

Take My Breath Away & Share Your Oxygen

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Take My Breath Away & Share Your Oxygen

by [TuttleAsHimself](#)

Summary

It's been a long day. A good day for the most part...all things considered. But that's kind of the problem. Because once Shane's parents leave after coming for dinner, he finally lets himself consider all the things that have happened, and will happen, and might happen for him and Ilya.

The panic attack he didn't quite have at his parents dining room table hits him like a ton of bricks, and poor Ilya is the unfortunate bystander.

[Takes place later in the evening, the day Shane and Ilya get caught].

Chapter 1

When the front door finally closes behind his parents, Shane closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

They'd come for dinner after the whole debacle that morning, and it had been nice—really, it had. But the day has been a long one. Good, mostly, but a lot. So much, actually.

It's hard to put into words the relief he feels not having such a big secret hanging over his head with his parents. He's gay and they know he's gay, and it's kind of crazy how distant that hurdle feels now. And with Ilya... Shane is honestly pretty surprised his mom took to the Raiders captain as quickly as she did, with only minimal disbelief and ribbing about Boston.

Still, the way today has played out hadn't exactly been the plan. He'd expected to wake up, soak in the Ilya of it all, eat, swim, relax, fuck—not the rollercoaster of getting caught, coming out, and facing every angle of their PR-controlled future his mom could think of.

It had all turned out, he reminds himself. But it still hadn't been *part of the plan*.

He's standing there with his eyes still closed and shoulders tight, when Ilya slips his arms around his waist from behind. Shane doesn't mean to but he flinches a little, having not heard Ilya's approach. Ilya pauses for a fraction of a second before kissing him lightly on the back of the neck.

"*Solnyshko*," he murmurs quietly. "What are you thinking?"

Shane breathes in and out slowly. He's thinking about Rolex and Speedo. He's thinking about all the little Asian boys who might lose the role model Shane has carefully built an entire career around being. He's thinking about his and Ilya's secret getting leaked to the press before they can retire, and the MLH cutting them loose. He's thinking about Ilya being forced back to Russia and disappearing into some modern day gulag...

Normally, having Ilya's body pressed into his like this is all he ever wants; has spent literally years thinking about it. Usually, if anything can quiet his anxious mind, it's this. But right now everything feels a bit too *close*.

"Shane?"

He blinks open his eyes and turns in his arms so they're face-to-face, standing there in the entryway. He rests his cheek against Ilya's shoulder for a second or two before stepping out of his hold, feeling guilty for putting that look of concern on his boyfriend's face.

His *boyfriend*. That, at least, never ceases to warm him from the inside out.

He attempts an apologetic smile but it comes out as more of a grimace. "Sorry. I'm okay, I just...need a second."

"You are crying..."

He's not really, not yet but his eyes *are* glassy and Shane thinks it won't be long now before Ilya is right. He hates himself a little for how easily this happens to him.

Ilya ducks his head a little to catch Shane's eye and for his part, Shane tries to return the gaze but has minimal success. He looks down, over Ilya's shoulder, at his mouth, at the collar of his shirt. Whatever Ilya sees on his face must not be very reassuring.

"Hey, hey...that was good, yes?" he nods to the dining table where they'd been sitting and chatting all evening. "Your parents are okay, we are okay."

Ilya starts to reach out but seems to decide against it and lets his hand fall to his side. As much as it pains Shane to see him standing there at such a loss, he can't help but be grateful for his restraint. It's just that Shane's chest is feeling a little tight at the moment, and so is his throat. It frustrates him to no end when he feels the pressure of tears building behind his eyes and he clenches his teeth and tightens the corners of his mouth to keep it all in. He takes a

few careful steps until his back is against the wall and he hooks his thumbs into the pockets of his shorts, digging his fingernails into the flesh of his palms. It hurts just enough to keep him focused.

Ilya's not wrong, it had gone better than Shane could have hoped. Even when his parents had come to his place for dinner it had been fine. But there had been more talk about their plans, coming out to everyone, brand deal pivots and it's just a *lot* to process.

The nod he gives Ilya is stiff and short, "Mmhm, yeah, good. It was good."

Ilya's brows twitch together and he frowns slightly, his eyes searching Shane's for some kind of explanation for this sudden change in demeanour. There's uncertainty there and maybe a flicker of self doubt too. "We are not okay? Was I— did I do the wrong thing?"

