

Ilya's eyes searched his, the playful light from earlier replaced by a focused intensity. "You remember what we talked about. The… structure. To help you let go. Do you want that tonight?"

The words—BDSM—hung unspoken but understood. A flush, hot and sudden, swept up Shane's neck and into his cheeks. He dropped his gaze to the floor, to their still-linked hands. His pulse kicked against his ribs. It was one thing to discuss it in the abstract, in the clinical light of day. It was another to stand here, with the offer laid bare, and admit he craved the very thing that embarrassed him. The surrender. The relief.

He nodded, a slow, stiff dip of his chin. He couldn't look up.

Fingers, warm and sure, slid under his jaw. Ilya tilted his head up, forcing the eye contact Shane was avoiding. In the soft light, Ilya's blue eyes were dark, pupils wide. And Shane knew his own were reflecting the same. That tell-tale dilation, the body's involuntary signal of submission and trust, already beginning.

"Look at me" Ilya murmured. "This changes nothing between us, you understand? Out there, in here… we are equals. This is a game we play. A gift you give me, and I give to you. Because I love you. All of you."

The words, so deliberate, so certain, seeped into the raw edges of Shane's anxiety. He managed a smaller, more genuine nod. "I know," he whispered. "I love you, too."

“Good.” Ilya kissed him again, a brief, sealing press of lips. Then his hands moved to the buttons of Shane’s shirt.

He undressed Shane with a methodical care that was its own form of worship. Each button slipped free with a quiet snick. The shirt was eased off his shoulders, and Ilya didn’t just drop it. He folded it, smoothing the fabric, aligning the seams with the same precision Shane himself used. The gesture was profoundly intimate—Ilya honoring the parts of him that needed order, even as he prepared to dismantle his control. The pants followed, the belt unbuckled with a soft rasp, the zipper a low whisper. They were folded and placed atop the shirt on the dresser. Soon, Shane stood shivering slightly in the cool room air, clad only in a pair of simple black briefs that did little to hide his growing interest.

Ilya stepped back, his gaze a physical weight moving over Shane’s body—the broad shoulders, the defined planes of his chest and abdomen, the powerful legs that could drive him down the ice at terrifying speed. A slow, appreciative smile touched Ilya’s lips. Then, without a word, he began to undress himself.

It was a mirror of his actions, but with a different energy. Ilya’s movements were confident, unhurried. His own shirt came off, revealing the formidable expanse of his torso, the dark trail of hair leading down. His pants followed, folded with the same deliberate care. He stood before Shane in white boxer briefs, the fabric straining noticeably. The contrast was stark: Ilya, solid and steady, fully in command of the space and himself; Shane, exposed, waiting, his breath coming a little faster.

“On the bed,” Ilya instructed, his voice calm. “Lie back. Head on the pillow.”

Shane moved. The sheets were cool against his skin as he settled onto his back, his head sinking into the familiar pillow. He stared at the ceiling, listening to the soft sounds of Ilya moving to their closet. A click of a latch. The rustle of something being lifted.

The box was plain, unmarked. Ilya set it on the foot of the bed and opened the lid. Inside, nestled in soft cloth, were the tools of their private language. Ilya’s hands were sure as he lifted out several lengths of rope, a rich, soft red the color of wine. The fibers were smooth, not rough, chosen for sensation, not for bite.

Ilya came to the side of the bed, the ropes in his hands. “You remember the rules,” he said, not as a question, but as a recitation. “Your words are always heard. Our safeword is ‘red.’ If you cannot speak, tap my leg twice. Fast. Like this.” He demonstrated a rapid tap-tap on the mattress. “Do you understand?”

“Yes,” Shane said, his voice clearer than he expected.

“Good boy.”

Ilya took his right wrist first. He didn’t just tie it; he wrapped the rope in a pattern that was firm and secure, but with a careful space between the bonds and Shane’s skin. The sensation was strange—a constant, gentle pressure, a firm reminder of his position. Ilya secured the end to the sturdy post of the bed frame, then moved to the other side and repeated the process with his left wrist. Shane’s arms were stretched out, not uncomfortably, but with a definite

lack of freedom. The vulnerability was immediate and profound. His heart hammered against his ribs.

