

handle with care

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by [anincompletelist \(soldouthaz\)](#)

Summary

So he's there in the hotel room, and Ilya Rozanov has him pushed up against the door, and he's saying all sorts of filthy things that should send Shane running and instead very much make him want to drop to his knees, which is also a relatively *new* feeling—and he won't quit grabbing Shane's face.

It's the first time Shane realizes it's going to be something that irreparably alters him for anyone else. It feels like a betrayal, somehow, that this is happening on home soil.

Notes

IT'S ME AGAIN :D

i have no explanation for this it just kind of happened. little bit of necessary hockey stick anatomy if you're unfamiliar: there's the grip or the handle or the 'butt', the long part is called the shaft (ha), and the part that hits the puck is called the blade. i think that's really all the terminology you need to understand but let me know if anything's unclear!

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

i.

The first time Shane realizes it's going to be something that irreparably alters him for anyone else, they're in a hotel room in Toronto. It feels like a betrayal, somehow, that this is happening on home soil.

And maybe it's too early for him to be having any sort of revelations when it's only the first time he's ever even had his hand inside another guy's underwear, but Shane's brain has never worked the way he sort of thinks it's supposed to. He's stopped trying to change it. Mostly.

So he's there in the hotel room, and Ilya Rozanov has him pushed up against the door, and he's saying all sorts of filthy things that should send Shane running and instead very much make him want to drop to his knees, which is also a relatively *new* feeling—and he won't quit grabbing Shane's face.

The kissing, the talking, the attractive body in front of him and the novelty of a cock in his mouth for the first time, and Shane can't even get past Rozanov's fingers spread wide over his jaw, thumb digging in just above his incisors on one side. Rozanov moves quickly, eyes and hands a blur like he's trying to drink in as much of Shane at once, so fast that when he grabs Shane's face to move him around it's more of a—it's sort of like, if he thinks about it the right way—

Like a *tap*. Like. Maybe something a little more than that.

It's enough to take Shane's focus, usually stretched paper thin and drawn in all different directions, registering sounds and senses and surroundings all at once all the time, and narrow it down to right here. Just this moment.

The little noise of greedy fingers meeting blood-warm flesh. That slightly delayed, subtle flinch that Shane feels ripple through his face each time. His own reaction to it, the sharp inhale and the shaky exhale that feels as close to relief as he ever seems to get. The laxness of his perpetually tense muscles afterward, so rare that he hardly registers it as something like *relaxed* at all.

He wants to ask for more. Wants to have Rozanov pull his thumb out of his mouth and tap the flats of his fingers against his cheek harder. Wants it to sting a little. He wants it so badly and so suddenly, in fact, that his eyes burn.

“So overwhelmed already, Hollander,” he purrs, all thick with arousal and syllables bending to wrap around his accent, Shane's brain repeating his own name in that tone like a mantra to keep himself grounded. *Hollander. Hollander. Hollander.* He nods.

Very carefully, he files this *other* feeling into a box for *Shane* to deal with. He can think about it—or not, preferably—sometime when he's alone, when he can examine it from every possible angle and either logic his way out of it or into what's sure to be a spiral.

“Come here,” he rasps against Shane’s mouth, pulling him toward the bed. Shane stops thinking for a minute and goes.

Rozanov lands a neat, tidy little slap of his palm on Shane’s abdomen after he swallows his come, and Shane’s pretty sure he could’ve gotten it going again only a handful of minutes later if Rozanov wasn’t already out the door.

ii.

He does it again in Vegas.

Which is irritating, because Shane’s already upset with him. One feeling is already a lot to handle when it feels like he *can’t fucking get away from Rozanov* even when they’re on different continents, but then he’s marching after Shane and barging his way into the bathroom like he’s owed Shane’s attention, cocky and unbothered, and Shane finds he’s not a fan of being horny *and* angry at the same time.

If he hadn’t gone right for the face, he thinks, Shane might’ve been safe. But of course he does, because it’s like Rozanov has X-ray vision made specifically to see right through him.

