

6 Months

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6 Months

by [Nituaii](#)

Summary

Shane didn't know what he should say, what he could say. They hadn't talked since that night, hadn't been in contact much. Which at first hadn't worried Shane. It wasn't unusual for them to go longer periods of time without contact, and especially with the Olympics looming so close, with them both being chosen for their teams, it had only seemed logical to focus on their duties. He hadn't worried. Had lived in that blissful state of finally knowing what it felt like to be taken, of sharing the arguably most intimate part of himself with someone he trusted. Knew he could trust. Thought he could trust.

OR: What happened during those 6 months when Ilya ignored Shane? How did that time change things for Shane?

Notes

Heyo, it's me again

This time with a longer fic that I purely wrote in self indulgence. Because there were things i wanted to see in the show (you'll notice what i mean) and then it spiralled and towards the end its very different.

I have no explanation or defence for this.

The dialogue is sometimes exactly like the show, simply because I wanted to focus on how Shane (in my head) felt.

The timeline is also mostly the same, as are the events happening. Mostly.

Dunno, again, this is all self indulgence and maybe very boring to all of you sooo

I hope someone will still enjoy.

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

Chapter 1: Chapter 1

Shane watched with a soft smile as Ilya slipped out of the back door of his apartment building. The soft kiss still tingled against his lips, the smile still curving the corners of his mouth, bunching his cheeks adorably. The door shut with a gentle click, encasing Shane in the silence of an empty building. The hum of electricity was the only thing keeping him company as he allowed himself to get lost in the memory of this very night.

He let his head fall back against the wall with a soft thud, the smile not wavering as his eyes slipped closed. He let his mind wander, for just a moment.

His body still ached in that satisfying way. Almost similar to the way it did after a good work out, his muscles strained but warm and relaxed.

He could still feel it, could still feel him. His ass was just on the verge of sore, an ache so unknown yet familiar. It was different. Everyone had always said it would be different. But it had taken him by surprise just how different it felt, how much of a difference the warmth of another body could make. It had felt like more than anything he could have imagined. People said the first time was magical, now Shane believed them.

He could still feel him. Could feel Ilyas touch on his body, could feel the soft strands of curly hair as he'd run his hands through them, the way it had caught between his knuckles.

He could still feel the way Ilya had nipped at his lips when he kissed him, the way a slight tinge of pain had bloomed just to immediately be soothed and forgotten. He could still feel the imprints Ilyas fingers had left behind, the way he had dug his hands into the plump muscle of his thighs while he had eaten him out. The way his tongue had rubbed over his skin, tasted him in ways no one else had ever done before.

The way he had fucked into his body, slow and careful, gentle. Shane could still hear how he had whispered into his ears, soft words asking for confirmation, always checking in, making sure.

The way he had kissed him every chance he had, kissed him as if he were a starving man. As if Shane held the answers to the universe between his lips, as if kissing Shane would cure Ilya of all ailment and worries. He'd kissed Shane with reverence, in worship.

Shane would never forget how his name had sounded, falling from Ilyas lips, lost in the bliss of his own orgasm, of their shared pleasure. "*Hollander.*" Sighed as if it were a prayer.

Shane doubted he would ever be able to forget.

The memory clung to his ears, to his heart.

After a long while he finally pulled himself up, his back aching. From the position he had been sitting in? From the night? Shane didn't know, didn't want to know. He was happy to just exist in the moment, in the now.

He climbed up the stairs, the Deja-vu of Ilya chasing him up the steps just hours ago making warmth spread in his chest.

Shane set to cleaning up their mess, pulling the sheets on his ruined bed free, tossing the towel Ilya had used in the washer with it all together.

He set to folding his clothes, having pulled on something different to see Ilya off. Sorting these things, making sure his living spaces were organized made him feel calm. Helped him ignore the strong tug in his chest, the squirming in his stomach. He was still smiling.

As he waited for the washing, Shane made sure to eat and drink. The activities of the night had stirred up quite a sweat and Shane knew he had to refuel his body.

A calm song played over his speakers, gentle melodies and soft voices. It sounded like yearning.

As he pulled the new cover over his mattress and sheets, a small foiled pack fell to the floor. Shane picked up the now empty wrapper, the teasing grin on Ilyas lips as he'd pulled out the string of condoms flashing across his inner eye.

Shane licked over his lips as he twisted the packet between his fingers. He put it into his night stand instead of the bin.

The smile on his lips had not wavered once all night.

"Go away, Hollander."

Shane didn't know what he should say, what he could say. They hadn't talked since that night, hadn't been in contact much. Which at first hadn't worried Shane. It wasn't unusual for them to go longer periods of time without contact, and especially with the Olympics looming so close, with them both being chosen for their teams, it had only seemed logical to focus on their duties. He hadn't worried. Had lived in that blissful state of finally knowing what it felt like to be taken, of sharing the arguably most intimate part of himself with someone he trusted. Knew he could trust. Thought he could trust.

But the tone of Ilyas voice, the cold dismissal. It clashed with everything his brain had come to associate with Ilya. Shane spluttered for a moment, unsure of what to say.

"No, I wasn't... Are you okay?"

Was this because of where they were? This was Ilya's home, should he not be happy to be here? Sure, it was dangerous for them to get too close, maybe even be seen together often, for people to suspect them of their relationship.

But Ilya had to know that Shane would never jeopardize this, would never jeopardize him. He had always been careful, had never once even slightly given Ilya the idea that he would be a threat. That Shane would be careless enough to expose their secret.

"I'm fine, Go back to your seat."

Again, the dismissal. Shane swallowed thickly, an unfamiliar ache settling in his chest. It wasn't like he was going to jump Ilya right then and there and kiss him. Ilya had to know that, should know that Shane could be discreet. Hell, he hadn't spoken to anyone about this and they'd been doing this for years.

"You didn't answer my text."

For the first time since he had come up here, Ilya turned to look at him. The ice in his eyes made Shane recoil, his fingers curling into the soft fleece of his team jacket.

"No, I did not answer your boring text. Will you go?"

Shane took a moment, forcing himself to breathe slowly. Clearly, Ilya was distressed. Because of their loss against Latvia? It must have been hard, to lose like that on home soil, after being chosen as captain. Shane felt sympathetic. He understood. What he couldn't understand was why Ilya treated him like this, met him with such evident distrust. Dismissal.

"I just thought... We..."

Ilya didn't give him the chance to finish his sentence, doubted him so evidently. "We are not anything, Hollander. Go. Away."

Ilya turned away from him, clearly dismissing Shane from his presence. Ilya's jaw was set, locked tight. Shane felt the fight drain out of him, that disgusting feeling in his chest rising to choke him. It was joined by irritation, almost anger.

"Fine. Fuck....."

He turned away from Ilya, a deep ache setting into his chest.

Where had that man gone that had held him so tenderly? Whom he had willingly given his virginity to. The man behind him, standing alone and staring out onto the ice below was a stranger.

Shane forced himself to look straight ahead, refused his body the visceral need of turning around and catching one more glance at Ilya.

The walk back to his seat was a blur, his head spinning with worry, want, rejection.

He let himself fall heavily into the seat beside Carter Vaughn. For the remaining duration of the competition, he did not avert his eyes from the ice. He tried to concentrate, tried to show the athletes the respect they deserved, his undivided attention. He refused to acknowledge Carter Vaughn's gaze boring into the side of his head, the silent question therein. The pit in his stomach grew, dragging him down.

Finally, he couldn't stop himself any longer. When he glanced up toward the banister, Ilya was gone.

Shane saw Ilya only one more time during the Olympics. He had headed down to the froyo shop, where he had met Carter the day, the day they'd went and watched the figure skating event where he had also first seen Ilya whilst in Russia.

He had his headphones in, the calming voice of a meditation specialist guiding him through breathing exercises. He wasn't doing them actively, but the mere sound of the voice calmed him down these days. The pressure of the competition, more so imposed on Shane by himself, was bearing down on his shoulders. They'd done well so far, were looking at a real chance to win.

Shane sighed softly into the cold air, a cloud forming before his face, and he looked up, for no definitive reason.

And there he was. Ilya stood with his back ram rod straight, his shoulders pulled back so tight Shane could feel his own back ache with sympathy.

He was speaking to another man, his face a cold mask. Shane knew that the athletes of Team Russia had left the village shortly after their defeat and subsequent ending of their games. He hadn't expected to see Ilya here again at all. He'd honestly expected him to be back in Boston, to rejoin his team as soon as possible.

The man he was speaking to was older, his beard dark. He was speaking animatedly, and Shane could hear shouting even through the noise cancellation of his headphones.

For a second he thought Ilya had seen him, had felt like their gazes had crossed, but then the moment was gone, Ilya's gaze flowing over him like water, clearly not recognizing him in the crowd.

Or perhaps Shane wished Ilya hadn't, for his own peace of mind.

Shane took a deep breath and turned away, heading into the Froyo Shop. His hunger was gone.

The sound of the crowd, the familiar scent of the rink tickled in Shane's ears and nose. Shane breathed in deeply, letting the cheers of his home crowd wash over him.

The Olympics had been fun, and he couldn't say he was too disappointed. They'd played well, had fought hard for their country. Gold would have been the cherry on top, but not many could claim to ever have stood on an Olympic podium.

And yet, it had been a stressful time. The unfamiliar country, foods he was not used to. The living quarters which had been lacking.

The silence that continued to reign between him and Ilya.

Shane focused on the ice, the little heap of snow a blade had carved off earlier, as he stretched.

It was their first game against Boston since they'd returned from the Olympics, had been thrown back into the chaos that was the NHL.

Shane continued to stretch, his muscles turning loose and agile.

Only when the puck dropped, did he allow himself to acknowledge that Ilya was here, right in front of him.

Shane had, against his better and rational judgement, sent a message to Ilya that morning.

That was their thing, no? Random, meaningless hook-ups. Because that was who they were.

It had been harder than he would have expected, to send the message. But Shane craved Ilya's touch, missed the way he kissed him.

So, he'd hit send, asking if they would meet. It had joined the others to be left on read. Ilya did not respond.

Shane had checked his phone right up to the start of the game, a small tiny part of him hoping that Ilya would reply, that they would go back to what they had been... before.

No such luck.

Shane focused on the hand in his peripheral, holding the puck. On the sound of the crowd, the way they had stilled in anticipation, breathing deeply in sync with Shane.

On anything but the man before him, who was currently, and for the last few weeks, ignoring him. And Shane for the life of him did not know why. Ilya was deeply focussed on the game as well, his body wound tight like a spring shortly before breaking.

Shane had then checked his phone again during the first break, and felt like an idiot immediately after when the lonely blue message boxes mocked his desperation.

Shane had promised himself he would not look at Ilya, would not stare at him like some lovesick heartbroken teenager. Because he wasn't. Lovesick nor heartbroken.

He was only confused, He just didn't understand. That was all.

Shane watched his team lose on the ice; an invisible power was coursing through the Raiders.

For most of the game, Shane could keep himself in check. When he finally broke and glanced over to the Raiders bench, Ilya was staring straight ahead, his features the same icy mask he had worn that day back in Russia. Shane swallowed around a rock that had formed in his throat.

They lost that game, barely. Ilya skated like his life was depending on it, moved on the ice with a determination that was almost awe inspiring.

For some reason, Shane felt sad as he watched him.

Shane came home to an empty apartment. Which really was no surprise, considering he lived alone. It usually filled him with calm, seeing his own space, decorated and furnished just the way that made him feel calm and safe.

But tonight, it felt oppressive and claustrophobic while being far too grand at the same time. As if something, no, someone was missing and his apartment could tell.

Shane, against his better judgement, pulled his phone out of his pocket once more and checked on the message again. Ilya had not replied. He hadn't even looked at the message, though it had been delivered.

Shane let a deep breath rush through his nose, the sound loud in the silence of the room.

It made him feel awful, especially with the loss from the night sitting deep in his bones. His shoulder ached where he'd been pressed into the boards, body checked by one of the Raiders defensemen.

He threw one last look at the phone, still sitting on his table unmoving, no new notification flashing across his screen.

Shane headed upstairs for a shower, needing the hot water to melt the stress away, to loosen his muscles.

In the private cubicle of the shower Shane could pretend the wetness on his cheeks was water alone.

He stood there until his skin wrinkled and the water turned cold.

It was both harder and easier to step onto the ice at their next game against Boston. This time, they were the guests, the locker room not offering that familiar calm that Shane only experienced when they played in Montreal.

Shane shook out his hands before putting on his gloves and dashing out onto the ice.

He hadn't cracked since that time weeks ago, when he'd texted Ilya. He hadn't messaged the man today, neither to check in nor to ask if they would meet up after the game today. It gave him a small sense of accomplishment, having held strong, lessening the sting just barely as he noticed Ilya fly by as the man made his rounds on their side of the ice.

And still. The one-sided emptiness of his screen made him feel sick every time he looked at it. A testament of his desperation. A stark revelation that he, too, was just another of Rozanovs many conquests.

Shane forced his mind to focus on the game, drain out every other thought until nothing but the puck against his stick, the ice under his skates, was on his mind.

He played like a madman.

And it worked. They won.

Throughout the whole game, he had only looked at Ilya once.

The empty condom wrapper in his night stand was mocking him. Shane sat on the side of his bed, frozen as he stared at the foiled packet.