Next were his ankles. Ilya's hands were warm on his skin as he lifted each leg, wrapping the soft rope with the same efficient care, spreading Shane open before tying each ankle to the lower posts. Shane was now fully exposed, bound to their bed, the red ropes a vivid contrast against his skin and the pale sheets.

Ilya stood back for a moment, his gaze traveling the length of Shane's body. A low, approving sound hummed in his throat. "Beautiful," he breathed. He leaned over, his hands skimming up Shane's sides, making him jump at the contact. "So perfect for me." He kissed Shane's forehead, a benediction. "Now. The blindfold. Do you want it?"

The darkness. The removal of his last sense of orientation. It was the final step into the void where he couldn't overthink, couldn't watch and analyze. He could only feel. "Yes," Shane whispered.

"Good."

The blindfold was black, soft padded silk. Ilya fitted it over Shane's eyes, the world vanishing into a deep, velvety black. The knot was secure at the back of his head, not tight, but immovable. Panic, thin and sharp, tried to spike. He was immobilized. He was blind.

Then Ilya's hands were on him again, large and warm, sliding up his thighs, over his hips, up the taut muscles of his abdomen. The touch was possessive, reverent.

"Shhh, I have you," Ilya murmured, his voice close to Shane's ear. "You are so good. So good for me, Shane. Giving me this. Letting me see you like this." His hands continued their exploration, mapping the territory of Shane's body as if memorizing it anew. Calloused thumbs brushed over his hip bones, traced the lines of his obliques. "Every part of you is mine to admire tonight."

The words, the touch, began to override the panic. The emptiness behind the blindfold filled with sensation. Ilya's scent—clean skin, a hint of sweat from the day, his own unique musk—filled Shane's nose. He turned his head, seeking it.

Ilya's lips touched his chest, just over his heart. A soft, closed-mouth kiss. Then another, lower, on the firm plane of his abdomen. The kisses became open-mouthed, hot and damp, as Ilya worked his way down Shane's torso. He laved his tongue over a nipple, and Shane gasped, his back arching off the bed as much as the ropes allowed. The sensation was electric, a direct line to his groin. Ilya sucked the nub into his mouth, worrying it gently with his teeth, then soothing it with his tongue. He paid the same devoted attention to the other side, until Shane was squirming, soft moans falling from his lips.

"I love the sounds you make," Ilya whispered against his skin, his breath hot. "They are just for me."

He continued his journey downward, nuzzling into the trail of hair below Shane's navel. Shane could feel the heat of Ilya's face so close to where he was achingly hard, the fabric of

his briefs tented and damp at the tip. Ilya didn't touch him there yet. Instead, he moved to the side, his nose skimming along Shane's ribcage, into the hollow of his armpit. He inhaled deeply, a long, savoring drag.

"You smell like mine," Ilya growled, the vibration skittering across Shane's sensitive skin. "Sweat and soap and you. It drives me crazy."

Shane whimpered, his head thrashing lightly on the pillow. The intimacy of the act—the smelling—was almost more overwhelming than the kisses. It was animalistic, deeply personal, a claiming that bypassed thought entirely.

Finally, Ilya's hand settled over the bulge in Shane's briefs. Shane cried out, his hips jerking up into the touch. Ilya just held him there, a firm, steady pressure, his palm cradling Shane's length through the cotton.

"So eager," Ilya said, his voice thick with amusement and desire. He began to rub, a slow, maddening up-and-down motion that had Shane straining against his bonds. The rough friction of the fabric, the heat of Ilya's hand, the unbearable tease of it—it was exquisite torture. "You are so hard for me already. My good, responsive boy."

He kept rubbing, varying the pressure, sometimes a firm stroke, sometimes just a gentle cupping squeeze. His other hand roamed Shane's body, pinching a nipple, skating over his quivering stomach, gripping his thigh.

Shane's hips were still chasing the friction of Ilya's palm when the touch vanished. The cool air of the room hit the damp cotton of his briefs, a stark contrast that made him shudder. He heard the soft rustle of movement, then felt strong fingers hook into the waistband on either side of his hips.