His big hand touches Shane’s jaw, callouses pressed into his cheek, thumb stretched over his chin to the other side. Greedy. Confident, like he knows what it does to him.

Do it, Shane thinks. He needs something he can’t quite put his finger on—needs Rozanov to dig his nails in, to put his face where he wants it, to peel his fingers back and just barely let the cool air seep in before they land, splayed and perfect, on his cheek again.

Shane doesn’t spend much time looking at himself, but he thinks if he had the shape of Rozanov’s fingers on his skin he’d find himself in front of a lot more reflective surfaces.

“Let’s make a deal,” Rozanov murmurs, thumb pressed to his chin. “If you win MVP tonight, I will do whatever you want.”

God. Please. Shane wants it so bad he can *taste* it. He can picture it now, on his knees in some fancy hotel suite, the shape Rozanov’s mouth would make when his hand struck skin, the things he’d say, that look in his eyes he gets when he’s in control.

“And if you win?” Shane manages.

Rozanov—beautiful, terrible, *infuriating* fucking Rozanov—grabs his face again and kisses him hard enough to make up for the last few months, sucking Shane’s anger out of him through his teeth.

When he pulls back and leaves with a bid of good luck, he taps Shane's cheek twice with his palm. It's condescending, Shane thinks. He fucking burns with it.

He wants to win the award more for what Rozanov's going to do to him more than he does for himself.

iii.

Rozanov buys a penthouse in Boston, and he spans Shane for the first time over his pristine, black and gray marbled countertops just seconds after Shane asks, for a second time, who designed them, like retribution for paying more attention to the interior design than him.

"Fuck," he spits, jolted harder into the cold, unforgiving surface when Rozanov's palm comes down again. "*Shit*, Rozanov."

"You take it so well," he praises. It drips through Shane like honey, makes his panting breath fog up the marble. He's seconds away from drooling on it. It's a health hazard. Shane won't be able to eat on it after this.

It's worth it.

"You want more?" Rozanov asks, palm rubbing lazy, possessive circles over the last few stinging hits. Shane nods, pushing up on his toes.

"More. Please."

He sounds fucking humiliating. His voice is hoarse, he's sort of crying, and his pants and underwear—*Rozanov's* pants and underwear, really, borrowed while Shane's are in the wash—are down around his ankles. His bare ass is on display to Rozanov and his massive wall of floor to ceiling windows overlooking the treeline, and the tiny thrill of *public display* is making him hot in a way that he hadn't expected. Vulnerable, maybe. The sort of powerlessness that reduces him to nothing but need.

At least Rozanov likes him that way.

"Fucking—*shit*," Shane hisses when his palm abruptly lifts and comes down again, shuddering as white hot pain floods in and registers as pleasure instead. He grips the edge of the countertop with white knuckles.

"I thought you were smart, Hollander," Rozanov brats behind him, landing another swift hit up near his hip, down low again, teasing that line that meets his thigh and making Shane cry out. "Look at you now. Only know four words. *Fuck. Shit. More. Please.*"

Rozanov's voice shifts and heightens to mimic Shane's accent as he bends over him, breath hot on Shane's skin when he captures an ear lobe between his teeth. His touch turns sickeningly sweet for a minute, stroking soft fingers up and down his side while he catches his breath.

He drags his lips over Shane's shoulder, the back of his neck, the side of his flushed cheek that isn't pressed into the marble.

"Oh, but I forgot one, didn't I?" he rumbles into Shane's hair. "Remind me, Hollander—what is the other?"

Shane sucks spit back up into his mouth and tries to close it, tries to make his lips move around the words in a hopeless attempt at a guess. But he must get it wrong or not actually manage to say much at all, because next he knows, Rozanov's body heat is gone and his hand is landing square in the middle of Shane's ass again, reawakening all the fantastic, devastating bursts of sensation he's been working on all afternoon. His body lights up like a switch being flipped, eyes rolling as his dick twitches below the counter.

Isn't it terrifying, he thinks, that no one else will ever be able to give this to him?

"*Rozanov!*" he cries out as he shakes, steady hands catching him before he can slip to the floor.