Oh god I'm such an asshole, Shane thinks dismayed. But if he opens his mouth to reassure Ilya that they are more than okay, he's sure it will be the tip of the first domino that sends the rest of him cascading into something he no longer has control over.

So instead of giving Ilya a proper answer, he fervently shakes his head *no*. The image of Ilya helplessly standing in front of him blurs and Shane tries to blink his eyes clear. When that doesn't work, he settles for squeezing his them shut.

His chest aches and he presses the heel of his hand into his sternum.

"Shane," Ilya's voice loses the self doubt and turns to something closer to alarm. "What is this? What is— *lyubimiy*, you need to breathe!"

Chapter 2

He hasn't noticed he'd stopped breathing until Ilya says it, and then suddenly it's the only thing Shane can focus on. He is distantly aware of his back sliding against the wall and his butt hitting the floor with a *thump*, but beyond that all he can feel is a huge weight squeezing the air out of his lungs.

Is he dying? He must be dying. Maybe he's having a heart attack. His hands have gone numb, that's a symptom right? Or is it supposed to be his arm? It doesn't really matter because if he doesn't get a breath in soon, Shane is sure he's going to suffocate himself to death anyway.

Suddenly, fingers are tugging at his hand and pressing his palm against a solid, moving surface. A chest—strong and sturdy. Lungs fill and empty slowly beneath the loose curls of his fingers.

“—reathe, *lyubimiy*.” Ilya's voice forces itself through the ringing in Shane's ears. “Deep breath. *Delayte, kak ya, sleduyte za mnoy*.”

It feels like it's never going to happen, but eventually Shane sucks in one breath and then another.

“I...dunt...sp'k...Russian,” he bites out incoherently between ragged gasps.

The breaths that come in and out are stilted and irregular, but they come and that's all that matters. Every time he manages to get another one in, it's accompanied by a pitiful keening that he almost doesn't realise is coming from *him*.

“Da, keep going. Better.”

In. Out. In and out. Shane's not sure how much time passes before his breathing evens out to something resembling normal and he becomes aware of how uncomfortable he is. Slowly, aching, he blinks his blurry eyes open to a world tipped on its side. At some point he's gone

from sitting against the wall to laying curled up on the floor in the fetal-position. An arms length away, Ilya is curled on his side too—two closed parentheses connected only by Shane’s outstretched arm and stiff fingers being held against Ilya’s chest.

Close enough for comfort, far enough not to crowd him. It makes Shane want to start crying again. He’s so drained from the exertion of panic that the tears roll unhindered over the bridge of his nose.

“Are you here?” Ilya asks quietly, fearfully.

In response, Shane shakily moves his hand from Ilya’s chest up to his face to brush away tears that cling to his own lashes. He nods, still focused on breathing. Ilya exhales with such relief it's almost painful. He turns his face into Shane’s hand to kiss it.

They lay like that for a second more before Ilya pushes himself up to sit and guides Shane up as well. He’s careful to keep the same distance between them, though Ilya is still holding Shane’s hand, smoothing circles over the web of his thumb.

“This is okay?” he asks, nodding to their hands.

“Mmhm,” Shane affirms, blinking slowly and not trusting his voice.

He’d be more mortified about what just happened if he wasn’t absolutely racked with exhaustion. He wants to tell Ilya to move closer but his mouth and his brain have momentarily lost their connection, so he sort of just leans his body forward and trusts Ilya to figure out the rest. Sure enough, Ilya scoots forward just in time to catch Shane’s body against his broad chest, easily wrapping his arms around him and holding him close.

Shane hums appreciatively into the crook of his neck and tries to match each new breath with the cadence of the circles Ilya rubs against his back.

“M’sorry,” he mumbles but Ilya just shushes him with a kiss on the head.

“Come, can you stand? The floor is too hard for you.”

The thing is, Shane’s body feels too stiff to do much, like he’s just done the world’s most intense workout without stretching first. But they can’t stay here, legs cramping against the hardwood floor in the entryway.

Shane becomes acutely aware that he’s been laying on the floor where the shoes go and he grimaces.

“Th’ floors dirty.”

Ilya is unfazed by the non sequitur. “Okay, yes it is filthy—worst floor ever. Time to stand up, yes?”

Eventually Shane manages to stand (mostly because Ilya basically deadlifts him off the ground), and he leans heavily into his side as they shuffle their way to the bedroom. At the steps leading up to the room when Shane’s legs shake too much to climb them, Ilya picks him up in one swift movement, legs wrapped around his waist and arms circled loosely around his shoulders.