He didn't know why he had saved it, why he still held on to it, even months later.

Ilya hadn't spoken to him since that night, and Ilya hadn't replied to the now shameful amount of messages Shane had sent him in moments of weakness.

He finally reached for the foil packet, staring down at something that was essentially trash.

He felt the same way about himself right now.

It crinkled between his fingers, completely dry after months in his bedside table.

He remembered the teasing, the soft smile on Ilyas lips as he'd taken it from his hands. The reassurance, hidden once more in a teasing tone. But Shane had felt safe, secure. Confident. Nervous

Ilya had kissed Shane so gently, whispered against his lips as he had pushed into him, making sure to go slow, to give Shane time to adjust.

Ilya had checked in so often on him, had asked Shane how he felt every single time he moved him, every time they changed a position.

He'd treated Shane as if he were the most precious thing in the universe, a thing to be coveted, to be cared for with the softest hands.

He'd fucked Shane slowly, in the beginning, their bodies adjusting, getting used to one another. And then when Shane had felt more comfortable, more confident in his desires, Ilya had fucked him like it was a visceral need, a desire so deep that could never be fulfilled.

Shane rubbed his hand over his thigh, the memory of Ilyas hands as they'd pressed into his skin, had held onto him tightly, tingling under his fingertips. The way his fingers had stroked over his skin, had drawn soft circles into it giving Shane time to get used to this new sensation, this new experience.

He'd been so careful.

Loving.

Shane closed his eyes against the wave of pain, his heart squeezing tightly in his chest until he felt like he couldn't draw a full breath.

Shane could feel himself slip, the tight lock on his emotions that had kept him mostly upright in the last few months slowly breaking.

His fingers curled around the wrapper, the crinkling sound the only noise to accompany his ragged breathing.

Keeping this reminder only added insult to injury.

And it was making him feel vulnerable. Raw.

The seal broke, the thoughts he worked so hard to suppress now at the forefront of his mind.

Had he been just another conquest to Ilya, just another achievement?

He had refused his advances so many times, hadn't felt ready for quite a long time to give up that most vulnerable part of himself to Ilya.

And Ilya had been so understanding, so patient. He'd just joked and mocked him like he always did, teased him with that irresistible smile on his lips. Had accepted Shane's boundaries without question, had instead sucked him off or stroked him until Shane was a shaking and quivering mess on the sheets. He'd never once pushed him for more. Had always easily accepted Shane's hesitations.

Perhaps that was why...

Shane shook his head, his heart racing in his chest even as he sat there, still.

Ilya had given him so much confidence, had made him feel wanted and appreciated.

Shane didn't know, didn't want to think about if that was when this tug in his heart had appeared for the first time.

But he'd felt so safe in Ilya's arms. So loved.

And that was the problem.

He'd fallen for the man he couldn't have, the man that clearly didn't want him any longer.

Rozanov had gotten from him what he had wanted all along, a lay.

And Shane must not have been good enough. The thrill of the chase, the excitement of doing something forbidden had disappeared the moment Shane had given in.

Now he was just... Boring.

That night, Shane couldn't bring himself to shower, to leave his bed.

He couldn't stop the tears, the burning feeling clawing at his throat. He sat on the side of his bed until the early hours, the wrapper clutched in his hand, tears coating and drying on his cheeks.

He could still feel the phantom weight of Rozanov pressing him down into the mattress.

Shane awoke with a start, the feeling of dread running down his spine. He'd dreamt of Rozanov, of that night. His first time.

He'd kissed Rozanov on the forehead. After, when they were simply relaxing in bed, Rozanov smelling of Shanes own body wash, his hair still damp from the shower and body only covered by a towel.

He'd kissed Rozanov on his forehead.

And immediately after, Rozanov had stood and announced his intention to leave.

Shane had kissed his forehead.

Had it... Had it revealed too much? Had Rozanov been able to tell?

Had the action revealed the fact that Shane had fallen for the first man that kissed him, for the first man that fucked him?

He sat on his bed, his face buried in his hands.

Fuck, that must have been it. Rozanov must have clocked Shane's feelings, must have had at least an idea of what was going on in Shane's head.

And it had scared him off. Had pushed Rozanov away.

The mere thought of Shane feeling more than just friendship must have catapulted Rozanov into a reality the man clearly had no desire to be part of.

The back of his throat burned as he forced his body through some breathing exercises.

It took a long time for that awful feeling to fade enough that Shane could finally fall asleep.

Rozanov smashed into Shane from behind, forcing his body into the boards with a loud crash. The wind knocked from Shane's throat, rushing out of him with a woosh and leaving him to crumble onto the ice. Shane struggled to draw in breath for a short moment, but then he was up again, chasing after the Boston centre.

His team mates did not intervene. Star player against star player almost followed the same unspoken rules a goalie versus goalie hit held.

Shane almost wished his team mates would attack Rozanov. Then he immediately felt awful for the thought. The hit had been clean, completely within the rules.

Shanes ribs and hip hurt.

Not as much as his heart ached in his chest.

A few nights later, Shane stared into the mirror in the hotel room, the lights in the bathroom on the verge of being just too bright, like some hotels were.

The light washed the natural tint of his skin away, leaving him looking pale in a way that made him look sick.

His fingers traced over the blue and purple bruises that had formed against his hip, thigh and ribcage.

Their padding did a great job of protecting them from more severe injuries. But a bruise formed easily, even with their layers of padding and clothes.

Shane stared at the deep purple bruise on his hip, his fingers circling it at the very edge.

It ached to press his fingers into the skin.

Shane flattened his palm against his hip, fingers spreading until the bruise was almost entirely hidden. Then he dug his hand in, a shooting pain running down his leg.

He hissed softly.

For some sick reason, the physical pain soothed the ache in his heart. The delusional part at the back of his mind whispered dangerous lies to him.

Did Rozanov still think about him? Had he been trying to catch Shane's attention, had he looked for an interaction, even if it would have been a fight?

The hit had been harder than warranted, hadn't it? Perhaps Rozanov had tried to grab his attention. Shane shook his head. It was of no use to get lost in ridiculous fantasies.

Shane pressed his hand into the bruise once more, the pain making him feel more grounded than he had in months. It distracted him from the turmoil swirling within.

Sweat was running down Shane's face, dripping into his eyes. It stung and clouded his vision for a moment, making the captain shake his head, the helmet loose on his hair.

They were out of the play-offs.

Boston had kicked them out, had won the series against them. It had been a close call, a tight game.

Shane and his team had given it their everything, and towards the end had played more viciously, perhaps even more dirty than Shane was a fan off.

It still hadn't been enough.

Shane was standing bent over, his fists braced against his knees as he panted heavily.

He'd skated like his life had depended on it just mere moments ago. And now it was over.

The disappointment from the loss sat heavy, the sting of failure burning with shame at the back of his neck.

All around him his team mates were bend over or sitting on the ice, letting the reality settle in.

They'd been so close. But Rozanov had scored in the last few seconds, giving Boston the win and ending their chances for more in overtime.

Shane wiped over his face with the back of his hand, stretching his body to stand. Everything was sore. He'd given more than he had, and he would pay the price for it tomorrow.

Hayden skated up to his side, knocking their helmets together. "Good game. We'll get that asshole next time. Should have tripped his ass." Shane could only fake a weak smile, nodding.

"We'll get them next time."

Shane pressed his lips into a thin line as they lined up to shake the Raiders hands.

With every player that passed him his nerves grew, Rozanov at the very end of the Raiders line.

Shane refused to look Rozanov in the eyes, clasping his sweaty hand with his own. It felt like a shock to his body, touching Rozanov again. Even if it was a fleeting, objectively gross touch. They were both warm and sweaty, sore from the game.

Shane had to swallow around the lump in his throat, mumbling an almost inaudible "Good Game."

Rozanov said nothing, squeezing Shane's hand once before he dropped it as if it burned him.

As if Shane were poison. Shanes fingers curled into a fist, trying to trap the sensation of Rozanov's hand against his own for as long as possible. He missed him so much. And hated himself for it.

Shane's hand tingled where Rozanov had touched him, still feeling the callouses against his skin.

Shane swallowed thickly as he skated away, following his team mates into their locker room.

Shane was bored.

Sure, he enjoyed the free time, even if it had come at the cost of getting the chance to win the Stanley Cup. But that journey had ended for this year, and it had only made Shane more determined to win the next one.

He trained every day, more than others might during their off season. He was still on the ice at least three times a week, sometimes with Hayden and some team mates, sometimes just

running drills alone.

The exercise gave him a chance to let his mind shut off. Gave him something to do where he did not have to think, where his mind could be empty and void, focussing only on the task at hand.

But he was bored now, sitting on his comfortable couch at home, the game Minnesota vs Dallas on the screen playing in the background.

His laptop was on his lap, and Shane had been scrolling through socialite sites for hours. Wasting time away by reading articles that had to be more lies than truth. Some of them even contradicted themselves just three sentences down. It had been fun at first, a game with himself to spot inconsistencies. Now it was just boring.

He'd come across pictures of Rozanov with no less than four different women, all from different cities and days. He'd clicked those away swiftly, the pit in his stomach that had become a constant in the last few months growing heavier.

Usually, he did not give such gossip much thought, but there had been a quiz on one of the sites that promised to reveal what kind of animal he was. The perfect distraction, a way to reign in his spiralling thoughts.

Then there had been one on what type of flower. The answer had put a small damper on his mood, adding another few kilos to the pit. A Lily.

Shane had closed out of that quiz quickly, opening another one to distract his mind.

What kind of hockey player he was.

He had to admit to himself; it had been satisfying to get Shane Hollander as his answer. That started a downwards spiral towards more personal quizzes.

What kind of vacation fit him best. What kind of presents he would like most. What a perfect first date would look like to him.

That one had been quite accurate.

Then a new suggestion below the answer of the date quiz he had just completed (hot drinks and skating, classic) caught his attention and stopped him in his tracks at the same time.

It wasn't another quiz but a link to an open discussion forum on relationships, with one of the questions displayed as a hook to get people to click on it.

His mouse moved before he could really think about it, before he could stop himself.

What should I do? I finally slept with my boyfriend for the first time, but today at college he didn't even say hello to me in the hallway.

Shane's breathing had slowed, reading through the more detailed post under the title.

The woman had been scared to lose her virginity, nervous about her first time. Her boyfriend seemed to have pressured her into it, at least the tone of the message suggested such things. She had finally given in, and subsequently gotten ghosted.

His heart had picked up its rate, the similarities few but there.

Rozanov had never pressured him, not really. He had simply expressed his interest every so often, but had never had a bad reaction when Shane rejected his advances.

But Shane too had been reserved and nervous for quite a while, had brushed off and ignored Rozanov's advances for some time.

Shane read through the comments on the post, the people pointing out to her that there had been signs, some comforting, some rather harsh.

Shane had never considered this a possibility, back then. For Rozanov to ghost him after he'd gotten what he wanted. Especially since Rozanov had waited years for him, had never done anything against Shane's explicit will or permission. And now he was getting ignored, just like that woman. Cast aside.

A comment caught his eyes, the words on the screen not directed towards him. And yet, reading them felt like a knife to the heart, Shane couldn't help but extrapolate her experiences onto his own life. And as such, the comment applied to him just as it did to her.

You were easy. He got what he wanted, to fuck you. Why would he stay around? It sounds like you were probably a good trophy or maybe even a dare, something to brag about to his frat mates. You sorority girls are all the same. Should've kept your legs closed. What did you expect of him? You're clearly not worth the hassle you are. Good for him to realize that quickly and dip before you could get all clingy.

Shane grew more nauseous the more he read through the comments, the tone shifting from supportive to blaming the woman for having wrong delusions.

The words on his screen confirmed his deepest fears, choked him in their nasty hold.

Shane made it to his bathroom, dry heaving into the toilet. Had he been easy? A challenge? A dare...? God, had Rozanov told others about them? Had this been some sick and twisted joke, a stupid game?

The small rational part of his brain that knew it was not so was drowned out by the anxiety of it all.

If Rozanov had told anyone, it would have been news by now. Theoretically he knew that. He also knew that it would ruin Rozanov just as much as it would ruin him.

But still.

The mental image of Rozanov bragging about this to his team mates, of having taken the famously stoic and antisocial Shane Hollander, having the man moaning and begging under him. It would not leave Shane's mind.

He dry-heaved into the toilet once more, clutching onto the cold porcelain.

When nothing came again, he sunk against the wall next to his toilet, cold sweat beading on his forehead.

Fuck.

He sat like this for quite some time, the cold tiles under his spread palms, his head leant back against the wall.

His heart rate slowly calmed, his thoughts untangling from the mess they had gotten into.

Shane knew that Rozanov would keep their secret.

Even if he did not trust that Rozanov still wanted to continue the physical relationship they had developed, he knew that Rozanov would never jeopardize their careers in such a way. Especially with him being Russian, the words from Carter still fresh in Shane's mind.

He told himself, over and over again, that their secret was safe. That even if Rozanov had grown bored and tired of him, he would never expose Shane like that.

It took some time for his nervous system to accept the words. Even then, every so often Shane felt a small spike of fear, the act of having to rely on something completely out of his control throwing him off centre.

Shane dragged himself into the shower, exhausted and tired from the day he'd just experienced.

Just a few hours later, freshly showered and clean, Shane was resting with a few pillows supporting his back, his phone in his hand.