It's the right answer.

"Good boy," Rozanov commends. Shane can feel the outline of his cock pushing against the reddened sin, flush with his handprints and now with a bit of his precome too. There's something muttered in Russian, and then, "*Fuck*, Shane. So good."

"Ilya," Shane echoes blindly.

He guesses, even with his head empty and ass stinging, he does know something else after all.

iv.

Rose Landry is beautiful, and Shane wishes desperately that he could want her.

He does, he guesses, on a surface level. He wants the aesthetic of it. He wants the security that being with her would come with. It means that box inside of his head, the one for Shane and not Hollander that he's shoved down deep, would never really have to be opened or parsed through. For once in his life, he could take the easy way out without having to fight, to prove, to push, to pretend.

But Rose calls him *Shane*, and it's wrong. It's like she means to be talking to someone else. Shane has to remind himself that it's him sometimes.

She's pretty. She's surprisingly kind for how popular she is. Down to earth in a way that Shane thinks his parents might like, can picture them all having heated conversations about hockey until late in the night.

Rose is soft. Everything about her. From her name to the look she gives him when she knows he isn't telling her something to the way her body wraps around him when he tries to fuck her and fails spectacularly.

She's soft about that, too. It's awful. Shane hates her a little for it in a fucked up sort of way that he knows isn't real nor right, but really, it just makes him hate himself. The way he wishes she were something different. Something he needed.

He doesn't mind softness, not really. But she can't give him the other parts, no matter how much he wishes she could. No matter how much he wishes he didn't need them in the first place.

"I just don't know that we can keep trying," she tells him, sympathetic frown curving her petal-pink lips.

And he gets it, honestly. He's not sure which part of it he's supposed to be apologizing for—only that he *does* owe her one, probably. For wasting her time. For not trying harder. For getting himself into this thing with her knowing pretty much from the beginning that he'd used her to prove something to himself that he'd always known, deep down in that buried box, would never change.

Even now, he craves something sharper. Wishes that she would yell at him or curse him out instead of offering understanding and friendship.

Maybe though, Shane figures, he could use that too.

"You're not getting rid of me, Shane Hollander," she warns as she goes to leave outside the restaurant, with her pretty hair and her soft smile and a painted fingernail pointed in his direction.

He mimes catching her air-kiss as she ducks into the back of an SUV, and something inside of him relaxes at this too.

He's on his back in a hotel room in Florida, a couple of pillows shoved underneath his hips, Ilya's a blur between his thighs while he fucks him.

It's intense. Always is, with him, but this time feels like more. After being apart for so long, Shane's confession and Ilya's opening up about his family, it's like everything's been pulled right up to the surface, every touch a lifeline instead of an indulgence.

And the fact that he keeps exhaling *Shane* right up against his cheek like he's been waiting years to say it. The fact that Shane can say *Ilya* back without running this time.

They spend a good amount of time kissing deeply and wetly between relentless rolls of Ilya's hips, but as heat inevitably builds, he sits up on his knees to look down at Shane below. One of his knees is hooked around Ilya's hip but the other is dragged up onto Ilya's shoulder, knee folded and ankle in the air behind him while his back arches to hold the position.

The burn feels good. Shane's missed it so much he could cry. He might already be actually, with the way Ilya keeps touching his face. He likes watching it, likes watching Shane's mouth open around nothing each time Ilya rakes his nails cruelly over his nipples until his cock dribbles precome onto his hip.

On one pass, Ilya doesn't stop at his chest, which is already blooming with mesmerizing pink and red lines. He keeps going, dragging his nails down and down until they're grazing the sensitive skin between thigh and groin, and with his current position, Shane can't do anything but grit his teeth and take it like the *good boy* Ilya keeps saying he is.

Shane assumes his dick will be taken up by the heat of Ilya's fist any second now, and he'll come bucking up into it like he has so many times before. He's ached for this not only all weekend but since the moment he walked out in Boston, and he's more than ready to take all that Ilya's willing to give him, even if this is all he ever gets.