There was no ceremony, no drawn-out tease. Ilya simply pulled the fabric down, peeling it away from Shane's skin in one smooth, efficient motion. The air hit his bare cock, already flushed and hard, a bead of moisture glistening at the tip. A full-body tremor rocked him, the vulnerability of being completely exposed, fully bound, crashing over him in a dizzying wave.

Then Ilya's hand was back, but not through fabric. It was skin on skin, warm and dry, wrapping around his shaft in a firm, possessive grip. Shane's back arched off the mattress with a sharp, punched-out gasp. The sensation was so much more—the direct heat, the slight roughness of Ilya's palm against his sensitive skin, the perfect pressure.

Ilya's thumb swiped over the slick head, spreading the wetness in a slow circle. The touch was electric, sparking up Shane's spine. He made a sound, low and broken, in the back of his throat.

"There he is," Ilya murmured, his voice a husky rasp close to Shane's hip. "All mine." His hand began to move, a slow, testing stroke from root to tip. He explored the weight of Shane's balls, cupping them gently, rolling them in his palm. The dual sensation—the firm stroke and the tender, careful hold—made Shane's thoughts scatter. He could only feel.

A moan tore from him, loud and unrestrained in the quiet room. It was too much, the direct contact after the teasing, the sheer intensity of being so completely at Ilya's mercy.

The hand stilled. Ilya's chuckle was a warm puff of air against Shane's inner thigh. "So loud, kotik. The neighbors will think I am hurting you." His thumb brushed over the head again, a maddeningly light touch. "And we are just getting started."

Shane panted, his chest rising and falling rapidly. He tried to form words, an apology, a plea, but nothing coherent came out.

"If you cannot be quiet," Ilya continued, his tone shifting into something softer, more deliberate, "then I will have to help you."

Shane heard the quiet sound of the box lid opening again. A faint, muffled clink of something being lifted. His heart hammered, a mix of apprehension and raw, pulsing need. He knew what was in that box.

Cool, smooth silicone brushed against his lips. He opened his mouth instinctively, and the solid sphere of the gag was placed on his tongue. The red strap followed, sliding into place behind his head, secured with a soft click. The world narrowed further. His hearing seemed to sharpen, every sound magnified—the rustle of sheets, Ilya's steady breathing, the frantic beat of his own heart. His own muffled sounds were trapped behind the ball, reduced to low, choked hums.

Ilya's fingers traced his lips, stretched around the gag. The touch was gentle, almost reverent. Then he leaned down and kissed him. It was absurd, beautiful—a soft, closed-mouth kiss pressed against the unforgiving silicone. It was a kiss on a muzzle, a gesture of affection that only emphasized his control. Shane whimpered into it, the vibration humming in his own skull.

"Good," Ilya whispered against his mouth. "Now you can just feel. Just take what I give you."

He didn't return to Shane's cock immediately. Instead, he began to kiss his way down Shane's body again, as if starting over. Each kiss was a brand, a slow, thorough re-mapping. His lips traveled over Shane's sternum, his navel, the jutting bones of his hips. Shane squirmed, the need coiling tighter, a live wire in his gut. The gag stifled his cries, turning them into desperate, nasal pleas.

Finally, Ilya's mouth hovered over his aching length. Shane could feel the heat of his breath, a tantalizing promise. He held his breath, every muscle taut.

The first touch wasn't his lips, but his tongue. A long, flat lick from the base to the very tip, gathering the moisture there. Shane's entire body jerked, a silent scream locked behind the gag. God.

Then Ilya's lips wrapped around the head. They were soft, wet, incredibly hot. He sucked, gently at first, then with more pressure, his tongue swirling around the sensitive ridge. The

sensation was blinding, a white-hot spike of pleasure that shot directly to Shane's core. He cried out, the sound a muffled, guttural roar.

Ilya took more of him, his mouth sinking down, his hand working the base in a synchronized rhythm. He was good at this—knew just how to use his tongue, just how much pressure to apply, when to suck hard and when to pull back to just the tip. Shane was lost in the wet, slick heat, his hips straining to fuck up into that perfect mouth, the ropes holding him back, forcing him to just receive.