The evening had shown him something.

He felt for Rozanov. Ilya.

Deeply.

Too much.

His finger hovered over the chat column, the name Lily staring up at him, mocking him.

He'd blocked and unblocked Rozanov a few times that evening already, a game he was playing with his own conscience.

It was childish.

Rozanov wouldn't ever notice.

And Shane had to stop hoping that he would, that Rozanov would answer his messages at some point, that they would go back to the way they had been months ago. That they could

go back to the way they had been.

That Rozanov would send a message that couldn't be delivered, that the inaccessibility would show Rozanov where Shane stood.

Except, that wasn't the truth.

The idea of Rozanov trying to reach out and being unable to do so filled Shane with so much dread it overweighed the knowledge that Rozanov wouldn't reach out, and the sadness that knowledge filled his heart with.

Shane held down on the currently unavailable Chat and unblocked Rozanov again.

And to torture himself a little further, Shane opened the chat.

He had to scroll to see the last message Rozanov had sent him, the movement of his thumb feeling humiliating.

I'm here.

God, how Shane wished that were true right now.

Shane curled into a tight ball; his phone pressed to his chest.

He was so fucked.

Some days were easier than others.

There were periods of time when he didn't think about Rozanov at all, full days he kept his mind free.

Others were harder.

Like today.

Shane took a deep breath to steel himself.

The bottle of wine in his hand was getting uncomfortable to hold by the grip he had on its neck.

Shane shook out his free hand and rolled his shoulders, finally raising his fist to knock at the front door.

Jackie let him in just seconds later, accepting his gift and giving him a quick hug before she ushered him into the living room.

A large chunk of his team had gathered to watch the Stanley Cup finals together. To watch Rozanov play. Though Shane was sure he was the only one there that looked forward to it.

"There is Ginger Ale in the fridge."

Shane acknowledged Jackie's words with a thankful shout, steering straight for the kitchen.

There was no way he could watch Rozanov play, surrounded by his own team mates, and get drunk at the same time.

They were bantering all around him, players bullying their team mates that still had the playoff beards into shaving.

The atmosphere was relaxed. Light.

Shane let himself drop onto the sofa next to Hayden, a Ginger Ale in hand.

The game was entertaining, quick paced. They watched in relative silence, the silence of easily excited men that cared too much about the sport shown on the screen that was.

"I can't believe that asshole is about to win the cup, Shane hates him the most."

Shane was too focussed on the game, watching Rozanov fly down the ice, the quick passes and steals. San Francisco was putting up a fight. But it was clear what the outcome would be, with only a few seconds left on the clock and the Raiders in a two-point lead.

After a moment it registered, that Hayden had spoken to him specifically. "What?"

"You hate Rozanov."

And for a moment, how Shane wished those words were true. It would make his life easier; would relieve him of the anguish his emotions were instead putting him through every single day.

"Of course."

Shane couldn't believe how anyone heard the tone of his voice and trusted those words to be true.

"But he's very good at hockey." His team mate interjected from behind them, sitting around the kitchen island.

"The best, probably." Now those words, Shane could believe. Did believe.

"No, you're the best." Shane smiled softly, the support of his team temporarily freeing him from the agony it was to watch Rozanov fulfil his life-long dream.

Then J.J.'s comment caught him off guard. "Not that animal, shit-show cocksucking Russian."

Shane's smile immediately turned strained. The horn saved him from having to acknowledge J.J.'s words in any way. Rozanov had won.

The words hadn't been directed towards him, and still, they caused that spike of adrenaline, the fear of having been found out. Was this the way his team would react if the truth came out? If it was revealed what Rozanov and he had been doing?

He didn't want to believe his own friends would speak about him in such a way. But did he truly know?

The members of his team all stood around him, making their way towards the kitchen to ransack the foods Jackie had generously prepared for them.

Shane remained on the couch alone, watching as the Boston Raiders smashed into a huge group hug, gloves, stick and helmets flying every which way.

He watched Rozanov hoist the cup towards the heavens, a blinding smile on his lips.

Shane realized he hadn't seen that man smile in real time since before the Olympics. Rozanov had always been laser focussed at any of their games.

Rozanov shook the cup high, screaming something into the camera.

Mama?

Shane didn't understand the words, but the waves of emotions rolling off Rozanov affected him, even here in this living room thousands of kilometres away.

The joy, relief, exhilaration. Shane clenched his teeth, his eyes beginning to sting in that telltale way.

He fought hard to keep his features in check, his own emotions a jumble.

He felt envious, sure. He would have wanted to be the man to lift the cup instead.

That was expected. Even the longing in his heart was nothing surprising, even after all these months Shane couldn't deny the pull Rozanov had on him.

What surprised him was the wave of sadness. He couldn't place why. Sad because it wasn't him? Sad because they hadn't spoken in months? Sad because he wished he could be there and celebrate this win with Rozanov, celebrate Rozanov like he deserved to be celebrated.

Shane swallowed the salty tears and continued to witness Rozanov fulfil his dreams.

Congratulations on the win.

Shane hit send on the message against his better judgement. He wasn't able to suppress that small flicker of hope, the irrational belief that there would be an answer this time. A hope against all his better judgement.

Still, his heart did a stupid little jump when the message switched from delivered to read.

Rozanov did not reply.

Shane had a hard time believing the words that were on the invitation before him. They expected him to present at the NHL awards, most sportsmanlike player. That in and of itself wasn't something too absurd. Shane was known as a clean player, never taking unnecessary risks, never hitting when it wasn't warranted, and often not even if it was.

He was a genius skater, quick and skilled. Never aggressive. Never too friendly either. Well, usually not aggressive except for that one time...

Even so, it being him to present that specific award made sense.

What made no sense was the name listed under his, revealing that he would be co-presenting the award with someone else.

Ilya Rozanov.

It had to be a joke. It was a joke.

A play on their rivalry, perhaps even a dig at the way Rozanov got under other people's skin. It was a joke.

The awards were still days away and Shane couldn't shake the feeling of humiliation that coursed through his veins.

He'd have to see him again.

They'd have to interact, probably speak to each other. It would be weird not to, right? If they were back stage together, and ignored each other while staff was bustling around them.

He'd have to speak to Rozanov again, after months.

But Rozanov would have to speak to him too, his brain helpfully interjected. He wouldn't be able to ignore him any more than Shane could.

A weird mix of feelings settled in his stomach, under his skin, making him feel like he was buzzing all over. Excitement. Anticipation. Fear.

And if the excitement to see Rozanov outweighed all the other emotions, it was not something Shane would ever admit to.

Shane stared down at the few lines they wanted him to say, the lines unmarked that belonged to Rozanov. They wanted them to act out something, had given them lines like some children in a school play.

Of course they'd written Shane to be the uptight one, the one having to be coaxed into relenting. The stuck up, good kid. Sometimes it felt like that was all he was to them, all they

wanted to see. Quiet in press and good at the game. But nothing more. And Rozanov got the role of a charming play boy. The one that got to be fun, cheeky. Have a personality.

Shane chewed on his bottom lip. It left a sour taste in his mouth.

He repeated his lines a few times, memorized them together so he would know when to speak. He knew Rozanov would be able to do it, would be great at this, even. He'd joke the way they wanted him to, would smile that winning smile and captivate every single person in that room.

Shane couldn't wait to see Rozanov and hated himself for it.

Chapter 2: Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

As I said, a lot of self indulgence.....
Dont judge me
Hope you like it <3

Shane was swaying from one leg to the other, moving his weight in an attempt to self soothe in a subtle way.

Rozanov was late. They would have to present in less than a minute and Shane was still standing here alone. The people around him were growing nervous too. Evidently, no one knew where Rozanov had disappeared to.

He could feel the shift in the air before he saw him. The relief that went through the organizers, the collective breath of air rushing free as Rozanov suddenly appeared beside him.

Shane couldn't hide his irritation, the rising nerves from having to speak in such a public manner, with Rozanov by his side no less, making his fuse shorter and emotions burst out quicker.

"Where the fuck were you. We're on in like 5 seconds."

Shane wasn't sure what he would have imagined their first time speaking to each other after six months would be like. It hadn't been this.

Rozanov looked bored, nonchalant, as he adjusted the cuffs of his jacket. "Ah, 25 seconds."

Shane's jaw clenched, irritation growing. God he'd missed his voice. Rozanov still hadn't looked at him, not really.

"Where were you? I was standing here alone like an idiot."

Shane could feel his blood rush through his veins at rapid speed, could feel his cheeks warm. He hated how easily Rozanov made him feel.

"I was busy."

It felt like cold water running down his spine. It was one thing to see Rozanov in the tabloids with the puck bunny of the week, but an entirely other thing to be left alone and stressing out over that very same a person while Rozanov got his dick wet somewhere.

"With who."

It slipped free, and Shane could hear his own dripping jealousy in his words. It burned viciously in his veins.

Right that moment, to his grace, or detriment, a woman waved them forward, giving them the signal to step on stage. Rozanov stepped past him and into the light, ignoring Shane's question.

Shane breathed in deeply one more time, the knot in his throat tightening in a way that made him begin to worry if he would be able to speak clearly.

Shane followed Rozanov onto the stage, the lights blinding him. There were so many people, so many eyes focussed on them. Shane felt exposed.

Thankfully, it seemed, that the stress from standing in front of hundreds of people was enough for his body to ignore the man beside him, at least to some degree, and Shane managed to school his expression into that neutral state he adopted often when he felt uncomfortable. The podium was illuminated, giving the very opportune side effect of Shane being unable to see the faces in the crowd past the first row.

Their scripted banter ran flawlessly and earned a few laughs. It was easy to follow the instructions he'd received.

Shane didn't really hear any of it. Only muscle memory or anxiety or fear of failure got him through it.

Then, when Rozanov asked for the pictures, just as the script demanded, Shane couldn't stare straight ahead anymore and had to acknowledge the man beside him.

He'd assumed Rozanov would simply raise his phone and pretend to take photos. But instead, their faces greeted Shane as he looked up at the device.

He could see Rozanov's hand rise before it landed on his skin, just above the collar of his suit jacket. His neck tingled, his body going stiff under Rozanov's hold. He had no time to prepare himself, no way to guard his heart.

A soft sigh escaped him, his cheeks flushing just slightly. It was inaudible to anyone but them on the stage. Shane prayed no one would notice the colour now in his cheeks.

With just this one touch, Shane felt more grounded than he had in months. It took all his concentration to keep his expression neutral, to put a little smile on his lips, when all his body wanted to do was sink into Rozanov's touch, let his eyes slip closed and get lost in the sensation.

Fuck, he'd missed him so much, so deeply. And Rozanov couldn't know. Ever.

Rozanov may as well have trailed down fire along Shane's spine, the path of his fingers along Shane's back causing Shane to arch under his touch, just a bit. This was torture.

Rozanovs hand came to rest on the curve of Shanes lower back, just shy of straight up touching his ass. On stage. In front of hundreds of their colleagues and coaches, thousands of people watching at home.

And all Shane could think was: *please, hold me.*

Shane had no recollection of how he had finished his lines, how he had read out the winner of the award.

One second Rozanovs hand was burning into his back, and the next Shane was almost running into the first bathroom back-stage that he could find.

He had the mental capacity to check under the doors of the stalls, finding the restroom gracefully empty.

His heart was racing, his lungs were feeling like they couldn't fully expand.

Shane bent over the sink, both hands curling around the cold surface, and Shane pressed his fingers against the edge, trying to ground himself. He clenched his fingers until it hurt.

He stared down into the porcelain. Shane couldn't lift his head, couldn't look at himself. He knew that he would see the devastation, the longing. The hurt. Yearning for a man that would never be his.

Shane shook his head, his eyes scrunching shut as he fought against the impending break down. He could tell, if he let his thoughts spiral further, if he gave into the rushing river in the back of his mind, he'd lose it in this very bathroom. The skin along his temples was already beginning to tingle. Shane forced himself to breathe in deeply until it hurt, then hold the breath until he felt his lungs burn. Sometimes it worked. Not so much today.

There was still an award show he had to get back to, a party after. He was nominated too

There was no time for him to break down in this bathroom floor.

Shane scolded himself. He had to grow up. He wasn't some teenager that could spend the evening being love sick and hiding away. He was an adult, expected back in his seat any moment now.

Shane couldn't move. The only reason his hands weren't shaking was that he clutched onto the bathroom countertop like his life depended on it.

He tried to focus on his breathing, trying a different technique, dragging in slow lungfuls of air, exhaling against his lips. Someone had told him years ago that the pressure could calm your nervous system.

It didn't work either.

His heart was racing.

The door to the bathroom opened, the soft click making Shane jump, and in stepped... Rozanov.

Shane turned towards him immediately, noticing the soft click of the lock as Rozanov locked them in the room together.

Shane took a step back, slowly turning his body towards the man. He couldn't look at him right away, blinking rapidly to alleviate the burn in his eyes. He pushed his hands into the pockets of his suit, trying to hide the shivers that were trembling through his body.

Shane didn't know, couldn't control how his expression had slipped the moment his eyes landed on Rozanov, revealing entirely too much. He looked so unfairly handsome, his hair styled in that neat yet messy way, his sharp cheekbones and jaw. The suit that hugged his body in all the right places. Shane squeezed his eyes shut for a moment, his mind in turmoil. His gaze immediately found Rozanovs again.

