

pavement

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by [orphan_account](#)

Summary

“Um. Hi,” Shane starts, looking down at the boy. The boy just looks up at him, a puzzled expression on his face.

“кто ты?” The boy says in some funny language Shane has never heard of.

“Um.. I only speak English.”

The boy's eyebrows furrow, but he doesn't seem all too deterred by the language barrier. Instead, he hands Shane a piece of pink chalk. He points to the drawing he's been working on, saying something in that funny language again

Or: Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov meet when they are six. They aren't rivals, but they still fall in love. Some small moments in that process.

Notes

woo! user nebulasstars posts their yearly fic!

heated rivalry has kind of taken over my life and hollanov possessed me into writing this sorry if there are errors i tried my best don't feed my work into ai blah blah okay enjoy very rough translations at the end

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

When Shane is six, someone comes and buys the house at the tip of the cul-de-sac after it had been vacant since before he was born.

Shane... is nervous. He's not completely a shut-in. He has friends in his junior hockey league and he gets along okay with the people in his class. But, any new people kind of freak him out. But, his mother has sent him out to go say hi to the new people, since according to her, they have a son his age. And lucky for him, he doesn't have to knock on the door and potentially face the wrath of an adult, because the son in question is sitting in the driveway when Shane walks over there. He has chalk in his hands and seems very determined in what he's doing.

"Um. Hi," Shane starts, looking down at the boy. The boy just looks up at him, a puzzled expression on his face.

"кто ты?" The boy says in some funny language Shane has never heard of.

"Um.. I only speak English."

The boy's eyebrows furrow, but he doesn't seem all too deterred by the language barrier. Instead, he hands Shane a piece of pink chalk. He points to the drawing he's been working on, saying something in that funny language again.

By using context clues, Shane thinks they are farm animals. They look that way anyway. He's pretty limited on what he can do with just a pink piece of chalk, but he makes it work.

He gets a bit frustrated when he can't get the pig to look how he wants it to. The other boy doesn't seem to care how his animals turn out, he's just doodling away, even if the cow's ears are off-center or the horse looks more like a flamingo with a birth defect.

“Вы слишком много волнуетесь,” He comments, and Shane gets a bit frustrated that he can’t understand what the heck the blonde is saying.

Oh. Right! He forgets that he is supposed to give the family some cookies that his dad baked earlier. He fishes the bag from his pocket. It’s a wonder they aren’t entirely crushed. He hands them to the blonde, who looks at him for a moment before a shit eating grin breaks onto his face. He stands up, running towards the door. Shane is befuddled by it, until he sees a woman come out of the house. Probably his mother, he can guess by the blonde hair and almost identical face.

The boy points to Shane, jumping up and down like he is on a sugar rush, “Мама! Я подружился с новым человеком!” He exclaims, and though Shane can’t figure out what he’s saying, he looks ecstatic about it.

“Очень хорошо, Илья, дай мне с ним поговорить, да?” The woman tells him, ruffling his hair slightly before heading over to Shane.

Shane straightens his back, suddenly feeling a bit intimidated. The woman looks nice, even a bit young, but still, he feels a bit nervous around adults. They tend to comment on his lack of eye contact or the weird things he does. Maybe she’ll think he’s not good enough for her son.

“Hello there,” She says in English, but with a thick accent, “You meet my son, Ilya, yes?”

Shane nods, trying to force eye contact as best he can, “Yes ma’am,” He says politely.

“He's nice, yes? Not mean?”

“No!” Shane replies quickly, shaking his head, “He even gave me a piece of chalk to draw with!”

“Good. I’m sorry, he does not speak English yet. He understand a bit,” She tells him, gesturing Ilya to come back over, “Also, thank you for the cookies. Smell very good.”

Ilya runs back over, plopping himself down back onto the concrete next to Shane, this time much closer. Ilya and his mother exchange a few more words before she disappears inside. Shane decides he needs a new tactic if he is going to get anywhere with this Ilya kid.

“Uh, shake your head yes or no to the questions I ask,” He blurts out, “Okay?”