Ilya deep-throated him once, swallowing him down until his nose pressed into the coarse hair at Shane's pelvis. Shane saw stars behind the blindfold, a supernova of sensation. Ilya pulled off with a soft, wet pop, then immediately moved lower, taking one of Shane's balls into his mouth, sucking gently, his tongue laving the sensitive skin.

It was too much. The buildup from the car, the interview, the careful undressing, the binding—it all coalesced into a tsunami of need at the base of Shane's spine. He was hurtling toward the edge, a tight, burning coil about to snap. He moaned a warning, a frantic, vibrating sound around the gag, his body bowing off the bed.

Just as the first flutter of orgasm ripped through him, he felt it—a loop of cool, stretchy silicone snap snug around the base of his cock and balls, cinching tight. The impending release slammed into a wall. The pleasure crested, crashed, but found no outlet. It reverberated through him, a shockwave of denied ecstasy that left him trembling violently, his cry a broken, frustrated thing against the ball gag.

Ilya released his balls, his breath coming in quick pants against Shane's inner thigh. "Ah, ah, kotik," he said, his voice thick with his own arousal. "Not yet. You cannot come yet. I have more for you."

Shane whimpered, a sound of pure, agonized want. The cock ring held him in a state of heightened, painful fullness, every pulse of blood a reminder of what had been withheld.

He heard the click of a bottle cap. The sound of lube, thick and slick, being squeezed out. Then a warm, slippery substance was being smoothed over his entire length, from the tight ring at the base to the dripping head. The touch was clinical, thorough, adding a new layer of sensation to his oversensitive skin.

Then a new pressure surrounded him. It was firm, yielding, a textured sleeve that fitted itself around his cock. He recognized the shape, the feeling—a fleshlight. Ilya guided it onto him, a slow, steady push until he was fully sheathed inside the toy. The internal nubs and ridges were a maddening contrast to the smooth heat of Ilya's mouth. It was strange, artificial, and incredibly intense.

Ilya's hand wrapped around the exterior of the toy and began to move it. A slow, dragging pull almost all the way off, then a smooth push back down. The pace was agonizingly measured. Each stroke dragged those textured walls over every hypersensitive inch of him. The cock ring kept him painfully hard, amplifying every tiny sensation into something huge.

“That’s it,” Ilya murmured. His free hand stroked Shane’s hip, his stomach, a calming counterpoint to the relentless stimulation. “You take it so well. My good boy.” The toy moved up, down. A twist at the top. “You do not have to worry about anything out there. Not the reporters, not the fans, not the lights.” Up, down. A torturous, perfect rhythm. “In here, there is only this. Only me. And I will always be here for you. No matter what they say, or think. You are mine.”

The words washed over Shane, seeping into the spaces between the sharp jolts of pleasure-pain. The world beyond the bedroom, beyond the blindfold and gag, began to feel distant, unreal. The only truths were the bite of the ropes, the tight grip of the ring, the slick glide of the toy, and Ilya’s voice, anchoring him, claiming him.

He floated in a space of pure sensation, the anxiety that had been a knot in his chest now completely unraveled, replaced by a heavy, drugging buzz of submission.

He was so focused on the feeling around his cock that the first touch at his entrance made him jolt. Cool, slick lube, being spread with a single, circling finger. His breath hitched behind the gag. Ilya’s finger pressed gently, then slipped inside, just to the first knuckle.

Shane’s body clenched instinctively, then relaxed on a long, shuddery exhale. Ilya worked him open with that one finger, scissoring gently, coating his inner walls with more lube. It was a stretch, a faint burn, but it felt right. Necessary. A second finger joined the first, sliding in deeper, crooking just so.

A low, ragged moan escaped Shane. The dual stimulation was overwhelming—the constant, rhythmic motion on his cock, and now the probing, stretching fingers inside him. His mind was blissfully, utterly blank. There was no room for anything else.

Ilya added a third finger, stretching him carefully, thoroughly. The burn intensified, then faded into a deep, full ache. Shane was panting through his nose, his body pliant, open, waiting.

The fingers withdrew. He heard the sound of Ilya moving, fabric sliding. The weight on the bed shifted. Then Ilya’s hands were on his thighs, pushing his legs wider, the ropes at his ankles allowing the spread. The head of Ilya’s cock, thick and blunt, nudged against him, slick with lube.