So he surprises even himself when his own voice cuts through the intense quiet that's surrounded them since Ilya first slipped inside. "I need—"

Ilya's eyes snap up to his, dark and all consuming, sweat on his temples and lips pink with Shane's spit. "What is it. Tell me."

He's said that before, teasingly. Taunting him because it was amusing and he wanted a reaction. It feels different this time.

"I *need*," Shane says again, this time a full thought on its own, eyes burning as he tries to articulate something he can't put words to. He whines, too far gone to be humiliated about it, and Ilya bends down to kiss him hard.

"I know what you need," he says, panting against Shane's mouth.

And then he leans up again, takes his palm off of Shane's hip and brings it down hard against the strained muscle of Shane's inner thigh that's still flung over his shoulder.

“*Fuck!*” Shane yells, louder than he should. He’s twisting in the sheets, riding a high that makes him shake all over. His cock bobs between his legs with his movements as Ilya holds him down and does it again, two quick ones this time, and Shane sobs. “Again, again, Ilya, *again.*”

The insides of his thighs burn as Ilya layers the hits across the sensitive skin. They aren’t even particularly hard but the mix of sensation makes him dizzy—the collision of flat fingers, the scratch of sharp, blunt nails, the intermittent sting of Ilya’s teeth nipping at the island of his ankle near his shoulder.

He’s ruined. He’ll never be able to be with anyone else but Ilya. It wouldn’t even be fair.

Ilya lands a final slap to the inside of his thigh, bends to land one sharp over his nipple, ends up on the side of his face, his cheek stinging with the kiss of his fingers.

Shane screams Ilya’s name back into his mouth no matter who’s listening. They should all know, he thinks deliriously as he starts to come, cock jerking without anything touching it—he wants the entire damn world to know that Ilya will have left a mark on him long after the bruises fade.

+i.

Shane’s not used to asking for things. So he doesn’t.

He’s not sure when the fantasy first started, only that it’s festered inside of him for some years now, stirring up again every time they’re on the ice together. Or off of it, really. Ilya has a way of making his thoughts a little X-rated.

It comes up in conversation after a game earlier in the last season, when they were tipsy and in the same city and had another suite to themselves for some twelve hours or so. Well. *Ilya* had been tipsy. Shane had been hopped up on nothing but excess adrenaline, ginger ale, and that odd burst of confidence that Ilya inspires in him when they’re around each other.

Tipsy Ilya has a filthy fucking mouth.

Things inevitably devolved into talking about sex; what they liked, didn’t like, their favorite memories together and the ones they wish they could redo or get better at. And then they’d arrived at fantasies.

“*I don’t have any, like, bucket list items,*” Shane had insisted, glancing down at his lap.

“Ah. You looked away. Now I know you are lying,” Ilya teased. “Come on. I don’t need a list—tell me one thing you want that you have never told anyone else.”

So he’d taken the chance.

And. Like. When *else* would Shane have brought up that he wants Ilya to hit him in the cock with his stick?

“No, no, let me get this straight,” he’d said, setting down his glass, “you want me to hit you—on your dick—with the same thing I’ve used to beat you with on the ice?”

Shane blinked. *“Yeah.”*

With a tilt of his head, Ilya’s eyes narrowed.

“Why.”

“I think it’d be hot,” Shane answered honestly.

“Is not the same as hitting ass or face,” Ilya reasoned, suddenly sobering. *“It would be different. We would have to talk about it.”*

“I mean, I think we’ve gotten pretty good at that lately.”

They really have. Shane thinks this is probably the most they’ve ever communicated with each other, and it seems to be working so far.

“The hitting,” Ilya had gone on, *“you do not like it because you believe you are bad, yes?”*

Shane thought about it for a minute. *“It’s not really like that for me. It’s more like...there’s so much pressure, you know? And when you do this, it all just—snaps. I can breathe again.”*

He remembers already being hot just thinking about it. He’s positive Ilya caught onto the flush in his face, the way his words were breathier than they should’ve been. He’d been hard when Ilya held out a hand, beckoning him into his lap.

“We will have safeword, yes?”