Ilya seems to understand, because he nods. Okay, good.

“You’re six? Right?”

Ilya nods.

“You go to school?”

He nods again. Okay, so they should go to the same school unless Ilya is going to some fancy school or whatever. Shane brings his thumbnail in between his teeth. Dang, this language thing is harder than he thought it’d be. So, they don’t talk. They continue to draw, Ilya keeps drawing stuff that looks so silly and Shane can’t help but laugh. Ilya doesn’t seem bothered by it though, because he laughs along and soon, they are lying on the concrete, laughing until their sides hurt over some stupid drawings of animals.

Shane apparently didn’t realize how late it was getting, because the street lights flicker on and he sees his mother walking down the road, probably to come find him.

“Oh, Shane! There you are! It’s getting late,” His mother says when he gets close. She looks between the two boys, and her expression is fond, “I see you made a new friend. Come on Shane, you can see him tomorrow.”

Shane doesn’t argue with his mother. Instead, he stands up and waves bye to Ilya. He thinks that’s the end of it, but Ilya jumps up and brings him into a tackle hug, almost knocking the

two of them back to the ground.

“Careful!” Shane’s mother shouts out, but neither of them really care.

They giggle some more before Ilya lets go. Usually, Shane isn’t all too fond of touch. He lets his parents hug him, but he doesn’t like it when his teammates roughhouse him too much during practice or when his grandma smacks kisses against his face.

Ilya though, Ilya is fine.

He and his mom walk home together. Shane is quiet, until his mom prompts him.

“Did you have fun? Is he nice?”

Shane nods, staring at his shoes very intently, “Yeah. He doesn’t speak English. His language is funny.”

“I heard they’re Russian,” His mom tells him, “Be nice to that boy, he’s probably feeling very lonely right now.”

Shane doesn’t hear the undercurrent in her voice. He just thinks she’s saying that because it’s the right thing to do. Besides, Shane is nice to everyone! Even when they are mean to him and call him names and push him around.

“Ilya’s my friend, of course I’ll be nice!”

Ilya has followed Shane around for the past six years.

They are in secondary school now. Ilya's language has vastly improved. It's still a bit broken, but it's fine. They protect each other from the kids who are mean to them because Shane is half Asian or a little odd and because Ilya is an immigrant. They play hockey on the same team and are damn good. However, the past couple of days, something has been off. Ilya hasn't been to school, he hasn't come outside to play with Shane, and he hasn't answered any of the phone calls he's left on the Rozanov house phone.

And of course, the rumor mill at school has begun.

"I heard his mom died," One kid says from afar when Shane is eating lunch by himself at school. Ilya is always the one who sits by him.

"What, really? How?" Another kid asks.

"Dunno. The teachers are being super secretive about it. Some kid asked where Ilya was in English, and the teacher skirted around the subject."

"Weird."

That made Shane's nerves worse. Is Ilya okay? Is his mom okay?

Ilya doesn't talk much about his home life. Shane isn't allowed inside whenever his father is home. He knows his father is very strict, how strict he isn't sure, but he's seen the occasional bruise on Ilya where his school clothes or jersey don't cover. He also knows that Ilya's mother takes a large brunt of it too. It's not like Shane can do anything about it. What can he do? He's just some kid.

He sighs, suddenly not feeling very hungry anymore. He pushes his food away, pondering about the whole situation. Shane can feel his leg bouncing, but he honestly doesn't care at the moment.

When he gets home later that day, he notices Ilya leaving the house. That's the first time he's seen him in almost a week! Shane wastes no time, yelling to his dad that he was going out for a bit before slipping his shoes and a coat on before heading out.

"Ilya! Wait up!" Shane calls out, almost tripping and eating shit in his haste.

Ilya's head snaps up. Shane's heart drops when he doesn't see a shit eating smirk or that light in his eyes. He almost looks... Empty.

"Shane," Ilya breathes out, looking like he is about to cry.

"Where have you been?" Shane asks, panting slightly as he stands in front of his friend.