Rozanov leant against the wall opposite and just looked at Shane. And then he began to laugh.

He laughed. Rozanov chuckled as if this situation were funny to him. Was this funny to him?

"Well..."

That ugly feeling in his throat roared, clawing at Shanes skin as if it were a monster waiting to be unleashed.

"What? What the fuck, Rozanov. What do you want from me?! You haven't answered a text from me in like six months!" Shane's voice was rising. The sound volume almost hid the deep hurt that strained him.

Rozanovs smile slowly started to fade, but Shane couldn't stop.

"You won't even acknowledge I exist unless there is a camera pointed at us. Won't talk to me unless it is fucking scripted out for you to read off. So yes, what the fuck do you actually want from me."

Shane could hear it, in his voice. There was no way it was not showing on his face too.

Rozanov just stared at him, still silent. The smile had faded entirely, replaced by something Shane couldn't place. He couldn't reconcile the expression with anything he believed Rozanov felt for him. Which wasn't a lot in and off itself.

"Well?!" Shane felt like a fool immediately, standing there and shouting at a man that did not care.

Rozanov still hadn't spoken, was still just staring at Shane. Then he brushed his hands over the front of his suit, smoothing out non-existent wrinkles.

"I want you to suck my dick."

The words stopped Shane's momentum, drained him. His breath hitched, his eyes widening just slightly. They burned.

He shouldn't be surprised. He had forced himself to accept over the last 6 months that he was nothing but another body in Rozanovs collection.

It still hurt to hear. To be faced with it so easily. It felt like Rozanov was mocking him, mocking the desire that, even now, after all this, still scratched at the back of Shanes skull, commanding of him to go over to Rozanov and do exactly what he asked of him.

"Fuck you. You are unbelievable. You suck my dick." The power drained from his voice, the tone quieter. Defeated. He was just a game.

Shane had to turn away. He couldn't look at the man that held him captive any longer. Couldn't face the fact that Rozanov had him in a chokehold.

He could hear fabric rustle as Rozanov walked towards him. And then, without warning, Rozanov grabbed his chin, pulling at him until he faced Rozanov again.

Shanes lashes fluttered as his eyes slipped closed, the hold on his chin enough to make his knees feel like cooked spaghetti. God, his skin craved to be touched by Rozanov, craved to be caressed. His body sang with joy, betraying the pain in his heart. Shane couldn't stop himself from leaning into the touch which was so demanding. His mind cleared. Nothing else existed.

"Maybe ask nicely."

And gods, Shane was weak. He was so very weak to the man in front of him, so weak and unable to deny his needs when they were finally being met, finally accessible. He wanted to tell Rozanov to fuck off, to finally leave him alone. To release Shane of the prison he had found himself in over the last 6 months. Technically, he should. Realistically, Shane was too fucking needy to ruin this opportunity for himself.

Rozanov manoeuvred Shanes face by the grip of his chin, pulled until they were mere centimetres apart. A soft hum from Rozanov caused goosebumps to burst over Shanes arms. He was already fucking hard. One touch from Rozanov, and his body betrayed his rationality, his feelings.

He couldn't do it. He couldn't send Rozanov away, the words wouldn't pass his lips. Instead...

"Please."

His voice was soft, filled with yearning. Unrequited desire. Rozanov smirked. He shook his head, the movement minuscule.

"If you want me to get on my knees, on this filthy bathroom floor, you have to ask nicer than that."

And for a split second, Shane found Rozanov to be a hypocrite. Hadn't this been the exact thing he'd demanded of Shane mere moments ago?

The irritation withered and died, the thumb stroking over his chin stealing all his thoughts away.

"Please." Shane whispered once more. "Please get on your knees, on this filthy bathroom floor, and suck my dick."

Rozanov leant into him, their foreheads brushing together before his nose rubbed along Shane's cheek. Shane breathed in that scent he had missed for 6 months, the sharpness of Rozanov's cologne, the subtle undertones of his shampoo and skin.

"No."

Ice curled in his stomach, the rejection so profoundly humiliating. Rozanov was playing with him, teasing him. Mocking him. Rozanov released his grip on Shane's chin, his hand moving to stroke over Shane's cheek instead. This was so incredibly cruel.

"No?" He sounded so insecure, embarrassment flushed his skin. Rozanov pulled away so they were facing each other once more, his hand still burning into Shane's cheek.

"No. We are going to go back out there, to this dumb ceremony and the boring party after. And then, when you have waited all night, you will come to my hotel room and I will maybe do more than just suck your cock."

Shane swallowed hard, his cock jumping in his slacks. He let out a slow, quiet breath. Rozanov was teasing him. He still wanted him. This wasn't mockery. But foreplay. It shouldn't make him feel that good this quickly, disregard all the other emotions that had dictated his past months. And yet, it did.

God, Rozanov had changed so much. Shane hadn't realized. But then how could he have? Shane looked at Rozanov through his lashes, his pretty eyes shining.

"When did your English get so good?" That was safe, a deflection from the one thing Shane wanted the most. His body was tight with lust, his pants straining under the weight of his erection.

But talking about Rozanov's English was safe. Rozanov's hand slipped from Shane's cheek, giving Shane room to breathe. He needed it desperately, the air. Shane immediately missed the heat against his skin.

"Ah, I read the New Yorker now."

"Really?" Shane couldn't help his smile. He was so stupidly in love. Fuck.

"No, the New Yorker is boring."

Shane bit down on the inside of his cheek, wrestling with that smile still. He was so weak to Rozanov.

"My dad likes it." Why did he say that?

"So, what, being boring is genetic?"

"Wow, genetic." Shane was smiling again. Stupid. This banter was familiar, allowing the adrenaline that had rushed through Shane's body to slowly ebb away.

Rozanov was still so close, his body radiating heat and cocooning Shane in a world of warmth. The man seemed to think about something, the change in expression telling Shane he had come to a conclusion.

"Let's make a deal. If you win MVP tonight, I will blow you and fuck you. Whatever you want."

Shane felt his cock pulse in his pants, the need to kiss Rozanov overwhelming. But he couldn't. He couldn't be the first to crack once again.

"And what if you win?"

Rozanov's hand was on his chin in an instant, and his lips were just as soft as they had been in Shane's apartment staircase, blanketing Shane's own. Just as soft as he remembered.

Rozanov kissed him deeply, his tongue pushing into Shane's mouth, tasting and devouring him in an instant. Shane felt his body bow towards Ilya, seeking to be closer. It was always overwhelming when Ilya kissed him, because it felt like he would consume Shane whole.

And Shane wanted to be consumed. He drowned in Ilya's kiss, his body and mind relaxed for the first time in a long while, truly at peace.

Ilya pulled away just as quickly as he had moved in to kiss Shane. Two soft taps to his cheek brought Shane back to reality. He couldn't have told you when his conscious had begun to slip, when the world had started to only exist against Ilya's lips.

Shane opened his eyes slowly, re-entering the now.

"Good luck tonight."

And with those words, Ilya was gone, the door falling shut and encasing Shane in complete silence.

He let out a long, shuddering breath. Fuck.

He was so fucking fucked.

Shane turned towards the sink, looking at himself in the mirror for the first time since he'd entered the room.

He looked... Destroyed. Tears shimmered against his lashes; his suit jacket was rumpled. His cock strained against his dress pants. His lips still glistened from the kiss.

He raised a hand to brush over them, a shiver running down his spine. Fuck, he loved Ilya Rozanov. Fuck.

And he knew he'd go to the hotel room once Rozanov called, would do whatever the man asked of him.

Because in his arms, Shane found pure happiness.

Without him, his world had started to turn bleak.

If being an easy lay was what would keep Rozanov around, would keep Rozanov interested, then that was what Shane would be.

The party after the awards felt like it had been going on for eons.

Of course, Rozanov had won MVP. It was a no brainer, really, with him winning a Stanley Cup, and being at the forefront of the scoring race. Rozanov had swept them all this season. Shane wasn't surprised. Instead, he was excited, remembering Rozanov's words all too well. The anticipation was making his skin itch under that too hot, suddenly too tight suit.

His phone buzzed in his pocket.

Shane pulled it free faster than lightning, seeing the message appear under a name he hadn't seen on his phone in a long while.

Penthouse 1

A rush of adrenaline shot through Shane, his gaze scanning over the crowd immediately to find Rozanov. He could see him on the other side of the room, speaking to two men. Then he seemed to excuse himself, and Shane watched with a weird electric feeling buzzing under his skin as Rozanov left the party.

He waited a total of 6 minutes and 35 seconds before he couldn't do it anymore.

Shane excused himself from his own conversation, which he hadn't really participated in all evening, and made his way up towards Rozanov's room.

His brain was trying to tell him that this was a horrid idea, that continuing to meet with Rozanov like this would only make him more miserable in the long run. But the promise of Rozanov's touch over his skin, or Ilya's lips against his own was too tempting.

Shane knocked on the door once, feeling it give under his hand. Rozanov had left the door open and ajar, waiting for Shane.

Shane quickly slipped into the room, locking the door behind himself. Then he finally turned to face Rozanov, able to drink in the sight.

Rozanov was a vision, standing at the far end of the room by the windows, his shirt undone and leaving his chest bare, his body only dressed in black slacks otherwise. He held a drink in his hand, his arms spreading wide in victory.

Shane couldn't stomp down the smile completely.

"Congratulations."

Rozanov nodded and took a sip of his drink.

"Thank you. Now take off your clothes."

It was so easy following Rozanov's command. It felt like second nature to him, slipping out of his jacket first and placing it over the back of the sofa. Then pulling off his bowtie, folding his shirt and pants until Shane was left with only his underwear and socks. Doing exactly what Rozanov asked of him required no thought. Shane could just be.

Still, he was nervous. Nervous about sleeping with Rozanov again, about giving his body over once more. Had he performed badly the last time and that was why he'd been ghosted for 6 months? The insecurity made him squirm as he stood there in his underwear.

Shane would have to do better today, he was sure he wouldn't survive another stretch of silence like this, not emotionally.

Rozanov seemed to pick up on his nerves.

"What?"

Shane scrambled for a good excuse, something he could say without giving everything away.

"It's just. A lot of windows."

Stupid thing to say, in the penthouse suite of a high-rise hotel in Las Vegas. But it was all he could come up with. Thankfully, Rozanov didn't question him and instead beckoned him to follow him into another room.

"Get on the bed." Rozanov had dragged a chair into the room with him, positioning it at the foot, a few metres away.

"What?"

Shane stopped short, his heart rate picking up. He knew what Rozanov was asking, he wasn't stupid. But his mind needed a few moments to comprehend the demand. His cock twitched.

Rozanov made it easy for him.

"Get on the bed. I want to watch you. Touch yourself."

Rozanov sank into the chair and nodded towards the bed once more, the glass in his hand rising to his lips.

Shane crawled onto the sheets, settling against the abundance of pillows, his legs crossed at his ankles. He felt vulnerable, exposed. It was exhilarating.

Rozanov gestured towards him once more, waiting for Shane to go on.

Shane took a deep breath, his nerves making his heart rate pick up. He slowly trailed a hand down his neck, over his chest and to his abs. His body curved into his touch, noticing with great satisfaction how Rozanov watched him with rapt attention. It gave him a boost of confidence. His hand settled over the visible bulge in his underwear, and he began to stroke himself over the fabric. Shane unhooked his ankles, letting his legs fall open slightly.

The quiet, "Fuck.", floated through the room, making Shane sigh softly in response. He was so hard. He wanted Rozanov to touch him. He wanted Rozanov to continue to watch him. It was quite the dilemma.

"Do you want to know how it feels?"

"How what feels." Shane's voice matched Rozanov's, the need in both of their voices evident.

"Holding the cup." Rozanov let the p pop over his lips, the corner of his mouth curving in a teasing smirk.

"You fucking asshole." Shane's lips curled in tandem with Rozanov.

"Ah, Hollander, I can barely describe it." Rozanov groaned and arched back on the chair, his head falling back as he seemingly basked in the memory of his win.

Shane pulled off his underwear in one swift motion, and threw it right at Rozanov's chest. It flopped down onto Rozanov's lap, and Rozanov slowly moved to look at the black garment.

The man stilled as he stared at the underwear in his lap, causing the smile on Shane's lips to falter. Had he gone too far? He really wasn't sure anymore what would push Rozanov over the invisible line he had created for them.

Shane watched with bated breath as Rozanov picked up the black underwear with the tips of his fingers, his gaze jumping from the fabric to Shane's face.

And then, Rozanov raised it to his mouth and nose, drawing visible breath. Shane's cock jumped so hard it slapped against the soft skin of his underbelly.

"Fuck." Fuck, that was hot. He would keep this memory safe for as long as he lived, Rozanov's face buried in his underwear, his eyes boring into Shane as he breathed in, deliberately deep, deliberately slow, the purest scent of Shane.

Shane's hand curled around his cock, working off instinct alone as he began to stroke himself to the visual before him.

"I need..." Shane trailed off, a soft moan falling from his lips, he spread his legs wider, his hand stroking down along his cock, brushing over his balls until his fingers began to circle his hole.

Rozanov's eyes had followed Shane's hand with laser focus.

Rozanov breathed in one last time, then let the underwear fall to the floor beside him. His focus was on Shane entirely.

"What."