Shane smiled. *“Sure.”*

“And you will tell me if I am doing it wrong.”

“You won’t do it wrong.”

“I want to get it right,” Ilya insisted. *“For you.”*

And so a plan had formed.

The blade of the stick has Ilya's initials on it. Shane can feel them every time it whistles through the air and lands on his ass.

They're in Lanaudière at the cottage with the blinds lowered and all the furniture in the living room shoved out of the way, the sounds of nighttime dull outside the windows, insignificant compared to the ones coming from inside the house.

"Fuck, you look good wearing my name," Ilya marvels, syllables long and low and rough. Shane arches further under the praise, ass in the air, cheek resting against the rug they'd ordered especially for him to kneel on for however long it took.

That's still the plan, unless he taps out: Ilya will give him hits in varying pressure and locations until he comes. Shane's not allowed to touch his dick, and he's not allowed to run away unless he uses his safeword.

They've only been at it for less than a half hour, but Shane's pretty sure he's not going to need it.

He's past the point where Ilya expects him to talk much, already sinking into that pleasant haze of nothingness that the pain brings, buoyed by Ilya's own warm voice as it douses him in praise and filth in equal measure.

And orders.

"Wider," Ilya says, tapping the blade of the stick against the insides of his thighs. With a low moan, Shane drops his head further between his shoulders and widens the stance of his knees a little on the carpet until Ilya hums approvingly.

He should be expecting it when the stick comes down against the back of his thighs, but he still screams.

The pain is so *bright* like this, like a starburst erupting behind Shane's fluttering eyelids. Nothing exists outside of this room, outside of Ilya, outside of his body that he can actually *hear* for once without distractions.

"Good?" Ilya asks. He's touching Shane now, up by his head, fingers pushing into his hair and rubbing at the roots. Shane nods, pushes into the weight.

Another thing he loves about the pain is how much softer it makes everything else in comparison.

"Not too hard?"

Shane shakes his head. With a gentle squeeze to the back of his neck, Ilya's hand runs down the length of his bare back until he can't feel it anymore.

The stick whistles again, sharp and short, and lands in a dull thud against Shane's inner thigh. His entire body rocks forward with the hit, like his cock thinks something will have

magically appeared for him to rut against since the last time he tried it.

But, fuck. Ilya's cruel little chuckle never fucking gets old.

"You bruise much easier here," he dictates, and Shane flinches harder at the sweet stroke of knuckles over the stinging skin than he had the initial hit. He's pretty sure he whimpers. Ilya squeezes his hip when he stands again. "You look so pretty in pink, yes?"

The stick swings again, this time on the other thigh and up a little closer to where his cock hangs, hard and wet at the tip between his shaking legs.

He whines loud, something that might vaguely be Ilya's name, and Ilya shushes him, petting at the reddened skin of his ass and tracing over a set of his own initials.

Time bleeds as he layers other hits between his ass and his knees, some on the backs of his thighs and other curving around toward the inside. Shane shakes so hard it feels like he's vibrating each time the wind from the stick moving through the air hits his cock, closer and closer as the minutes tick by.

Each time Shane thinks he's finally going to make contact, muscles clenched and balls heavy and aching between his thighs, Ilya pulls him back again with soft pets or sweet words until he calms down.

This time, he flips the stick around and prods the butt of it against Shane's asshole, the rubbery grip slipping and sliding, wet with Shane's sweat. The edge of it catches just barely at his rim.

"Maybe one day I will fuck you like this, ah?" Ilya prompts.

Shane groans loud enough that it echoes.

Another lighter round of smacks falls along his inner thighs, shorter and quicker this time, less recovery in between to catch his breath. Shane rocks forward helplessly after each one, then forces himself back into place hurriedly for more. He's got white-knuckled fists full of the soft fabric of the rug.

His tongue feels heavy in his mouth, words far away, but he's in the midst of trying to pull himself back enough to beg for it when Ilya switches his aim slightly and instead of hitting right up against the top part of Shane's inner thigh like he had been, he gives Shane's balls a tap with the blade instead.

"*F-fuck*," Shane erupts, hazy and frayed at the edges.