Ilya leaned over him, his body a solid, warm presence. He kissed Shane’s shoulder, his neck, just below the line of the blindfold. “Ready?” he breathed, the word hot against Shane’s skin.

Shane nodded frantically, a muffled, desperate sound of assent vibrating in his throat.

Ilya pushed in.

It was a slow, inexorable invasion. The stretch was immense, stealing Shane’s breath. He felt every inch as Ilya filled him, a thick, hot pressure that seemed to reach into the very center of him. He was so full, stretched so tight around Ilya, the cock ring and the toy on his own cock making the sensation almost too intense to bear. Ilya bottomed out, his hips flush against

Shane's ass, his balls a heavy weight against his skin. He held there, buried to the hilt, and Shane felt him tremble with the effort of his control.

For a moment, there was only the joined heat, the ragged sound of their breathing, the profound intimacy of being connected so completely.

Then Ilya began to move.

He pulled back, almost all the way out, then pushed back in with that same slow, deliberate pace. And as he moved his hips, his hand on the fleshlight moved in perfect synchronization. The toy slid up Shane's cock as Ilya withdrew, and sank down as Ilya pushed back in.

The coordination was devastating. Shane was being fucked in tandem, filled and stroked in a mirrored rhythm that shattered any last semblance of thought. It was a feedback loop of pleasure, each thrust stoking the fire lit by the toy's stroke, each stroke amplifying the deep, driving fullness of Ilya inside him.

Ilya's pace began to increase, gradually. The slow, deep thrusts became more urgent, the strokes on the toy keeping perfect time. The slap of skin, the wet, slick sounds of the toy, Shane's choked, gagged moans—it all merged into a symphony of their joining.

Shane was gone. He was a vessel, overflowing with sensation. The meditative blankness had transformed into a state of pure, fucked-out bliss. Every nerve was alight. He could feel the sweat-slick slide of Ilya's chest against his own, the bite of the ropes with every driving thrust, the impossible tightness of the ring, the maddening texture of the toy. And through it all, Ilya's presence, solid and real, the center of his universe.

"Look at you," Ilya grunted, his voice strained, his accent thickening. "Taking me so deep. Taking everything I give you. Moy prekrasnyy mal'chik. My beautiful boy."

His thrusts became harder, faster, losing their perfect rhythm in favor of pure, driving need. The hand on the toy matched the new tempo, a frantic, delicious friction. Shane felt the pressure inside him swell, a tidal wave building from his toes, up his spine, concentrated in his trapped, aching cock. He was moaning constantly now, a high, continuous whine behind the gag.

Ilya was close. Shane could feel it in the erratic jerk of his hips, in the way his fingers dug into Shane's thigh. "Shane… ya idu…"

That was all it took. The sound of his name, raw and wrecked on Ilya's lips, broke the last dam. The orgasm tore through Shane with a violence that blurred his vision behind the blindfold. It was endless, wracking, the pleasure so intense it bordered on pain as his cock pulsed violently, hopelessly, into the constricting sleeve of the toy. His body convulsed against the ropes, a silent scream locked in his throat.

The feeling of Shane clamping down around him in rhythmic pulses sent Ilya over the edge. With a final, deep thrust, he buried himself as far as he could go and stilled. A hot, wet rush flooded Shane's core as Ilya came, a searing claim that echoed the explosions of his own release.

They hung there for suspended moments, joined, shuddering, breathing in ragged, syncopated gasps. The world slowly seeped back in—the feel of the damp sheets, the ache in his shoulders from straining against the ropes, the overwhelming scent of sex and sweat.

Ilya carefully pulled the toy off Shane's cock, the sensation a sharp, over-sensitive twinge. Shane heard a soft, wet sound as it was set aside. Then Ilya's gentle fingers were at the base of his shaft, loosening the cock ring. As it came off, a final, weak pulse of pleasure shuddered through him, and he went completely boneless.

Ilya pulled out slowly, and Shane felt the hot, sticky evidence of his climax begin to trickle out of him. He was too spent to care.