Shane just pressed his fingers against his dry skin slightly, continuing to circle his fingers, stroking up over his balls. He may not be the most experienced person, but he wasn't about to finger himself without lube.

"You."

Shane focussed on Rozanov intensely, the way his breath hitched at the word, the quick peek of a tongue as Rozanov wet his lips.

Shane felt powerful. He repeated himself.

"I need you." The weight of the words was so much greater than Shane wanted to acknowledge, than Rozanov knew.

Rozanov downed the last of his drink and stood, pulling his dress shirt off completely. The motion caused his muscles to ripple, shadows casting and accentuating his physique. He looked like a god.

Shane couldn't hold back any longer either, pulling his hand away and twisting on the bed.

He crawled towards Rozanov as said man stepped up to the end of the bed. Shane looked up at him through his lashes, searching for any sign that what he was doing was not what Rozanov wanted. He couldn't find anything in Rozanov's gaze that asked him to stop.

He felt Rozanov's gaze on him like a burning fire washing over his skin, causing Shane to arch his back further. He wanted to look alluring too, wanted Rozanov to marvel at his body just like Shane did. As soon as he was close enough, Shane pressed his face into Rozanov's covered crotch, breathing him in deeply just like Rozanov had done minutes before.

He rubbed his face against the covered erection, warm under the fabric, and felt Rozanov's fingers twist in his hair. It wasn't to stop Shane's movement, or guide him. It was simply a steady presence against Shane's scalp, scratching through his hair, the touch surprisingly gentle.

Shane sighed softly, a hand joining his lips as he rubbed and kissed at Ilya through the fabric of his pants.

He glanced up at the man once more, his eyes an obvious question. Rozanov nodded.

Shane raised both hands to undo Rozanov's fly in a heartbeat, pushing his clothing down and away. Ilya's erection slapped him in the face, warm and heavy against his skin.

Shane sighed in delight, his fingers curling around the base of Rozanov's heavy cock to hold him steady as he stretched his lips around the head and sank down, slow, deliberate, devouring.

Shane almost choked when Ilya's cock hit the back of his throat, the scent of him, the taste and weight of him on his tongue consuming every thought. He breathed through it.

Shane moved slowly at first, savouring the experience, his tongue running along every prominent vein, stroking over the slit each time he pulled up to taste Rozanov.

And Shane was desperate, so incredibly horny. He wanted to taste Rozanov, wanted to know what it felt like when he came down his throat.

Rozanov pulled at his hair suddenly, the pain sharp enough to penetrate through the haze in Shane's mind. He stopped immediately, the tingling on his scalp a welcome addition to the sensations filling his body.

"Turn around. On your knees, Hollander."

Shane was quick to obey, pulling off with a soft pop and flipping around, his chest and cheek pressed into the mattress, his hands curling in the fabric beside his head. His back arched beautifully, his ass straight up in the air, his legs spread slightly. He was presenting himself to Ilya. Did Rozanov think he looked pretty like this?

While Shane had rearranged himself on the bed, Rozanov had moved to pick up a bottle of lube, shrugging off his clothing completely in the process.

The cold of the gel against his exposed hole made Shane shiver, a needy whine filling the room.

A hand came to rest on his ass, squeezing the fat muscle once. Rozanov's thumb rubbed over the glob of lube, pressing it into Shane's skin.

"Be patient."

Shane whined again, wriggling his ass under Ilya's touch. That earned him a light smack. Shane moaned with delight.

Ilya's hand moved from Shane's ass cheek, brushing over soft skin, down the crease, until his fingers found Shane's hole once more. For a moment, Ilya just touched Shane, his fingers caressing the soft skin.

"Is okay?"

Shane nodded.

Ilya poured some more lube onto his own hand, and pushed a finger into Shane's body, careful and slow.

Shane moaned, the sound drawn out and broken, needy. His cock jerked, hanging in the air, forgotten.

Ilya made sure to open up Shane thoroughly, carefully. By the end of it, Shane was a shaking and sweating mess, the muscles in his stomach drawn and clenched so tight as he tried to keep himself from cumming right then and there. He was panting against the sheets, his breaths soft moans and whines.

Ilya finally took mercy on him and positioned himself behind Shane, the sound of a condom being opened drowned out by Shanes desperate sounds

"Okay?"

"Please." Shane begged immediately, his eyes screwed shut. "Fuck me, please."

Ilya didn't have to be told twice. He lined himself up with Shanes fluttering hole. And then he finally pushed in, spreading Shane inch after inch on his cock.

Shane mewled and whined, the stretch just as delicious as last time, just as mind numbing. He tilted his hips towards Ilya, tried to get him to move faster, quicker, harder. But Rozanov curled a hand against Shane's waist and held him still.

"Is this okay?"

"God, please. Rozanov, fuck."

Shane didn't care that he was begging, didn't care that he sounded like a desperate whore. He whined and wriggled under Ilyas touch, his breaths fast and broken.

And then Ilya finally gave him what he so desperately wanted. He fucked into Shane with long, deep thrusts, building the fire that was consuming Shanes body, stoking it until it threatened to burn Shane away.

Ilya held on to him, his touch grounding Shane in the moment, allowing his mind to quiet until nothing else existed in this universe but him and Ilya, the pleasure between them.

Ilya's thrusts were becoming more frantic, more irregular, slowly losing his rhythm. His hand moved from Shane's hip down to stroke over his cock.

At the first brush of Ilyas hand against Shane's erection Shane came, his body seizing and curling as he moaned loudly. Ilya continued to chase his own pleasure, his moans and groans mixing in a symphony with Shanes own.

"Fuck, Hollander." Ilya cursed as he came, his hips slowing with every thrust until he stilled completely. They both remained silent for a moment, simply trying to catch their breath.

Without another word, Ilya pulled out and tied off the condom to discard it. Without Ilyas hands on his body, Shane crumbled onto the sheets, panting and exhausted.

He felt like every bone in his body had been replaced with gelatine, rendering him boneless.

Ilya disappeared from the room for a brief moment, then re-entered with a glass bottle and an additional glass. He picked his own glass on the way to the bed. Ilya sat down on the bed beside Shane, leaning against the headboard, and filled both glasses with a generous serving of Vodka.

Shane managed to push himself up, mirroring Ilya's position on the bed, coming to rest beside him. Ilya handed him a glass without a word, then pulled a cigarette free from a small carton on the bedside table and lit it.

Shane sipped at the drink, the alcohol burning in his mouth and down his throat. He didn't like to drink. But he wasn't going to deny an offering from Ilya either. Shane hated how the alcohol stole the taste of Ilya on his tongue.

They sat and spoke in soft voices. The atmosphere had cooled down exponentially, and Shane couldn't shake an uncomfortable feeling crawling along the back of his neck. Something felt off.

Ilya dismissed him with the excuse of an early flight. Shane agreed and stood, moving over to grab his discarded underwear and heading into the other room to change. He hadn't expected the night to end in any other way. This was who they were.

"Goodbye, Hollander." came the voice from the bedroom.

Rozanov hadn't come to see him off.

Shane pulled on his jacket, nodded once into the empty room and slipped out into the night. Disappointment rested heavy on his shoulders.

Only in the elevator did that uncomfortable feeling at the base of his neck explain itself.

He rubbed his finger over his bottom lip. It didn't ache in that way it usually would after spending a night with Rozanov, his skin didn't tingle under his own touch.

Reality crashed into him like a freight train.

Rozanov hadn't kissed him once, not after Shane sucked him off, not when they'd fucked. Not after, laying there together as they came down from the high of an orgasm. Not when he'd offered him that, honestly, disgusting Vodka.

Shane pulled out his phone and opened the messenger chat to Rozanov. He wouldn't see Rozanov for weeks, maybe months.

See you next season.

He slowly deleted every letter, the tapping of his finger against the screen drowned out by the music playing in the elevator.

Shane nibbled at his lip, sucking it into his mouth.

We didn't even kiss.

He typed it out slowly, almost as if he were at war with himself. Was it too much? Would it reveal too much about what he felt, what he craved?

Shane's finger hovered over the sent button, tasting blood as he continued to bite at his lip, pulling off tags of skin his teeth created.

The elevator halted with a jump. Shane hit send. The message delivered immediately.

"Fuck." He stared down at his phone in horror, people flowing into the elevator around him. He had no idea what floor he was even on. All he could do was stare down at his screen, partially in confusion, mostly in horror.

His heart stuttered when the message ticked over to read. Three dots in a speech bubble appeared, dancing on his screen. Rozanov was replying.

Fuck.

Shane exited the app quickly, worried that if Rozanov sent him an answer he would see Shane lurking immediately. Would notice Shane's desperation.

That he desperately hoped for a reply, desperately waited for Rozanov to notice him in any way.

Shane pressed down on the power button of his phone, turning it off before any new notification rolled in.

He couldn't do this. Not here, in public.

Shane finally looked up and noticed he was already ascending again, having gone past his floor and heading back up towards Rozanov.

He smashed the button for the next floor and rushed out of the elevator.

Shane took two steps at a time as he ran down the stairs, practically bolting down the hallway. He unlocked his own hotel room with shaking fingers and slipped inside.

Once in the room he leant against the closed door, panting.

Fuck. Fuck.

Why had he typed that? Why had he hit sent? Why was he so desperately hopeful for a reply?

He knew, realistically, that Rozanov would either tease him about it, or ignore him. He knew he wouldn't get the answer he so craved.

Why did his body still think he would?

Shane stood there for a long time, waiting for his breathing to calm, his pulse to slow. When it finally did, Shane pulled off his shoes and stepped into the room. He placed down his jacket and bowtie. Then he stripped completely, got into the shower and scrubbed at his skin until he was pink all over.

Shane didn't turn his phone back on for three days.

When he did, he was greeted by a few messages.

One buried below them all.

Did you want me to?

Chapter 3: Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

The timeline gets a little wonky, but I wanted so many of the scenes from the show to happen in some way.....
Please enjoy

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

Shane debated whether he should reply to that message for days, going back and forth with himself if he should say something, answer Rozanov in any way.

But what would he even say? If he would have seen it that evening, he could have replied and maybe something else could have happened. Maybe something could have changed between them.

Shane shook his head, banishing the small hopeful thought.

Rozanov was likely back in Russia by now, and Shane was sitting in Montreal. They were thousands of kilometres apart.

Now there was nothing to gain from replying to the message, except for a chance of getting rejected. Or worse, ignored again.

So, Shane did nothing.

He didn't have to stare at his lack of response for a long time.

A new message fluttered in from Rozanov, teasing him about probably training too hard, telling him he should not be working too much as Rozanov would take the championship cup again next season.

It felt like a stone fell from Shane's heart. They were back to their banted and easy conversations. He could breathe again.

Rozanov seemed to have decided to ignore Shane's feelings.

Shane was happy to play along, happy to get his emotions hurt if it meant he could continue whatever it was that he and Rozanov had.

They fell back into a familiar rhythm, baiting each other through text, meeting up for a quick fuck when they played against each other.

They rarely had much time together, either both or one of them flying out early the next day, or sometimes even the same evening if it was an afternoon game, which often only gave them one or two hours crammed into a hotel room. Shane disliked those days the most, simply because it seemed more stressful, more forbidden to sneak around during the daytime. And, he didn't get to spend much time with Rozanov then. He genuinely enjoyed his company.

It was becoming a familiar rhythm again and Shane was growing more comfortable in the arrangement. If Shane's heart ached when Ilya kissed him tenderly, or caressed his cheek gently, he could ignore it just so this could continue on.

Shane glanced into the rearview mirror of the Uber once more, rubbing his hand through his hair.

He had to force himself to stop messing with it, to stop fidgeting so much in the back of this car.

He was nervous.

Something had changed, over the last few months and years. Shane had finally won the cup with the Metros, not once but twice. Him and Rozanov had continued their familiar pattern, fucking when they had time, texting in between.

Somewhere along the line, the texted conversations had begun to shift. It wasn't solely about their next hook up anymore; it had started to become a habit. Texting Rozanov when he was reminded of him by something he saw during the day. Sharing something he couldn't wait to tell him. Sending a Foto if he saw a cute dog or cat on the street. Shane wasn't the only one that initiated such contact, Rozanov texted him just as often, if not more.

They'd grown closer, in a lot of ways.

Shane had continued to fall, his heart singing every time he met up with Ilya, his chest aching every time he had to leave Rozanov's side.

It was getting increasingly harder to do just that, to hide his feelings. The longing for his touch. The jealousy when some tabloid posted another rumour, true or not. Shane never dared ask. He was scared of the answer. Not because Shane was unaware of the fact that Rozanov continued to fuck other people. He was scared who he'd turn into, what the jealousy would do to him, if Rozanov told him to his face.

Shane was generally a calm person. He didn't hate people easily, normally did not pay attention to what the trashy gossip sites would say.

He hated every person in those pictures with Rozanov. He was ashamed of it too, he did not know those people, they were surely lovely and kind. He still couldn't stand them. Quietly, in his own head, he hated them.

Shane was scrolling through Instagram, trying to distract himself from the words. His feed was a mixture of celebrity news and Fotos posted by his team mates or the few players he

followed outside his bubble.

Shane hovered over the block button for ET news. He was tired of seeing those posts, tired of being flooded with this non information. Shane pressed down and exited the app.

