mostly is plenty

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by amongtheshadows

Summary

> “I feel stupid,” Ilya admits, the words slipping out thin and brittle. “I should be able to do this.”
>
> Shane pauses for a fraction of a second, then resumes, gentler still. “I know you think that,” he says. “But right now, your job is to be here and let me help. That’s it. You’re doing great.”
>
> *ilya is stuck in a depressive episode and shane helps him through it*

Notes

> back at it again!
>
> this fic contains descriptions of depression and mental health issues re: irina.
>
> mostly it is shane wanting to be a good husband and taking care of ilya because it makes him happy.

See the end of the work for more notes

The sky was gray when Ilya finally opened his eyes.

He was wrapped tightly in a duvet with just his head sticking out, but he still shivered as he looked out the window at the moody sky.

It seemed fitting. He hadn't been able to move all day. It happened like this sometimes; after a long trip, after being alone for too many days, when he forgot to take his meds. It's like his muscles and bones turned off and all that could move was his mind, pulling him deeper into the darkest caverns of his brain whether he liked it or not.

It was part of depression that he was still accepting. *Lazy*, his father had called him when he couldn't move or speak or think. His voice was loud in Ilya's mind these days - he didn't like that he wasn't able to move, to be helpful around the house, to be fun to be around, to be a good friend, a good *husband*.

Shane was never mad at him when he had these days. In fact, when he realized upon waking that Ilya was feeling stuck, his face became unbelievably soft and he just nodded and stroked his hair until he had to get up. He'd kissed the top of his head, his temple, his forehead, before mumbling an *I love you* before getting up for the day. Ilya had been able to return it quietly, but it was like the words took the last of his energy with them as they exited his mouth. It had been worth it to see the way Shane's eyes had sparkled at the sound.

Now it was not morning. He didn't know what time it was but the sky was rudely bright despite the weather being so shitty. They were at the cottage, training and working from home to prep for an upcoming camp, so blessedly Ilya hadn't had to worry about calling out of anything, or dragging himself out of bed and into the cold.

His muscles hurt without moving them; achy and wrong, like he'd fallen the day before or had a particularly bad game. He hated it. Hated the way he was out of control of his body.

He twitched his leg, just to see if he could, and felt his knee extend and his leg follow as he started to stretch out. He got about halfway to full extension when something stopped him and he heard a sigh and the sound of a collar jingling as Anya woke up and moved to sit by his face with a yawn. Her little face was excited at the movement, ears perked up and mouth

open, and Ilya tested his body by reaching out from under the duvet and sinking his fingers into her soft fur. She leaned into his touch and he felt pride knowing that he was able to make her happy, even though he was so sad himself.

He kept scratching her until he felt a little more blood flow start to move in his body. It was a slow process, unfurling after hours and hours in a fetal position, even in sleep. He let himself lay here on his back for a moment after he'd fully stretched out and started to take in his surroundings a bit more. He looked to his right and saw that there was a glass of water and a package of crackers on the nightstand next to him, along with a folded piece of paper.

Shane.

The sight of the paper stirred something in him and he reached over to grab it with shaking hands. Part of his mind was desperate to see his handwriting, knowing that he'd touched the page, the thought alone making him feel closer to him. The other part was mean.

The other part told him that when he opened it, it would be a goodbye. That he wasn't able to take Ilya like this and that if he wasn't going to be the fun and outrageous man he'd been when they'd met that he wasn't wanted anymore. That part of his brain understood why he would do that too.

He let out a long breath and steeled himself before opening the paper.

Ilya,

Left you food and water if you want it. If you need a quiet day, that is okay. Anya will stay with you but you can text me or call me if you need anything. I'm not leaving.

Reminder: your brain is a dick sometimes. You are perfect exactly the way you are.

I'm here for you. I love you always.

Shane

Ilya's vision blurred as he reread the note on a loop, tracing the indents his pen had left on the paper over and over again. He held it against his chest after a moment and closed his eyes, feeling a tear slip out and into his hair.

Oh my *god* he loved him.

He loved him so much; his beautiful Shane who bought books on how to support a partner with mental illness, who listened to podcasts about being a good listener and making their home, that had at one point been just his, comfortable and warm so that Ilya always had a soft spot to land.

It was unlike anything he'd ever felt, anything he ever thought he'd deserve.

He thought of his mother sometimes and how she'd deserved someone that did those things for her. That held her close in a way Ilya couldn't when he was small, that helped her eat and get out of bed, that let her stay in bed and rest on days that her body couldn't move. She deserved so much more love than she got, and he couldn't help but think that if she had someone that treated her the way Shane treated her son that maybe she'd still be here to know him.

The thought that she would never know Shane felt like getting kicked in the chest, it always did.