"Talk to me," Ilya demands.

"I—" he pants, still shivering through the aftershocks as he rocks back and forth on nothing. "Good. S'good, Il'ya, *please*—"

"Do not come yet," is all the warning he gets before the stick moves again.

Shane's thighs threaten to twitch closed when the blade taps them again, but he makes himself keep them open. Ilya makes another appreciative noise, weighing them almost casually on the flat side of the blade. He lifts them up close to Shane's ass and then abruptly drops them a few times over, Shane's muffled sobs bouncing off the walls with each pass.

It's like whiplash when Ilya switches back to his thighs and ass, tapping lightly until the tension uncoils in Shane's gut again enough to breathe steady.

And then, again, the blade comes down against the back of his balls. This time hard enough to make them—and the rest of Shane's body—jolt forward.

Fuck. That pain is new, surprising, different. Shane kind of wants to fall over into the fetal position and have a good cry, and he kind of wants to turn around and yell red-faced obscenities at Ilya as if he hadn't asked him specifically *for* this. He thinks both might be pretty cathartic.

But more than any of that, he wants to follow this golden thread of *too much* and find out what's on the other side, balance on it until he tips off an edge higher than he's ever been before.

He forces his trembling thighs back open and pushes back for more. Ilya sucks in a breath behind him.

"Good boy, Shane."

It continues like that. Ilya inspecting him with the blade, a couple of intense hits to his balls, a series of lighter ones in other places until he calms down again. But Shane can take more of the hits between his legs each time Ilya does it, body floating on a drug that makes pain feel like bliss, and when Ilya deems it enough, he gets a different kind of reward.

The dull edge of the blade returns to prod lightly at Shane's over sensitive sac, but it doesn't swat at him this time. Shane grows restless the more it caresses him, getting so bold as to try to grind against it until Ilya gives him a hit on the backside for his eagerness. Shane whimpers at the reopening of an old sting and settles again.

His breath stops and holds when the hard carbon fiber traces along the underside of his cock, thoroughly cleaned but still subtly roughened from years of use and sentimentality. Shane briefly gets lost in the idea of it, of how badly he wants to be the same thing; something that has been Ilya's for so long and in so many ways that it can't ever go back to the way it'd been before him.

Ilya shoves the blade up further, and the sticky head of Shane's cock smears against it. He chokes on a noise, face twisted up like he might sob again and gut tight with need. He could come like this, he thinks deliriously—just bump up against the engraving of Ilya's initials until he's spent and shaking and a mess on the floor for Ilya to clean up.

And then, just barely, Ilya pulls back, a lewd string of Shane's excitement bridging the growing gap between his cock and the blade. Before he can even process it, it taps firmly against the underside of the head, electricity shooting up Shane's spine.

He chokes, tears filling his eyes but not falling as he fists the carpet and shakes through it.

“All right?” Ilya is back, rubbing at his shoulders again.

“Don’t stop,” Shane whispers, voice nearly gone as he begs.

Ilya bends to press a kiss between his shoulder blades and pats his hip. “Turn over for me.”

Shane doesn’t realize just how badly he’d been struggling to keep himself up on his knees until the moment he’s allowed off of them. He drops, rolls, and sprawls out on the carpet, limbs loose as if Ilya had just cut his strings.

His head lolls as he blinks up at Ilya standing over him, blurry at the edges but clear in the center. Shane feels like he’s glowing underneath the warmth of his gaze, miles away from the ache in his shoulders and knees, the sting of his ass and thighs where they graze the carpet underneath him.

The stick looks natural as anything in his hand, wrist relaxed, fingers gripping it with a lazy, confident spread. He touches the rounded edge of the blade against the top of Shane’s thigh, drags it feather-light up the twitching muscles, past Shane’s weeping dick, the quivering planes of his stomach and flushed chest. It tweaks one of Shane’s nipples and he pushes his chest up into it, writhing as if Ilya had wrapped a hand around his dick instead.