They were driving up a hill now, towards a rather secluded building. The driver came to a stop in front of a staircase leading up to the front door and Shane exited with a thanks and a cash tip. He'd heard the app took a percentage of the tip when you gave it online. He had no idea if that was true. Shane imagined someone would prefer cash anyway.

The car drove off, leaving Shane by his lonesome in front of what could only be described as a real estate wonder.

He almost wanted to take a lap around the house before ringing the doorbell, taking in the building.

But the longing in his chest was too grand. Shane knocked on the door, then rang the bell, peeking into the house through the glass by the doorframe. Damn. Ilya had a nice home. Why hadn't he ever come here earlier.

Ilya opened the door and immediately stole all breath from Shane's lungs. Fuck, he got to have that. He got to fuck Ilya. Kiss him. Shane wished he could have him in the way he dreamed about.

Shane stepped past him and toed off his shoes at the entrance, taking in the nice interior of the place.

"This is really great! Did you have it built?" When Shane turned towards Ilya, the man was closer to him than he had anticipated. Shane took a small step backwards.

"Mr. Real Estate."

Ilyas tone was so teasing, so playful. Shane huffed out a breath to alleviate the tension in his chest.

"You think we need to talk?" Shane had come here with the intention to keep his feelings hidden, to keep his mouth shut and continue this as best he could. But seeing Ilya before him like this, smiling casually, inviting Shane into his home... Shane was moments away from confessing his love and subsequently ruining his life by nuking their casual relationship, and yes, friendship, with his feelings. He still firmly believed Ilya did not want more. He could live with that. Truly. He could.

Ilya saved him from his own demise, stepping closer and closer, stalking Shane as he continued to retreat backwards until his ass hit the kitchen island.

"No, after."

"Okay." Shane whispered as Ilya cornered him and pulled him into a deep kiss.

Shane was immediately lost in the sensation, his body singing to life as Ilya kissed him deeply. His mouth fell open easily under Ilya's demands, his arms finding their way around Ilya's waist. His skin was hot under Shane's touch, soft and familiar. He had missed him so desperately.

Ilya nudged between Shane's legs, their lips never parting as he continued to kiss him deeply. His tongue seemed to seek out Shane's own the soft sounds falling from Shane's lips immediately being swallowed by Ilya. Ilya's hands found Shane's thighs and he squeezed at them, pulled at them while his hips pushed Shane backwards. Shane gasped softly into the onslaught of kisses, his hands moving from Ilya's waist to his hair. He loved playing with Ilya's hair, loved his soft curls and quiet groans when he tugged at it. It felt like silk against his palm.

Ilya swiftly pulled Shane onto the kitchen island, hands wound around Shane's thighs, stepping close to keep their bodies connected. Shane's legs naturally locked around Ilya's waist, dragging them closer still. Shane was so painfully hard already, the rush of blood from his brain and downward making him feel dizzy. It might also have been the way Ilya kissed him, kissed Shane like he never wanted to forget his taste, the sensation of their lips against one another.

Shane could feel Ilya's cock was hard in his pants, pressing into Shane's hip. The position on the counter was awkward but Shane was a flexible athlete and he could make do. He started to angle his hips, gently rubbing their crotches together, his ankles locked behind Ilya's ass giving him some further leverage.

Ilya groaned and started pulling at Shane's clothes, his jacket falling away first. Their lips did not part until they had to pull Shane's shirt off, leaving them equally clothed. While Shane tossed his shirt away, Ilya began to kiss down Shane's body, his spine curving to still stay close to Shane, to stay connected, while also kissing at his neck and collarbone.

Ilya's teeth scraped over Shane's throat, not hard enough to leave any mark of course, but definitely there. Shane wished so desperately that Ilya would suck a mark into his skin, that he would claim Shane. He wanted Ilya to be possessive over him. The idea alone caused a deep need to wash through Shane.

The desperate, keening sound that left Shane's throat should have been embarrassing, were it not from the bodily reaction it caused in Ilya.

In a second, Shane was lifted off the counter and in Ilya's arms, held secure and tight against his body. Being carried like this, easily, as if he weighed nothing, always sent a thrill through Shane. He continued to rut against Ilya as he carried them to what Shane could only assume was his bedroom. Their lips never separated for long, quick pants and moans the only air being pulled into Shane's lungs. They shared oxygen, encased in their own universe.

Shane was laid down gently on the bed, his legs never breaking the lock they had around Ilya's waist. Finally, their kiss broke. Ilya had managed to centre them on the bed, manoeuvring Shane's weight easily. Shane's legs fell open then and away from Ilya's waist, though his body was still pinned down with Ilya's hips. It was now Ilya's turn to rut against Shane; however, his movements were slower, teasing.

Shane stared up at the man he loved but couldn't claim, his curls framing his perfect face, fierce eyes, bowed lips and a strong jaw. He was the most beautiful thing Shane had ever seen.

The crucifix dangled from Ilya's neck, swaying between them gently as they both panted and simply stared at each other.

"Can I fuck you?"

Ilya's voice was so sincere, the lust barely contained within and yet he asked, waited for Shane to give him consent. Every time.

"God, please. Yes, please." Shane reached up and curled his fingers through Ilya's hair, holding his head. He pulled him down towards his body, arching up to meet him, the kiss more desperate than refined, his tongue licking over Ilya's lips and rubbing against Ilya's tongue.

Ilya's hands had begun to unbutton Shane's pants, pulling them off just enough with his underwear to get his hands on Shane's cock. Shane's hips jerked skyward at the touch, moaning into Ilya's mouth. Gods, he wanted him so desperately.

Ilya began to jerk Shane off, his movements shallow but quick, twisting over the head of Shane's dick, spreading the precum all over. It caused Shane's legs to shake, his chest rising as he writhed under Ilya's touch.

Fuck he was so hard. He could come like this, half dressed on Ilya's bed, getting jerked off and kissed by the hottest man in the universe. He would, too, if Ilya didn't stop soon.

It felt like drowning, to pull away from Ilya's lips. "Ilya, stop."

Ilya's hand froze on Shane's cock immediately. For a second, Shane was relieved, the impending orgasm slowly ebbing away.

Then his brain caught up.

His whole body locked as every muscle contracted, his nervous system locking into fight or flight. Freeze. That seemed to be an option.

Shane froze and stared at Ilya with wide eyes, met by an equally wide gaze, his heart racing for an entirely different reason. He'd fucked up. He'd fucked up so bad. Ilya had to know. He must have understood. Any second now he'd ask what Shane was doing, why he was changing their dynamic. Rozanov would tell Shane that they were not that close, that it wasn't like them to use first names, that it was too familiar. That this wasn't who they were. That he now knew Shane liked him and didn't feel the same because Shane had never been more than a quick and easy fuck. That Shane must have understood this wrong and Rozanov wouldn't be able to continue this anymore because he didn't reciprocate Shane's feelings nor did he want to be responsible for them.

Rozanov stared down at him, his eyes huge, the blue drowned by black. Rozanov's hand slipped from Shane's cock, instead moving to cradle Shane's face with both of his hands.

Then, Rozanov leant down to kiss him.

It wasn't like the kiss just moments ago. It wasn't hungry and desperate and feral.

It was soft. Searching. Just on the edge of uncertain, careful. Shane was reminded with a flash of how they had kissed that very first night, how Ilya's lips had been seeking an answer.

Shane's heart thundered in his chest, hard enough he was sure it could be heard.

"Shane." Ilya whispered, his tone softened by surprise and fascination. Reverence. Ilya understood. He didn't push him away.

Ilya cared.

Relief so powerful washed through Shane, tears rushed to his eyes. His whole body relaxed under Ilya's, the breath he'd been holding rushing free.

Ilya kissed him again, his fingers brushing over Shane's temples and cheeks, caressing him in such a gentle hold. They brushed over the soft skin under Shane's eyes, non-verbally telling him he was okay. It was okay. He was safe and cared for. Ilya had seen, had understood. And he accepted it all.

Shane melted into the mattress, his hands coming back to hold Ilya's waist. He needed to touch him, to be able to tell this was real. Shane needed to feel the heat of Ilya's skin under his palm, the way his ribs rose as he breathed.

The kiss remained searching and gentle for longer than should have been expected. But in the end, they were both still very much hard and wanting to touch each other everywhere and always.

Ilya kissed Shane like he had found the answer.

Before Ilya moved this along, escalated things again, he whispered against Shane's lips.

"Is it still okay?"

The love Shane held for Ilya in his heart squeezed at him tightly, choking him with its grandness. This time, Shane could only nod around the clump in his throat. He wouldn't cry because Ilya was too careful and kind and sweet and gentle and loving.

Ilya kissed him again once he received confirmation, his hands wandering back down to Shane's cock. He stroked over him carefully at first, but finding his earlier rhythm easily.

Soon enough, they were panting into each other's mouths again, Shane's hands having found their way into Ilya's sweats to reciprocate the favour.

Shane pushed at Ilyas waist with his free hand, his hips pushing up and off the mattress. And just like that, he was the one in Ilya's lap. Shane rose to his knees and pushed his pants down, awkwardly shuffling them off while straddling Ilya.

Meanwhile, the man between his thighs just watched him with fond eyes, his hands resting on Shanes hips.

Once Shane managed to wrangle himself free from the confines of his clothing, he made quicker work of Ilya's, leaving them both naked, Shane coming to rest on Ilya's thighs, their cocks pressed together.

"I want you to watch me."

Shane felt heat rush to his cheeks, knowing they were turning pink. But he needed this, he needed the weight of Ilya's gaze on him, needed Ilya to watch him just like he had in Las Vegas. He needed to feel seen.

Shane glanced towards the bedside table and Ilya immediately understood, pulling the bottle of lube from below his pillow. Shane barked a short laugh. Leave it to Ilya to be spatially prepared. Ilya cracked him a cheeky smirk and handed the bottle over.

Shane quickly coated his fingers and rubbed the lube warm between them, then reached behind himself and pushed two in immediately.

If he'd spent half an hour in the shower just before coming here, cleaning and opening himself up, no one would ever know.

It was easy to relax into his own touch, his muscles loosening more quickly than usual.

Shane tried to put on a little show for Ilya below him, feeling his gaze burn into his skin. His cheeks were still flushed, the shyness of doing something like this for someone you desperately wanted to enjoy it paired with the consuming lust Shane felt looking at Ilya. Shane arched his back, an arrangement of soft moans and whimpers falling from his lips as he worked himself open for Ilya.

It didn't take long.

Shane grabbed for the lube again, squeezing a healthy amount into his palm and moved to stroke it over Ilya's cock.

Ilya was already holding a condom, offering it for Shane to take it from him. Shane blushed again, more deeply this time, as he stroked over Ilya.

"I want to... Can we not use one?" He felt so silly suddenly, choosing to look down at the cock in his hand instead of Ilya's face as he spoke. "I want to feel you. Just you."

Shane could feel the way Ilya's cock jumped in his hand, could feel the way his body tensed at Shane's words. A shiver seemed to run through Ilya's whole body.

Shane finally looked up only to be met by the most stunned expression on Ilya's face.

"Are you sure?"

Shane nodded, his teeth biting into his bottom lip.

"Yes, I'm sure. I haven't been with anyone but you." The admission came before Shane could think too much about it, before he could feel too embarrassed, keeping him from voicing it out loud.

Ilya sucked in a deep breath, his pupils blown wide.

"No one?" Ilya sounded like he couldn't quite understand Shane's words, like he was worried his brain was translating them wrongly. He also sounded like someone had punched all the air out of his lungs. His fingers dug into Shane's hips hard.

Shane shook his head. "No one but you. I've never... It's only ever been you."

Ilya said something in Russian, and even if Shane couldn't understand the language the intonation was enough to gather that he had said something filthy.

"Chert, ty tol'ko moyu."

Shane tilted his head at the words but Ilya just shook his head, his pupils so large his eyes looked entirely black, even in the afternoon sun filtering through the windows. Shane knew he could drown in them.

"I get tested regularly. And always use a condom. Until now." Ilya's voice was still rushed, his accent thicker than it had been in a while.

Shane nodded. Maybe it was his love clouding his judgement but he trusted Ilya with his life.

"So, can I?" Shane gave Ilya's cock a slow stroke, coaxing a gasp from the man under him.

"Yes. Fuck. Yes."

Shane let out a slow, long breath, his body alight with nerves. He wanted this so much. To feel Ilya deep inside him, to know nothing was between them anymore. Most of all, he wanted to feel him cum deep in his body, fill him until it would run down Shane's thighs.

Shane placed his free hand on Ilya's sternum. He could feel Ilya's heart beat thrash under his palm, racing as the man looked up at him. Shane's other gripped his cock firmly, holding carefully to align it with his body. He rose on his knees, Ilya's hands on his hips more a decoration than aid. Shane didn't mind.

He positioned himself, and then slowly sank down. Shane's back arched at the stretch; his muscles aching to accept and accommodate Ilya.

Shane took his time until he fully bottomed out, sitting on Ilya's lap. He panted, sweat making his skin glisten in the sun. Even after preparing himself, Ilya was a lot to take.

"Fuck, Shane. You are so beautiful."

Shane would have blushed if his cheeks hadn't already been burning with lust and nerves.

He let his body adjust and leant down, his lips finding Ilya's.

"So are you, Ilya."

Shane started to move his hips, small tight circles at first, letting his body enjoy and savour this new sensation. It was different like this, feeling the heat of Ilya's cock and knowing they were connected in the most intimate way. Shane couldn't control himself for long, the deep need to feel Ilya deeper, more making his movements more desperate.