Ilya was used to the feeling now. He'd thought about it a lot, often talking to Shane about it and what he thought they'd do or talk about together. How they'd probably gossip about hockey or gush over Anya. He missed her so much, but more than anything these days he grieved the memories that he'd never be able to make.

He sat with that feeling for some time. Still scratching at Anya's fur with one hand and holding Shane's note over his heart with the other. The pain of missing his mother started to

shift into something else, equally as painful: missing Shane.

As soon as he had the thought, he inhaled and was hit with the smell of something warm coming from the kitchen he hadn't noticed before.

The thought of Shane, just downstairs, made him sit up. Anya moved with him and watched as he took another breath before grounding himself and tossing the duvet off his legs and standing up on the side of the bed before he could do anything else about it. The cold hit him like a truck and he couldn't help but groan. He wrapped his arms around his naked torso, still just wearing Shane's boxers from the night before, and moved to their closet where he quickly pulled a pair of Shane's soft sweatpants and a sweatshirt out and onto his body. The smell enveloped him immediately and he sighed, feeling a wave of comfort crash over him.

He sighed again and turned, motioning for Anya to follow him as he made his way out of the bedroom and down the hall to the stairs. He took them one at a time, Anya keeping close next to him with a wagging tail, until he was downstairs and moved towards the smell coming from the kitchen.

The sounds of Anya's paws on the floor and her collar jungling must have alerted Shane to his presence, because when he entered the kitchen he turned around from where he was stirring something on the stove and smiled bright and warm at Ilya.

"Hi." he sighed and stopped to rest the spoon he was using across the top of the pot. He had Ilya's Centaur sweats and shirt on and his glasses perched on his nose. He crossed around the kitchen island and Ilya didn't even know that his feet were carrying him until he crashed into his chest and wrapped his arms around his waist, inhaling the smell of his hair.

"Hello." he said after a moment.

Shane just hummed and held him tighter, knowing he needed some time before he could talk on days like this.

"Thank you for the note." he said after another moment of just holding him and Shane huffed a small laugh against the side of his head before pulling back and taking his face gently

between his hands.

“Of course. Were you warm enough?” he asked and ran a thumb under his eye, no doubt smoothing over a dark circle that sat there.

“Hmm yes.” he nodded. “Thank you.” he added and turned his head to kiss the palm of his hand. Shane blushed slightly at the gesture. “I love you.” he added, lips pressed against his palm still so he could hear them as well as feel them, needing Shane to know that no matter what he loved him.

“I love you, too. I love you so much.” Shane nodded and kissed the tip of his nose. “I’m sorry your brain isn’t working today.” he frowned and Ilya was shaking his head before he could finish.

“It’s okay.” he shrugs and sighs, turning Shane’s hand to kiss over his knuckles and where his wedding ring sat against his finger. “Missed you.” he whispered before kissing the inside of his wrist and closing his eyes, drunk of the smell and feeling of Shane being so close after being cold and alone all day.

“Hmm, I missed you too. I’m happy to see you, I’m proud of you for getting up.” Ilya immediately wants to quip back about being in his thirties and not being able to get out of bed but his brain still feels soft and he nods and holds Shane’s hand against his chest.

“Me too. I wanted to see you, see what you were cooking.” he adds, honestly, but Shane huffs a laugh and it makes him feel like he did something right.

“I made pasta. I can’t promise it’ll be as good as dad’s, but I tried.”

“It’s perfect. Thank you, moya lyubov.”

“You haven’t even tried it yet.”

“Hmm, no I know. You made it so it is very good.” he nods. Shane can only roll his eyes, but keeps a smile on his face. Before he can speak again his stomach growls between them and even Anya looks up in surprise at the sound.

“Dinner?”

“Yes, please.” Ilya sighs and kisses Shane’s hand once more before letting him go back to the stove.

He stays close, perched on the counter to watch him explain his process and what tomatoes he’d used and how he wasn’t able to find the herbs he wanted at the store. He was there but he wasn’t; stuck still in the fog that draped over his brain. He wasn’t really contributing to the conversation, but Shane knew he liked to hear him talk as he moved around when he was having a hard day.

He zoned out watching him and before he knew it there was a bowl of pasta being presented to him. It looked perfect, his favorite, even with a little sprig of basil on top in the shape of a heart. It was ridiculously cute and he couldn’t help but smile for the first time as he took it from Shane.

“You’re going to give David a run for his money.” he said around his first bite, suddenly realizing just how empty his stomach was.

“You’re going to give me an ego.” Shane replied and stood across from Ilya

They ate and chatted about what Shane did at the gym that day. How he wanted Ilya to take a look at the weight rack when he was feeling up to it to make sure it wasn’t going to fall apart by the time the season started. It was easy, and Ilya could feel himself coming back into his body little by little. Shane never strayed more than two feet from where he still sat on the counter, and didn’t even bother him to get off or to eat dinner at the table.