This is a new thing, and Shane fleetingly wishes Ilya had picked him up like this under less depressing circumstances. Doesn’t say it though, just breathes in Ilya’s hair (it smells like the lake and the summer sun) as they travel the last few steps to where he’s let down gently on top of Ilya’s side of the made bed. Shane curls onto his side once more, fighting exhaustion, and watches as Ilya leaves the room briefly only to return with a throw blanket from the couch. He smooths it over Shane’s body before crawling into bed with him.

They’re facing each other again, closer this time. Close enough for Ilya to lean in to press a worried kiss to Shane’s lips.

“What was that, *sokrovishche moyo*?” he asks, barely above a whisper.

Shane clears his throat and finally finds his voice. It sounds as tired as he feels. “I’m sorry.”

Ilya reaches over to run his fingers through Shane’s hair before settling on his cheek. “For what? I do not understand what happened to you...”

In the post-chaos clarity that he recognises all too well, Shane knows he was never having a heart attack and he was never actually dying. But for some reason, he’s a little ashamed to say the truth out loud. Afraid that maybe Ilya won’t want to deal with it all, and that he’s possibly already ruined what’s left of the time they have together by freaking out like this.

Just when they were getting started.

But no, the look on Ilya’s face is that of open worry, love, and confusion. It’s not the face of someone with one foot out the door. Ilya’s scanning eyes search every inch of his face for something to quell his worry and Shane decides to tell him the truth. They’d promised to be honest with each other after all.

“I was...” he can’t look into Ilya’s eyes when he says it so he looks at one of his stray golden curls peaking out from behind his ear. “I was thinking about...just *everything* that happened today. And I...I freaked out. I didn’t mean to.”

Ilya’s thumb runs back and forth against his cheek, grounding him, “Freaked out like at your parents’ house?”

Shane turns to press his face into his pillow. Ilya moves with him, placing the entirety of his large, warm palm against the back of Shane’s neck. It feels so nice.

“Kind of. A little. I just got overwhelmed, and I couldn’t stop it from happening.”

“Stop what?”

“A panic attack, I guess.”

He says it so quietly he’s unsure if Ilya hears it. As comforting as it is to feel Ilya so close, Shane still kind of wants the world to open up and swallow him whole. He’s bone-weary and this is embarrassing to say out loud. Usually when he feels a panic attack episode coming on, he’s able to fight it off until he can get away to freak out in private.

“I tried to keep it in. I really did, but— *oof*.”

Ilya closes the small distance between them and crushes Shane within his arms and legs like a six-foot koala.

“New rule,” Ilya commands with no room for argument. Shane can hear an undercurrent of fear in his voice. “No keeping it in.”

And Shane knows that Ilya knows it doesn’t work like that but he huffs a little wetly against his chest and says, “Ok.”

“You kept it in and would not breathe, *lyubimiy*.”

Ilya sounds pretty wrecked at the memory of it, and Shane holds him back a little tighter in silent apology.

“Next rule, we kick everyone out before it, how do you say... *vykhodit iz-pod kontrolya*. Before it gets bad like this.”

Shane hums in agreement, eyes really threatening to close now. God, he’s so tired but Ilya is squeezing him infinitesimally to get his attention.

“Is this good, or too much?”

“S’perfect.”

“But not before?”

For a moment Shane isn’t sure what he means. “Hmm?”

“Before, you wouldn’t let me touch you.”

“Oh,” Shane doesn’t actually remember if he pushed Ilya away or not, but he feels like a total asshole if he did. “Um...sometimes touching is just too much, I guess. I need space, or...I dunno.”

He can count on 1 hand the amount of times other people have been privy to an episode like this in his entire life (and he’d have some left over fingers). The truth is, Shane’s not one hundred percent sure how to go about having a panic attack as an adult with another person in the room. With *Ilya*. He can practically feel Ilya frowning at that less than complete answer, but it’s the best Shane can do while half asleep.

“Can we sleep?” he asks, already drifting away. “M’so tired.”

He feels Ilya’s body sigh around him, and as much as he hadn’t wanted it before, Shane doesn’t ever want Ilya to let go of this bear hug now.

But he needn’t have worried.

“Shhh, sleep *kotyonok*,” Ilya hushes, kissing Shane’s temple. “I am here, right here. Always.”

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