Ilyas hands moved from Shanes hips to his waist, then neck, stroking over his sides up and down, his fingers never leaving Shane's skin. He caressed his pulse point, the line of his ribs, the dip of muscle as it clenched while Shane moved. It felt like Ilya couldn't keep his hands off Shane, had to touch him, to hold him closer even with his cock buried inside him. Shane felt so wanted, so needed.

Their kisses slowly turned into pants against each others lips as Shanes hips picked up speed, the pleasure shivering along his skin making it hard to concentrate on anything that wasn't the way Ilyas body felt against his own.

Shane pressed his forehead against Ilya's, sweaty strands of hair sticking to their skin. He had given up on kissing Ilya, his eyes glazed over completely. Nothing in this world existed but Ilya's touch, the feeling of Ilya's cock filling him, the way Ilya panted against his lips. Shane couldn't concentrate on anything, lost in the pleasure as he desperately swirled his hips, the movements getting slower, sloppier.

His abs were aching from the position Shane held, his thighs tiring from holding himself up. He was strong, flexible, sure. But Shane wanted to be under Ilya again, feel encased in his arms, blanketed and small. Have Ilya look down at him with a soft smile, the star of the centre of Shane's universe.

Shane didn't say a word. Ilya understood him anyway.

With a hand on Shane's ass, the other wound tightly around his waist and back, Ilya flipped them on the sheets. Their bodies never separated. Shanes legs fell open, quivering, his hands curling around Ilyas biceps. He was so close, the emotions and sensations of the day having rubbed him raw and vulnerable.

Ilya pressed hot kisses against Shane's skin, his lips and cheeks, on his forehead and neck.

"Shane."

A bodily shiver went through Shane, his ankles twisting against the sheets. Shane's fingers dug into Ilya's bicep hard, pulling at him with a rhythm.

"Shane, do you want me to... I'm gonna."

Shane mewled, his chest rising, his fingers digging into Ilyas skin to pull him impossibly closer.

"Cum in me. Please. I want it."

Shanes words must have been a signal, a release of the control Ilya had over his own body.

His hips sped up, his eyes glossed over. His cheeks were flushed and his hair stuck to his forehead in damp curls. He looked lost. He looked like he'd found his personal paradise.

Ilya's body seized as his orgasm hit, driving in deep into Shane, a long, throaty moan pressed into Shane's lips as Ilya kissed him.

The sensation of warmth filling him, the pulsing of Ilya's cock in Shane's body send Shane over the edge too.

Shane whined, his hands moving to draw Ilya close, to keep him pressed to his body. He loved him so dearly. Ilya buried his face against Shane's neck, panting hard against his collarbone.

They stayed like this for a long time, trying to come down from the high, taking in the others scent and warmth.

Ilya pushed himself up after a while, the cross dangling between them as Ilya smiled down at Shane. He looked so happy.

Shane tilted his chin upward and Ilya understood him once again without words, leaning down to press a soft kiss against Shanes swollen lips.

Shane felt content like this. He raised a hand to brush the curls from Ilyas forehead as Ilya pulled back a bit to regard him again.

"That. Was so fucking good."

Ilya laughed softly and leant down to press a quick kiss against Shanes lips, over and over.

"Yes."

Shane patted at Ilya's side then, the warm skin sticky under his touch. It was starting to be too much very quickly.

"I'll go shower, okay?"

"Mmh. Bathroom is that door." Ilya gestured with his head.

Then he pressed one more kiss against Shanes lips, as if he too could never tire of the sensation, before slowly pulling his cock out.

Shane sighed with a tinge of disappointment as he was left empty. His stomach muscles twitched, a tongue darting out to wet his own lips. He could still taste Ilya on them.

Shane rolled from the bed once Ilya moved off his body and flopped onto the undisturbed side of the sheets. They hadn't even made it under the covers.

Shane stood, his legs feeling more wobbly than usual, but doable. As he walked towards the bathroom, he could feel Ilya's eyes burning into him, watching him. Shane could also feel the cum slowly running down his thighs.

A quick glance back at Ilya before he disappeared into the bathroom told him that Ilya had noticed too. He looked at Shane as if he could devour him again, right then and there.

Shane laughed softly, wriggled his hips and disappeared behind the door.

He made quick work of washing up, scrubbing over his skin with Ilya's body wash. Once he stepped from the now fogged up room, he smelled completely like Ilya.

Ilya had changed the top sheets and lay in bed, obviously waiting for Shane. He patted at the space beside him, silently beckoning him over. Shane quickly slipped beneath the sheets, letting his body rest against the pillows.

Ilya moved closer, a kiss getting pressed into Shane's shoulder.

"I should go." Shane did not want to go. He almost hadn't spoken.

Something had changed, hadn't it? They'd crossed an invisible boundary and if he left now, Shane wasn't sure if the change would stick. He wanted it to. This was new, exciting. Scary.

"Stay."

Shane's heart took a leap, then began to race. That wasn't something they did. "What."

Is this something he was allowed to want?

"Stay here, tonight."

Shane turned his face towards Ilya.

"We have afternoon game tomorrow. That means no morning practice." Gods, Shane wanted to.

"I told Hayden I'd be back."

He'd already made up his mind, he would stay. But still, Shane felt like he had to go through the motions, as to not appear too eager, too obviously desperate to spend time with Ilya.

"Who cares about Hayden."

Ilya kissed him then, slow and careful. He didn't pull away, their lips brushing together as he spoke again.

"Stay. Here with me."

It was so easy to give in.

"Okay."

Ilya kissed him again, soft pecks over and over. Shane felt at peace.

Shane was trying to concentrate on the game playing on the tv. It was hard, his mind wanting to focus on Ilya's voice. He sounded agitated, stressed. Like something was wrong. It worried Shane. He couldn't understand anything the man was saying, had only picked up on one word. Papa.

Was something wrong with Ilya's father?

Shane turned up the volume of the game, staring intently as he forced himself to analyse the play on the screen. Usually that worked pretty well, flooding his mind with hockey.

A few minutes later, Ilya sank down on the couch beside him.

"Are you still hungry?"

"Ah. No. Thank you, that was good." Shane swished the Ginger Ale around in it's can.

"Is your dad okay?"

Ilya turned towards him, his eyes wide.

"What, you speak Russian now?"

"No. I just heard you say Papa, I assume it's the same."

"Brilliant Shane Hollander."

Ilya teased, pulling Shane onto his chest. He pressed a kiss into Shane's hair.

They watched the game in relative silence, Ilyas hand playing with Shane's hair, Shane's hand stroking over Ilyas thigh. It was comfortable. He didn't press further for an answer. If Ilya wanted to share, he would. If he didn't, that was his right too.

When Ilya spoke again, his voice was softer. Almost as if he were afraid of the words he was saying.

"Do you remember the NHL awards in Vegas. And the time before?"

Shanes breathing shallowed, almost as if his body wanted to create as little as possible movement, as if it worried a strong reaction would cause the conversation to still. He remembered vividly. The heartache and worry. The doubts in his mind. They'd quieted significantly. But sometimes, Shane still found himself spiralling down that dark path.

He nodded.

"I am sorry."

Shane slowly raised his head, looking up at Ilya. Ilya's hand fell from Shane's hair to his shoulder. His thumb instead began to stroke over the sensitive skin in Shane's neck where his blood was pumping. Ilya looked genuinely sad. It made Shane worry.

"What for?"

He had already voiced his disappointment about being ignored back in Vegas. They hadn't talked about it further, but Shane hadn't expected Ilya to ever bring it up again. Was he now?

"For ignoring you back then. I wanted to reach out. Talk to you. But there was a lot going on. Is not an excuse. There was a lot of pressure from my father, especially after the Olympics. I had to win the cup."

Shane nodded. He could sympathize with Ilya, even if the circumstances were alien to him. The need to be perfect, the constant awareness that others were looking to him. Sure, it was different for Shane. But the surveillance around them, the constant pressure to be the best, to make no mistakes. To have every mistake made into something worse, pushed onto something that Shane was and couldn't change. It was exhausting.

Hearing that it hadn't been Shane's fault, the silence, lightened something in him.

"I hear you." Shane slowly sat up. This was probably a conversation better had facing each other fully.

"It was your first time, back then. Yes?"

Shane flushed but nodded anyway. After all, Ilya knew his body better than anyone else ever would.

Ilya raised his hand, his thumb stroking over Shane's freckles. He rested his palm against Shane's cheek.

"I am sorry. It was not nice to not speak with you after. Also, I am sorry about how I spoke to you in Russia. I was very stressed. I should not have shouted at you."

Shane raised his hand to hold Ilya's against his skin. He turned his head to press a kiss into Ilya's palm.

"It's okay."

"No, it's not. I was scared. But I should have never spoken to you that way."

Shane could sense there was more Ilya wanted to say but struggled to find the right words. He just held Ilya's hand to his cheek and waited.

"It is not safe, in Russia." Another pause. "I was worried someone could tell. There were a lot of eyes on us. On me. It would have put you in danger. Me too."

Shane stroked his thumb over the back of Ilya's hand. He could tell this was hard for him. His own heart ached, with love, with worry. "I understand, Ilya. I'm not upset with you anymore."

Ilya nodded.

"I should have texted you back. It was not kind to ignore you." Ilya stared at the TV, obviously struggling with something else he wanted to say. Shane waited. He would wait forever, if it meant that Ilya could express all his thoughts, could be heard.

"It frightened me. To want something I couldn't have. It made me be mean to you." Ilya took a deep breath. "You send me a text, after that time in Las Vegas. You never responded."

Now it was Shanes turn to struggle for the right words. Ilya's clear eyes bore into his own. Not in an unkind way. Not in a pressing way, nor demanding. Just trusting, open, curious.

Shane struggled to look away.

"I..." Shane pulled Ilyas hand from his cheek, instead winding their fingers together.

"Yes. I wanted you to kiss me. It was the first time we'd really been together since... That time. And you not kissing me felt like confirmation for my worries. I was being insecure. It was stupid."

Ilya squeezed Shane's fingers between his own.

"You are not stupid, Shane."

Ilya's hand gently pulled on Shane's chin, recentring Shanes focus on him again.

"I wanted to kiss you." Ilya arched up and did just that, a small peck to Shanes lips. How such a fleeting touch could bring so much joy.

"I like you." It slipped from Shanes lips before he could stop himself, before his conscious mind even really registered it was what he would say.

Time slowed. Ilya looked up at him with wide eyes. He seemed shocked. Happy. Scared. Shane could see the cogs turning in Ilyas mind.

"You don't like me."

Shane pulled his hand free, trying to retreat. Ilya caught it in his own again, a desperate edge to his expression.

"You can't like me, Shane."

At some point his heart would give out, the extremes of emotions rushing through his system surely not good for his health.

"Why." It sounded defiant.

"I would never be able to go home again."

Shane nodded. He knew that. But what they were doing, how much would it really change? Except Shane wouldn't have to lie to himself.

Shane was scared. Should he not have said anything? Shane was tired of hiding this part of himself from the one person that mattered.

"I'm not asking you to change. I don't expect you to tell anyone." His voice was small, careful. Hiding his anxiety, or trying to. "I just... This feels like we are... something."

And Shane could see it in Ilya's eyes. The hope, the want.

"We can't be something, not publicly." Ilya said. Ilya sounded just as mournful about it as Shane felt.

Shane nodded, raising Ilya's fingers to his mouth to press a kiss against them.

"Would you want to be, if we could?" It was a hypothetical. Still, Shane wanted to know the answer desperately.

"We can't."

"But would you, if we could?"

Ilya was clearly struggling with what to say. Shane could practically see the war going on in his head. He wound his fingers with Ilya's.

"What would your family say?" Shane had a feeling he wasn't going to like that answer much.

Ilya's mouth set into a hard line. This seemed easier to answer.

"My father is police. So is my brother." It was all the explanation any of them would need.

"And your mom?"

"She's dead."

"I'm sorry." Shane paused. "How about...?"

"My father could not accept me. He is sick. He is dying. I can't... I have to be able to go see him. To be there when..." Ilya's voice trailed off as he turned his head away. As if he were hiding. Shane quickly slipped onto Ilya's lap, both his palms coming to rest on Ilya's cheeks.

"Hey." He brushed a tear away, bringing their foreheads together.

"I'm sorry." Ilya sounded so broken, torn between the thing he wanted and the duty he had to fulfil.

A tear slipped from Ilya's eyes. Shane wiped it away with his thumb.

Shane kissed him softly, his touch gentle.

"I understand. Ilya, I'm not asking you to... come out or anything. Nothing has to change, okay? Just forget what I said." Shane could do that, pretend he hadn't offered his feelings, pretend this was just a friendship, his friend with benefits.

"No. I'm sorry." Ilya was still choked up, his eyes glassy. He kissed Shane again, short but deeply. "I don't want to forget."

Shane's heart jumped, nodding. He pulled Ilya closer, burying his face in his neck as Ilya did the same.

They sat in silence for a long time, the soft sniffles against Shane's shoulders dying down slowly but surely. Shane rocked Ilya in his arms, squeezing him close.

It had been an eventful couple of months. Shane and Ilya continued to play hard against each other on the ice, kept up their secret get-togethers. Except, sometimes, if time allowed it, they would stay over at each other's apartments for the night. Shane had gotten the code for Ilya's house, just like he had given his own to Ilya.