When their plates were clean Shane moved them to the sink and took care of cleaning with quick precision and detail. Ilya could only watch until he turned back around and stood between his legs, placing his hands on his knees and looking up at him.

Ilya used his legs to pull him in closer and grabbed his shoulders as he leaned down to kiss him. Shane hummed against his mouth and Ilya felt more of himself settle with him near. Any point of contact with him felt like a bright spot of light that was turning his world back to color after being black and white all day.

“Want to take a shower?” Shane asked when they parted, running his hands up and down his thighs.

“Will you come?” he asked, suddenly feeling timid, like he’d already asked enough of him for one day.

“Of course I will.” he replied without a second thought and kissed him again before moving back so Ilya could hop down. Ilya lets Shane guide him down the hall, a hand warm at the center of his back.

Shane doesn’t rush. He never does. The bathroom light is dimmed already, the edges of the room softened like Shane anticipated the way brightness can feel like an accusation.

He reached for his toothbrush to distract himself while Shane started the shower. He seemed happy with Ilya’s choice so he kept brushing his teeth while Shane pulled out products from a drawer in the sink and set them on the bench in the shower.

By the time Ilya was done it looked like he’d raided a spa and put it in their bathroom.

“Come on.” he motioned Ilya closer and reached for the hem of his sweatshirt. “Okay?”

“Of course.” He nodded and helped Shane get him out of his clothes. The steam kept the room warm so it wasn’t as much of a shock as getting out of bed had been, but he still

shivered as he kicked off his pants. Shane stripped quickly and took his hand, leading them in under the water.

Ilya couldn't help but moan at the feeling. He tipped his head back under the spray, closing his eyes and looking up into it. Not much longer arms came around his waist and landed on his lower stomach, rubbing gentle circles around his abs and lightly dragging his fingernails over the skin.

Ilya could only hum and tilt his head to the side as Shane kissed his neck. "Can I take care of you?" he asked against his ear. Ilya could only nod and turn to look at Shane, leaning in to press a gentle kiss to his mouth. Shane returned it with a soft smile before reaching behind him for Ilya's shampoo.

He started to lather it into his curls and his thumbs massaged into the back of his neck with soft pressure that made him moan. Shane smiled and kissed his forehead before working the shampoo in further and Ilya was boneless in seconds at the close proximity to him and how he made him feel so much better so fast.

When he was done, he used the shower hose and tiled his head back, rinsing it out while using his other hand to shield his eyes from the spray. He was always so tender with Ilya; where he'd just accept that he'd get soap in his eyes when he washed his own hair, Shane treated him with almost medical precision to make sure he was as comfortable and taken care of as possible.

He hung up the hose and moved on to the conditioner next.

"You here with me?" Shane asks as he works.

"Yeah," Ilya says, and then, quieter, more honest, "Mostly."

"That's okay," Shane replies without pause. "Mostly is plenty."

His hands never hesitate. There's no frustration in them, no urgency to fix what can't be fixed tonight. Just care. Just presence. It makes something in Ilya's chest ache, how easily Shane treats him like he's worth this softness.

"I feel stupid," Ilya admits, the words slipping out thin and brittle. "I should be able to do this."

Shane pauses for a fraction of a second, then resumes, gentler still. "I know you think that," he says. "But right now, your job is to be here and let me help. That's it. You're doing great."

A broken laugh escapes Ilya before it turns into something wetter, heavier. His chest caves inward, the weight of it pressing down.

"I don't feel like myself," he says before he can stop it from coming out.

Shane leans in, forehead resting against Ilya's temple, water splashing softly around them. "I know," he murmurs. "But I'm right here. I can see you, even when you can't."

He rinses the shampoo out carefully, one hand shielding Ilya's face, attentive to every small reaction. His voice stays calm, unshakable.

"You're not broken," Shane says, like it's a truth he's willing to repeat forever. "You're tired. And hurting. And you don't have to earn care from me."

Ilya swallows hard. His voice barely makes it past his throat. "Stay."

"I'm not going anywhere," Shane answers immediately. "I've got your head. I've got you."

He rinses the conditioner out carefully, one hand shielding Ilya's face, attentive to every small reaction. His voice stays steady, grounding.

“You’re not broken,” Shane says, like it’s a truth he’s willing to repeat forever. “You’re tired. And hurting. And you don’t have to earn care from me.”

When the water shuts off, the sudden quiet feels loud. Ilya shivers, more from the exposure than the cold.

“I’ve got you,” Shane says again, reaching for a towel.