Ilya looks conflicted, as if he is contemplating what he should say, "Uh..." He starts, but then clamps his mouth shut again, "Come inside. Father is not home."

Shane follows him inside, pulling his shoes off and neatly lining them up at the door. The house is still the same as he remembers it. He isn't in here often, more often than not them being at Shane's when they hang out. The wallpaper is still that same floral, and the floorboards creak a bit.

Ilya hands him a ginger ale, which he is very grateful for. He knows Ilya's mother kept them for him for when he did come over. They sit on the couch, thighs touching as Shane sips on his ginger ale, waiting for Ilya to say something.

"My mother died," He says bluntly, looking up at Shane for a reaction, "Accident."

Shane feels his heart sink even further.

He knows how close Ilya and his mom are. It makes him sick, knowing how lonely Ilya must feel, how heartbroken he probably is. He doesn't really know how to comfort people, but when Ilya puts his head in his lap, it seems to click.

He runs his hand through Ilya's curls, being met with little resistance. Shane knows how this looks.

He knows that kids at school think he and Ilya are gay. They poke fun, occasionally. Shane just really loves his friend and doesn't want him to be alone.

Neither of them says anything for a while. Shane thinks Ilya might be crying a bit, but he doesn't mention it. He doesn't want Ilya to shrink away from him.

"Ilya?" A voice calls from the top of the stairs.

Both he and Ilya look over. Ilya's brother is standing there, staring at the two of them blankly. He comes down the stairs and heads off into the kitchen.

Ilya removes his head from Shane's lap right after, clearing his throat and changing the subject by saying how he got a new game for his console that they could play. Shane opens his mouth to protest, to let Ilya know that it's fine if he is sad, but Ilya gives him a look as to say "drop it."

So, he does.

They play a bit of the game together. Shane admittedly sucks at it, and Ilya is way better, but at least it's something a bit lighter.

The two of them lose track of time again, and before he knows it, the sun has set and there are keys jiggling the lock. Ilya looks up and seems slightly panicked.

Ah, his dad.

Shane isn't explicitly not allowed over when his dad is home, no one ever said anything about it, but it is just preferred that way. Ilya's dad doesn't want random people in his house, even if it's someone his son has known for years.

The man walks in, eyeing the two of them on the couch together, he clears his throat and then says something in Russian. Shane has picked up on a bit, but he's still nowhere near fluent. Ilya and his dad speak in rapid-fire Russian, and it gets more heated as they keep talking. Shane feels like an intruder, so he stands to leave. However, Ilya grasps his hand, eyes pleading.

"It's alright Shane. You can stay," He says, "Please stay," He tacks on the end, almost so quiet Shane can't hear him.

"But Ilya, I don't want you to get in trouble."

"He won't do anything if you're here, please."

Shane sighs and sits back down. He still doesn't know about all of this, but he unfortunately can't resist Ilya. He should probably ask to use the house phone to call his parents so they don't flip out and search all of Montreal for him.

He'll do that later, for now, he just needs to figure out how to beat Ilya in this dumb game.

Shane is sixteen when he vaguely realizes he doesn't like girls. Well, not really. He's a bit clueless in the matter.

He's dating this girl right now, actually, but they aren't serious. They haven't gone past a handjob and some tongue action, which is fine by him.

Ilya also has a girlfriend. She's nice. And the four of them hang out occasionally. Though, it's still mostly just him and Ilya.

And obviously, they've gone through puberty. Ilya's voice dropped like a rock, and the first time Shane had heard it when it had stopped squeaking, he almost blacked out for some reason.

Not to mention, Ilya is finally putting on a good bit of muscle because of hockey. Ilya has already said that he isn't going to pursue the sport professionally, but Shane definitely wants to.

They're at Shane's house right now, with Shane's parents out of the house for the night. Shane is working on homework, and Ilya is in the corner on Shane's laptop doing something.

Ilya looks up at him, "Have you ever kissed guy before?"