Eventually the stick reaches his chin, bypassing his chin to move lightly across the seam of Shane’s parted lips. Ilya drags the lower one down gently with the blade, his own lips curving into a filthy grin when Shane tries to lift his head enough to suck on it.

He lowers it beneath Shane’s chin again, giving it a couple of taps.

“Look at me. Are you listening?” Ilya asks. Shane makes a vague noise of attention and thinks about the pretty arch of his brow. “I am going to keep going until you come. I do not think it will take long. You are feeling good, yes?”

Shane nods until the slats in the ceiling blur above his head, shivering as the stick grazes its way back down the center of his chest.

He’s hard enough that his cock stands on its own at an angle, just about an inch or two above his lower stomach. When Ilya brings the blade down flat against his hip, he yells, white behind his eyelids.

It’s all the warning he gets before the stick meets his cock.

Ilya doesn’t stop. He doesn’t change the pressure or the speed but he adjusts the angle a bit each time, the blade kissing up the underside of Shane’s cock, dropping to tap against his balls again when his thighs finally reopen from the last one.

He’s filled to the brim with sensation, so much that it comes out in all different ways, all at once. He can’t stay still, can’t be quiet. Shane tries to curl in on himself until he’s splayed open again, cries out until his voice is nothing but rasp, face so wet with his tears that he can taste the salt.

There is only Ilya and this pinpoint, bottomless feeling he's built out of Shane's mess, sharpened and shaped into something that Shane can swallow without choking on it.

And he does—over and over and over again, as many times as Ilya wants him to. His body absorbs it like water, desperate for and high on a sensation that's so singular it can't possibly be anything else.

In the end, it isn't force or pressure or a burst of pain that pushes him over. It takes one more tap against the head of his dick for the pleasure to ricochet through him like a puck on the ice, and Shane convulses.

He plants his feet on the carpet and clumsily rocks his hips up into the air as he comes, until one slips and he falls flat again. It makes the hits he'd taken on his ass and thighs burn, drives the pleasure even higher, Ilya's voice the backing track carrying him through.

He collapses when it's over, and Ilya smiles down at him and calls him good, and Shane manages one last dazed, crooked grin before he slips away completely.

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It's closer to morning than night by the time they make it to bed.

Ilya had dropped right down onto the carpet with him in the aftermath, uncaring of the tears, spit, and come everywhere that Shane would ordinarily be cleaning. Ilya does it this time, at the ready with the wet wipes that Shane likes, swiping in careful stripes against his skin until they can get to the shower instead.

Shane hardly remembers that part; the lowered lights and the soft sting of soap, the cool press of Ilya's palms against him rubbing in sweet smelling lotion. Stumbling feet and the firm, steady pressure of Ilya keeping him upright until his limbs—dried off a little with a soft towel because Shane loathes the feeling of sticky lotion against soft sheets—meet the freshly made bed.

When Ilya's warm mouth settles on the tip of his cock, Shane sobs.

It's different this time. Quieter, the sensations smaller, easier to stomach. His lips tremble around Ilya's name at how careful he's being—the only person in the world, maybe, who treats him like he's capable of breaking. Like he can't just endure and endure without any reprieve.

He doesn't avoid the bruises. One of Ilya's palms is pressed to the tender flesh underneath his thigh, the fingers of his other hand tracing idly over the faint outline of his initials on Shane's hip. He lies on his stomach between Shane's slack knees, his plush, pink lips open to take the head of Shane's dick onto his tongue.

It's warm and wet and achingly simple, and yet Shane finds that after the overload of tonight, he doesn't really need much else. Ilya doesn't even move his head, just tilts it and uses his tongue to pulse against the most sensitive spots, working Shane's body as intimately as if it were his own.

Ilya hums and keeps up the suction of his mouth as he draws a second orgasm out of him, and he swallows it down before he lifts himself enough to drag kisses up the center of Shane's chest to his mouth.

"You are good," he murmurs against it.

He's been saying it for years, even the times when Shane undoubtedly didn't deserve it.

Tonight, maybe for the first time, he believes.

End Notes

feel free to sound off in the comments about what their safeword would be. unhinged answers only.

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