They'd played on the same team for the All-Stars game for the first time. Shane had been chosen Captain. Ilya hadn't stopped riling him up for days.

It had been exhilarating, sharing a line with Ilya, playing together.

Hockey had never been that much fun, not even when he won against Ilya. Sure, no one really tried at the All-Stars games. But winning with Ilya was a sensation Shane prayed to be able to feel again.

Then Ilya's father died.

Shane felt sad for him, worried about Ilya dealing with this alone as the man had to return to Russia immediately.

Ilya had called him, late for him, after the funeral and spilled his heart to Shane in Russian. Shane hadn't understood the words but he could tell that Ilya had been deeply unhappy there.

They were playing each other again, this time in Montreal. It was one of Ilya's first games since he'd come back from Russia.

Shane skated up to him on the centre ice, looking around subtly. Everyone was out of earshot.

"Are you coming tonight?"

Shane looked at his stick as he talked, wiping the ice from his tape. He could hear Ilya laugh softly.

"Mh, I sure hope so. And not just me."

"Shut up." Shane forced down his own smile. "I bought Coke, it's in the fridge. I have to do press after this, so just head in first, ok?" They would have another night together, just them.

"Okay. I'll wait for you naked."

Shane shook his head, the mental image of Ilya waiting for him, already naked and desperate made lust rush through his body so fierce, he worried it would show on his face. He couldn't play hard again just because Ilya was so fucking hot. "Fuck you."

"Later."

Shane rolled his eyes before he would be in real trouble, skating to the sideboards.

"What did you want with Rozanov?"

Shane turned towards Hayden, reaching for his own water bottle. "Just offering condolences."

"Ah, should've done that too."

"Yeah, get to it, buddy." Shane knocked his helmet with Hayden's and skated off to finally start his stretches and win the game.

They played well, the game felt more fast paced than others, lots of shots at the goal, and a scruffle had already broken out once.

They weren't doing too bad.

Shane was flying down the ice; the puck practically stuck to his blade. He could see the defenseman from Boston in the corner of his eye, and Shane tried to sidestep him. Except, the man seemed to know exactly what Shane would do and adjusted his position and direction as well.

Shane flew hard when he was hit, his body whipping against the boards, his skated flying out under him. He twirled in the air, then came down hard on his head and shoulder, his body crunching in on itself.

The world went dark.

Ilya watched the hit as if the world were in slow motion, the way Shane's body flew as Kane hit him, the way he fell.

The way the weight of Shane's body pressed down onto his head, assisted by gravity. The way Shane lay there, unmoving. Completely still.

Ilya was off the bench, over the boards and down the ice before he could even register what he was doing.

He got there first, before the medical team.

Hayden was trading fists with Kane, going at him like a feral man.

Ilya didn't even know if it had been a clean hit, couldn't think about anything but the body crumpled at his feet.

"Shane!"

He fell to his knees beside him, his gloves somewhere behind him. Ilya's hand's hovered over Shane's body, shaking.

Fuck.

Shane wasn't responding to him.

Fuck.

He couldn't lose him. He couldn't go through this grief, not now, not ever. His father had just died, he was still dealing with those complicated emotions. He couldn't.. He wouldn't-

Then there were hands on his shoulders, pulling him away. Ilya didn't comply, his body heavy, as if he were frozen to the floor. The hands yanked again and got him to move, the medics filling the empty space immediately.

They checked Shane's pulse; there were lights and braces.

Then Ilya heard a groan.

Shane was awake.

He was alive.

The relief that washed through him choked Ilya, his shoulders slumping and hands falling into his lap. He was still sat there, on the ice, staring at Shane partially hidden behind the bodies of the medics.

He tried to stay away, honestly. He tried to give them space to do their job. He wanted them to make sure Shane was okay. But he also needed to see that he was okay.

Nothing else mattered to Ilya.

They hoisted Shane onto a stretcher and Ilya was right by his side, standing next to Shane's head.

"Shane."

He reached out, his hand hovering once more. He was scared to touch him, scared he could hurt Shane further.

Shane blinked a few times, his eyes remaining unfocussed.

"Tell him I'm okay."

His speech was slurred. Ilya skated next to the medics and followed them off the field, never straying from Shane's side.

A medic replied.

"Tell who, Shane. You have to stay awake, okay?"

"Ilya. You hav- tell- I'm okay."

Ilya clenched his teeth so hard it hurt.

The medics glanced towards him.

"He's here, Shane. He knows."

"Ilya?"

It looked like Shane was trying to focus, struggling to get his eyes to cooperate. "Ilya. I'm scared."

Ilya's heart broke into a thousand pieces.

"It will be okay, Shane. You are okay." He had to be. Ilya would not accept any other reality. Ilya's hand was curled around the plastic of the gurney, his knuckles white with the death grip he had.

They were walking down a hallway now, the sound of Ilya's metal blades against the concrete sharp and jarring. He did not care nor notice.

When they arrived at the ambulance the medics tried to push Ilya away, tried to tell him only family could ride with them.

"No. I have to go."

Ilya was getting frantic, watching them put Shane onto a bed and began to strap him down to load him into the car. A hand was still firmly planted against Ilya's chest, holding Ilya back.

"Mr. Rozanov. You are not even team mates. You cannot ride with him the ambulance."

Ilya heard a whimper from within the car.

The other medic poked his head out.

"He's asking for Rozanov."

It was too much. Ilya pushed past the man and climbed into the back. His gear was taking up far too much space. Ilya ripped his jersey and shoulder pads off and tossed them out of the back of the ambulance before the doors fell shut.

He squeezed in on the tighter side, his eyes running along Shane's body over and over.

"Ilya? Where?" Shane's voice was panicked.

"I'm here. It'll be okay, Shane."

Shane visibly relaxed and his fingers twitched, his hand raising in search of Ilya's own.

Ilya swiftly intertwined their hands together, squeezing Shane's fingers gently. The medics were working on Shane, pulling and cutting through gear.

Ilya did not pay attention. His eyes remained on Shane's face, the bruise starting to form on his cheekbone. His eyelids, the way they fluttered as Shane fought to stay awake.

Ilya simply continued to whisper affirmations and comfort to Shane, holding his hand.

His heart was racing out of his chest and Ilya felt more nauseous than he had in... over a decade.

Seeing Shane laying there, unmoving and still... The terror of losing the second person he'd ever loved had been too much.

But this wasn't about him. It was about Shane. So, Ilya forced his feelings down and locked them away.

It was easy, to forget about himself when he could fill his mind with Shane.

The wait in the waiting room at the hospital had been the longest hours of Ilya's life.

At some point, Shane's parents had shown up.

He could tell they were shooting glances his way, could tell they were talking about him being here.

It didn't matter.

Shane had blacked out again towards the end of the ambulance ride. Because of that, he'd been wheeled straight into the restricted area. Ilya had no idea what was happening. They wouldn't tell him anything. He wasn't family. He wasn't a spouse.

He had no right to Shane's medical information.

So, Ilya waited, and waited. Unknowing.

Twice someone came and spoke to the Hollander's.

The first time, the parents had seemingly remained worried.

The second time, they had seemed relieved.

Ilya kept stealing glances, trying to figure out what was happening through their body language.

He'd taken off most of his gear by now, only dressed in his thermal underwear and the shorts that looked ridiculously baggy without the padding to balance it out. His skates were on the ground beside him. A kind nurse had brought him some slippers. They didn't fit.

He'd left his phone at the arena, had no way to contact anyone even if he wanted to. And no one had a way to contact him either.

Ilya knew, realistically, he should feel guilty for running out on his team like that, and he was aware there would be repercussions for his actions. He didn't care.

All that mattered was Shane. His health, his wellbeing. Knowing what was happening.

Ten minutes later, someone came by and led the Hollanders away. Ilya watched them go, a deep longing adding to the nausea swirling in his gut.

Life bustled around him, people coming and going, staff walking or rushing past.

Night had fallen a while ago. Ilya hadn't noticed the change in the room.

Ilya remained. All his mind supplied as company was the hit, replaying over and over at the back of his mind. It was burned into his eyelids when he closed his eyes, was playing against the floor tiles when he opened them. It was torture.

Hours later, Yuna Hollander came back into the waiting area.

She was alone. Ilya only glanced at her quickly before he stared back down at his slippers.

A pair of black shoes stopped before him and entered his vision.

Ilya looked up slowly, only to be met by Yuna Hollander's gaze.

She stared at him for a long moment, just searching his face. Then she nodded, to herself. Ilya had no idea what she'd found in his expression.

"My son is asking for you."

She didn't say anything else as she turned away. Ilya scrambled to gather all his belongings, rushing after her down the hallway, arms full of his gear.

They stopped in front of an unassuming door. Yuna Hollander glanced at him one more time, seemingly still at odds with herself. Then she pushed the door open.

Ilya was greeted by the visual of Shane in his hotel bed, his face bruised and arm in a sling. David Hollander was sitting on one of the two chairs by his son's bedside. They'd been talking.

Ilya dropped his gear just inside the room, beside the door. Yuna walked to her husband's side. She remained standing, a hand on David's shoulder.

Shane looked at him and his face bloomed into a wide smile. It was like watching the sun rise for the first time after eternal winter.

"Ilyaa!"

For the second time in 24 hours, relief nearly brought Ilya to his knees.

He was hyper aware of Shane's parents beside Shane, was unsure of how to act. His teeth were clenched together tightly, the muscles in his jaw ticking as he forced down tears. Tears of relief, of worry. He'd been so worried.

"Hey, heeey!"

Shane raised his hand and reached for Ilya.

No force in the universe could have kept him away. The love of his life was reaching for him.

Ilya was by Shane's side in a heartbeat, their fingers winding together naturally, like they were meant to fit.

"How are you."

Ilyas voice was measured, putting on a front not only for Shane's parents but for Shane and himself as well. He felt the tears burn behind his eyes, felt the tightness in his own throat.

"Fractured collarbone. A concussion. But otherwise, I'm okay. Could have been worse."

Realistically, Ilya knew that. But right now, nothing could have been worse than seeing Shane hurt.

Ilya glanced towards Shane's parents, then back at the man smiling at him so openly.

"You know, I was really looking forward to last night." Those words told Ilya he'd been in that waiting room, waiting for a long time.

He couldn't help but look at Shane's parents again. How much did they know? They weren't saying anything, just watching.

"I wanted to ask you something."

"Hollander."

At that, Shane pulled a displeased face, frowning up at Ilya.

"No. Shane." Shane pulled at Ilyas hand to punctuate his words.

"Shane." It felt like Ilya was revealing everything, and he had no idea what he could say.

Shane noticed.

"They know." Shane said it as if it were no huge matter, as if those two words wouldn't change their lives forever.

Shane had told his parents about Ilya. They knew, what? That they slept together? Were they in a relationship? What had Shane said?

Shane squeezed Ilya's hand again, clearly wanting all of his attention. "Is okay. I told them I love you. They are happy for me, right Mom, Dad?"

Yuna Hollander nodded, her gaze still closed off too much for Ilya to read. "Yes, darling. We're happy for you." She sounded genuine.

Ilya stared at the three Hollander's in turn, his eyes wide.

Shane loved him.

He told his parents he loved him. Loved Ilya Rozanov.

"Holy Shit." The words slipped past Ilya's lips before he could stop them, his free hand slapping onto his mouth. "I'm sorry." Ilya mumbled. Somehow he had the impression swearing in front of Shane Hollander's parents was a bad idea.

Shane was high on so many drugs. Would he regret this later?

Shane clearly didn't like not being Ilya's sole focus. He pulled at Ilya's hand, harder, until Ilya stared down at him.

He was in another realm. Shane wasn't picking up on the tension in the room, the stiffness in Ilya's pose and face. He just happily rambled on.

"Soo. I was gonna ask you; Will you come to my cottage this summer? Don't go to Russia. Come to my house. It's so quiet and private. No one will know. Well, my parents but no one else has to, if you don't want. We could have a week, or two. And be completely alone. Together."

Ilya stared down at the man he'd fallen in love with the second he'd laid his eyes on him in that parking lot in Regina, Saskatchewan. Asking him to spend their summer together. The man that had told his own parents he loved his rival. The man that had become the most important thing in Ilya's life.

"Okay. Yes."

He whispered the words, hyper aware of Shanes parents, unlike the man on the bed seemed to be.

Still, Ilya couldn't stop himself and raised Shane's hand, bending down to press a kiss to back of it.

Shane let out a soft whine, his lips pulling into a pout. God, was Shane asking him to kiss him in front of his parents?

"Gimme kiss."

Ilya glanced at Shanes parents again, catching the hint of a smile on Yunas lips. David genuinely seemed content. His heart was thrashing in his chest.

Shane whined softly when Ilya took too long to comply, tugging at his fingers again.

And Ilya Rozanov could not deny Shane Hollander a single thing in this world. So, he leant down, and kissed the love of his life, right in front of his parents. Shane sighed happily, looking up with Ilya's whole universe in his eyes.

Chapter End Notes

Sooooo

This is it.

I hope it satisfied you and is what you guys would have wanted!

Please let me know what you think, your comments make me so happy :D

End Notes

I'm also on twitter

[@TaekWonmyHeart](#)

in case you want to scream at me :D

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!