Woah. That's not something Shane ever thought he'd hear out of Ilya Rozanov's mouth. Sure he's a bit brash, but Shane has never heard him say anything like that before.

"Um, no? Why would I?" Shane replies, pulling a slight face.

There's a ghost of a frown on Ilya's face, before it turns back into a smirk, "Oh, why not. You only live once, Hollander."

Shane rolls his eyes, feeling a small bit of heat spreading to his face, "Oh, what? You have?"

"Yes, actually."

“Who?”

“You know old coach? One who retired last year? His son.”

Shane’s jaw drops, “You what?!”

“Mhm. We did a lot more than kiss, actually.”

Shane is absolutely gobsmacked. He honestly didn’t even know that was an option, and here Ilya is, admitting it as if he is saying the weather.

“So you’re gay? But you’re dating a girl?”

“Not gay, Shane. Bi. Learn difference.”

Shane sighs exasperatedly, “Whatever, either way! It’s still a lot to take in.”

“You don’t like gay people?”

“I never said that!”

Ilya snorts, making the whole thing a lot worse for Shane. He drops his head against his desk, praying the ground just swallows him up entirely. He doesn’t like, think Ilya likes him. They are just best friends, what they always have been, and what they always will be.

“It’s cool if you like dudes, Ilya, I don’t care,” Shane tells him, “Anyways, I’m getting tired of staring at math questions. Do you wanna do something else?”

Ilya nods, “Watch a movie? I figure out how to get movies over Limewire.”

Shane sighs again, “Of course you did,” Because it’s a very Ilya thing to do.

They shove into Shane’s twin-sized bed, with Shane being squished up into the wall and Ilya almost falling off the edge. Ilya balances the laptop between the two of them and he loads up some movie he apparently pirated off of Limewire despite Shane’s parents literally paying for cable and some other subscriptions.

The movie is kind of boring. It’s some action movie that’s just recycled garbage that Hollywood puts out every year. Ilya seems very interested however, so he lets him have his fun.

Shane instead thinks about what Ilya said earlier. Was he implying something? Did Ilya want to kiss him? No way. They both had girlfriends, and again, Ilya didn’t like him. Besides, even if he wanted to, Shane isn’t gay, so he wouldn’t let it slide anyway.

The movie drags on, but eventually the credits roll. Ilya then shuts the laptop, setting it on the edge of the bed before doing something that shocks Shane even more. He kisses his forehead before getting up, stretching out like he didn’t just do that.

“I go make us food. Tuna melts?”

Shane is speechless for a second, and when he finds his voice again, it cracks, “Um. yeah, that’s fine.”

Ilya leaves the room, which means leaving Shane alone with his racing heart and mind. Shane gets up and starts to pace, trying to figure out what all of this means.

He's not gay. He can't be gay. Can he? He's never put much thought into it. He's been busy with school and hockey and his family. But being with Ilya...

Ilya's strong, muscular arms have always felt better around him than his girlfriend's thin, soft ones. Ilya's deep Russian accent is almost like a lullaby to him while his girlfriend's normal Canadian voice is almost monotone to him. Even just a kiss to his forehead from his best friend is better than any kiss he's gotten from a girl.

Oh. God. *Maybe* he is gay.

He snaps his fingers, rubs at his eyes, trying to get the burning out of his chest. He feels trapped and like he's going nuts. This is all way too confusing and he just wants to lie with his best friend and never let him go.

Speaking of his best friend, Ilya comes back with two plates of Tuna Melts and a ginger ale, and some Coke. He stands in the doorway, just watching Shane have a mental breakdown.

"Are you alright, Hollander?"

Shane glares at him before stomping over and taking his plate and ginger ale, "Fuck off Rozanov."

"When did we become so hostile? Do you not want Tuna Melt after all?" Ilya teases, going over and sitting at Shane's desk, knowing that Shane has a thing about eating on the bed. That only makes the burning in Shane's chest worse.

"It's nothing. Alright? I'm just feeling a bit stressed," Shane replies defensively, taking a pitiful bite out of his sandwich.