He felt the bed dip as Ilya moved. Gentle hands went to the back of his head, working the clasp of the ball gag. It came free, and Shane's jaw ached as he let it fall open, dragging in a deep, clean breath of air. Next, the blindfold was untied and lifted away.

The lamplight was painfully bright. Shane blinked, his eyes wet, his vision swimming. Ilya's face swam into focus above him, flushed, his hair damp with sweat, his blue eyes dark and soft. He looked utterly wrecked and completely satisfied.

He didn't speak. He simply leaned down and kissed Shane, deep and slow and thorough, a reclamation that was tender after the ferocity of what they'd shared. Shane tasted himself on Ilya's tongue, and it only made him kiss back harder.

Ilya broke the kiss and began to work on the knots at his wrists. His movements were slow, careful, mindful of the marks the ropes had left. As each limb was freed, he massaged the feeling back into it, rubbing warmth into Shane's skin.

When Shane was completely loose, Ilya gathered him up, pulling him against his chest, turning them so they lay on their sides, tangled together in the damp sheets. Shane's body felt like liquid, every muscle humming with exhaustion and satisfaction. He buried his face in Ilya's neck, breathing him in.

Ilya's hand stroked his back, long, soothing passes from his shoulders to the base of his spine. After a long while, Ilya shifted just enough to reach over to the nightstand. He picked up the fleshlight, holding it up between them in the dim light.

Shane's come, thick and white, was slowly oozing out of the opening, dripping in a slow, viscous string onto the sheets below.

Ilya smiled, a tired, smug, utterly affectionate curve of his lips. He brought the toy close and kissed Shane's temple. "See?" he whispered, his voice raw. "I knew you needed a release."

Ilya moved first, the shift in the mattress as he got up a soft protest in the quiet room. Shane kept his eyes closed, listening to the familiar sounds—Ilya's bare feet on the hardwood, the click of the ensuite door, the quiet rush of water in the sink. He floated in the warm, heavy aftermath, every muscle loose and humming.

The bed dipped again. A warm, damp cloth touched his stomach first, and Shane flinched, a soft gasp escaping him. The washcloth was pleasantly hot, and Ilya's touch was methodical, gentle. He wiped the sticky mess from Shane's abdomen, the cooling trails of lube and sweat from his thighs. The cloth moved lower, cleaning him with a care that made Shane's throat feel tight.

Ilya's fingers brushed over the faint marks left by the ropes on his wrists. "Okay?" Ilya murmured, his voice a low rumble in the quiet.

"Mmm," Shane managed, the sound barely more than a breath. More than okay.

Ilya finished, setting the cloth aside. He slid back into bed, his body a solid line of heat against Shane's side. Without a word, he opened his arm. Shane shifted, settling his head on Ilya's shoulder, his cheek pressed against the smooth, warm skin of his chest. He could hear the steady, strong beat of Ilya's heart. Thump-thump. Thump-thump. A metronome in the dark.

He let his eyes drift shut again, breathing in the clean scent of Ilya's skin, now mixed with the faint, lingering traces of sex and his own cologne. The last tight coil of tension, the one he hadn't even realized was still there, finally unwound. The world outside—the bright lights, the probing questions, the watchful eyes—felt like a distant, hazy dream.

He lay there for a long time, just listening to that heartbeat, feeling the rise and fall of Ilya's chest beneath him. The silence between them wasn't empty; it was full, a thick, comfortable blanket woven from trust and exhaustion.

"Thank you," Shane whispered into the dark. The words felt small, inadequate for the enormity of what he felt.

Ilya's hand, which had been resting on his own stomach, lifted. His fingers carded through Shane's hair, the touch so light it was almost a tickle. He scratched gently at Shane's scalp, the way you might soothe a cat.

"You do not have to say thank you," Ilya said, his voice soft but firm. "It is my pleasure. My honor." His fingers trailed down, tracing the shell of Shane's ear. "To help you. To see you… let go. To be the one you trust with this. It makes me happy, kotik. Happier than any win on the ice."

Shane's breath caught, but not in a bad way. It was a sweet, aching pressure behind his ribs. He nuzzled closer, pressing a soft, closed-mouth kiss against Ilya's collarbone.