"You look like you are about to sob like baby," Ilya points out, but it doesn't have any teasing or mocking, just an astute observation.

“Fuck you.”

“You can cry. You are allowed.”

“I don’t need to cry,” Shane says with an eye roll, “I just need to eat and start getting ready for bed.”

“Do I have to sleep on couch again?” Ilya asks through bites of his sandwich.

When they were kids, he and Ilya would just cram into one bed. It worked, they were little enough. But now that they were a lot bigger, it didn’t exactly work. Ilya always slept on the couch when they had sleepovers now.

As much as Shane is having peril about the other man in this room, he doesn’t want him to leave. So, he shakes his head.

“I’ll go see if mom still has that blow-up mattress from when we went camping.”

“Aww, you do love me, Shane.”

“Die.”

He does wind up finding the mattress. It’s a bitch to blow back up, but the two of them figure it out. At first, Shane is under the impression that Ilya would sleep on that and that Shane would have his bed, but after they both do their respective bedtime routines and Shane goes to lie back on his bed, Ilya makes a noise like he’s offended.

“Get down here with me, we have true sleepover like when we were young,” Ilya says, patting the spot on the mattress next to him.

“Ilya...,” Shane tries, staring at him with a slightly slack look, “Isn’t that weird..? We are almost two grown men.”

“What? Can’t two grown men sleep on same mattress?”

“I mean they can but-”

“Then get your ass down here, Shane.”

As much as Shane thinks it’s a terrible idea, Ilya’s command almost puts him in a trance-like state to where he cannot say no. So, he goes and shuts the lights off, getting down onto the floor and rolling onto the mattress next to Ilya, just far apart to where no body parts are touching.

“Goodnight Shane.”

“Goodnight Ilya.”

When Shane wakes up in the morning, he feels something plastered against his back. It’s a big weight, fully surrounding him. Arms have encircled his waist, and he feels hot breath tickling his neck.

Much to Shane’s horror, he realizes who it is.

He needs to die, like, right now.

Shane is seventeen, his team just won the junior championship and he has definitely secured his spot in the NHL. Shane's parents throw a huge party, inviting almost everyone they know.

Once the party has died down, and people have started to head out, Shane can finally breathe. He's been stuck talking to random people and trying to pretend he gives a shit.

Ilya is helping his mom clean up, he can be seen in the doorway of the kitchen. Ilya winks at him and Shane can't decide whether he wants to kiss him or kill him.

Shane has come to the realization that he is most definitely gay and most definitely loves Ilya in ways friends aren't supposed to. He and his girlfriend broke up, so that's not an issue. However, Ilya not liking him back is the issue.

Eventually, the two of them find themselves on Shane's back porch. Ilya is smoking a cigarette, for where he got them, Shane has no clue. Shane is standing a respectable distance away, staring off into space.

"You know, I go to college in Boston next year," Ilya remarks, "And you go off and do big hockey things."

Shane looks over at him, raising a brow, "Yeah, and?"

Ilya puts the cigarette out with his foot, closing the distance between them. Shane is stunned, so he can't pull away when Ilya grabs his face and kisses him as if Shane is the only thing on earth that matters to him.

He tastes like cigarettes and alcohol but also something so innately Ilya that it makes his head spin. Shane doesn't even realize he's not kissing back for a moment, but he quickly rectifies that.

They pull apart and Ilya whispers in between the little space they have between their mouths, “I need you.”

“Have me.”

And sure, a lot of things are uncertain. How would Ilya’s family react? How would Shane’s react? How would the NHL react if one of its top prospects liked men? What even were they?

But perhaps, they could just be Hollander and Rozanov. Shane and Ilya. That didn’t sound all that bad to Shane.

End Notes

“кто ты?”- Who are you?

“Вы слишком много волнуетесь.”- You worry too much.

“Мама! Я подружился с новым человеком!”- Mom! I’ve made a new friend!

“Очень хорошо, Илья, дай мне с ним поговорить, да?”- Very good, Ilya. Let me talk to him, okay?

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