"I love you," he whispered, the confession muffled against skin.

Ilya's chest vibrated with a quiet chuckle. The hand in his hair stilled, cupping the back of his head. "Of course you do," he said, the smug affection in his tone so familiar it made Shane smile. Then his voice softened, turning serious, raw. "I love you, too. More than anything."

They fell silent again. The streetlight from the window painted a faint, orange stripe across the foot of the bed. Shane watched the dust motes dance in the sliver of light, his mind

blissfully quiet. The anxiety that had been a snarled knot in his gut since the interview studio was gone, dissolved by sweat and sensation and this—this profound, quiet safety.

Ilya's thumb began to trace slow, absent circles on his shoulder. "The marks will fade by morning," he said, his thoughts clearly running along the same path. "A little concealer if you are worried for practice."

"I'm not worried," Shane said, and he meant it. The marks felt like a secret, a proof. Something real that existed beneath the jerseys and the media narratives.

"Good." Ilya's hand slid lower, down the plane of Shane's back, coming to rest at the dip just above his waistband. His touch was possessive, warm. "You were incredible tonight. The way you let me… the way you took everything. It was beautiful."

Heat bloomed on Shane's cheeks. Praise always did that to him, especially from Ilya, especially after a scene. It lit a different kind of fire, a low, smoldering ember of warmth and want.

"It… helps," Shane said softly. "The structure. Knowing what you want. Letting you decide. It shuts off the noise."

"I know." Ilya's fingers flexed against his skin. "That is why we do it. Not just for the… the sex. For this." He gestured between them with his free hand, though Shane couldn't see it. "This quiet."

Shane nodded, his head rubbing against Ilya's shoulder. He felt Ilya's lips press against the top of his head, a lingering kiss.

"Do you think you can sleep?" Ilya asked after another comfortable pause.

"Yeah. I think so."

"Good. You should." Ilya's hand began its slow, soothing path up and down Shane's spine again. "Big practice tomorrow."

A faint thrill, the good kind, shot through Shane at the mention of practice. Of competing. On the ice, their rivalry was a real, living thing—a clash of skill and will that was as honest as anything in their lives. The thought of facing Ilya across the center line tomorrow, the chase, the check, the potential for a sly, hidden smirk behind their cages… it stirred something in him. The ember of warmth glowed a little brighter.

He shifted slightly, turning his face more into Ilya's neck. His lips brushed the sensitive skin just below his jaw. He felt Ilya's breath hitch, just a tiny catch in the steady rhythm.

"What are you thinking about?" Ilya murmured, his voice dropping another octave.

"Practice," Shane whispered, letting his teeth graze the spot ever so slightly. "Hitting you into the glass."

Ilya's low laugh was a dark, delicious sound in the quiet room. The hand on his back stilled, then slid lower, fingertips slipping just beneath the elastic of his briefs to rest on the swell of his ass. A simple, claiming touch.

"Is that so?" Ilya's voice was a teasing challenge. "You will try."

"I will," Shane breathed against his skin, the promise feeling like a dare.

Ilya's grip tightened, just for a second. A faint, delicious pressure. "Then I will be waiting," he said. His tone shifted, from playful to something more intense, more promising. "And after… when we come home, and you are all sore and tired from trying to knock me down…" He leaned his head down, his lips brushing Shane's ear. "Maybe I will put you right back here. Just like this. And see how much fight you have left then."

A full-body shiver raced through Shane, hot and cold at once. The image was vivid, immediate: the exhaustion of a hard practice, the ache in his muscles, and Ilya's hands on him again, guiding him back into that perfect, blank surrender. The ember in his gut flared, a lick of real flame. He was suddenly, acutely aware of the weight of Ilya's hand on him, the heat of his body, the promise in his words.

He didn't have a reply. He just pressed another open-mouthed kiss to Ilya's neck, letting the action speak for him.

Ilya hummed in approval, a deep, satisfied sound. He didn't move to do anything more. He just held him, his hand a warm weight, his breath evening out again. The tension simmered between them, sweet and heavy, a promise for tomorrow.

"Sleep, kotik," Ilya whispered, his own voice thick with a drowsy kind of want. "You will need your strength."

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