He drapes it around Ilya’s shoulders first, cocooning him. Shane pats instead of rubs, careful and slow, drying Ilya’s arms, his chest, his back like he’s handling something fragile and precious at the same time. Every touch is deliberate, asking permission without words.

“Tell me if anything’s too much,” Shane murmurs.

Ilya doesn’t answer, just leans subtly into the towel, into Shane’s hands, trusting him to read the language of his body. “Never too much.”

Shane kneels to dry his legs, pressing the towel around his calves, his feet, grounding him inch by inch. When he finally helps Ilya out of the shower, he keeps an arm around his waist, steady and sure, like the world won’t tip as long as he’s there.

“I’m here,” Shane repeats, softer now. “You don’t have to hold yourself up tonight.” He sits him down on the closed toilet seat next to the sink and roughly dries himself off, wrapping a towel around his waist.

He wraps a dry towel around Ilya’s hair, squeezing gently, then presses a kiss to his damp forehead. Shane’s thumb brushes beneath Ilya’s eye, catching a tear like it’s nothing to be ashamed of. He kisses his forehead and lingers there like he’s committing it to memory.

“Pretty boy. . .” Shane whispered, almost to himself as he leaned back to wipe another tear off his face. “Always so pretty.” he added and leaned in to kiss Ilya again.

Sitting down, he looks up at Shane as he reaches out and pushes his hair back, moving his curls off his forehead and scratching his scalp as he goes. Ilya hums and closes his eyes, letting his hands come up to rest on his hips. He barely notices when Shane reaches away for a moment and comes back with one of the tubes from his side of the bathroom counter.

He plops out a squeeze of a white cream and rubs it between his fingers before reaching out to touch it to Ilya’s cheeks. He can’t help but moan under his hands as he starts drawing small circles on his cheeks. Shane had told him once that he picked this specific moisturizer because of its gel-like consistency because he liked the texture, and now he understood why.

He hummed under his fingertips as he continued to rub his face, massaging his jaw with his thumbs and making him release the tension he had from clenching his teeth. He felt his face relax more and more as Shane swiped his thumbs under his eyes and over the plane of his forehead. The tension between his eyebrows and on his forehead from the day dissolved and he felt like putty in his hands.

Shane continued, moving down under his chin and with slight pressure he rubbed the cream into his neck, pulling at the tendons at the side and applying gentle pressure to the front over his Adam’s apple. Ilya moans at the feeling like being vulnerable and playable under Shane’s hands was the most pleasure he’d ever felt.

And it was.

Shane hummed a laugh and with his eyes still closed he felt his lips come down and press a gentle kiss to his own. He was blissed out and moaned again at the touch of lips, tightening his hands ever so slightly on his hips.

Shane pulled back too fast, Ilya leaning forward to chase his lips and opening his eyes with a small scowl.

“Just a second.” Shane laughed and brought back a small jar. He swiped his ring finger through it before bringing it up and gently tapping it under his eyes. It was cold, but felt like it was soothing and gentle on his dry skin. He understood now why Shane was so specific about his eye cream.

He put the little jar down and twisted to grab another small container that he tapped his middle finger in before bringing it to Ilya’s lips.

He kissed it on instinct, and Shane laughed and blushed, shaking his head, before running a balm over his lips that smelled like vanilla and something sweet. It was soft and he could tell that Shane took longer than he needed to rub it in and play with the soft plush of his mouth.

“Feel good?” Shane asked quietly.

Ilya moaned in response. “Yes. Pampered.” He replied under his hand and Shane cupped his face between his palms when he was done. He looked at him for a long moment, squishing his face together once and making him smile.

“Good. That’s how I want you to feel.” he replies and kisses his nose. “I love your face.” He growls playfully, like it was the easiest thing in the world.

He can physically feel his cheeks warm up Shane’s chill hands, but he doesn’t move, letting himself bask in the glow of his husband. He pulls him in by the waist and presses their mouths together again.

“Bed?”

“Bed.”

Ilya kisses him once more and then stands but keeps his hands on his waist as he follows him to bed, always close or touching like he’s afraid he’ll drift away. They’re naked and under the duvet before he can count to five and moving like second nature he moves on his side so that

he‘s facing Shane and his forehead is level with his mouth so that he can rest his lips against it so that he can feel every word and every breath that comes out of him.

“Brain still going?”

He grunts. “More like not going. Everything feels slow.”

Shane hums thoughtfully. “Like underwater?”

“Hmm, yes.” He looks up at him. “Like I can’t get out.” he pauses and looks away from his eyes to his mouth, almost nervous to be so raw so close. “But then there is you and then I can find my way out.”

“I’m proud of you.” Shane responds and moves his hand under his jaw to bring his gaze back to his eyes. It makes Ilya’s eyes water again and his chest hurts from the raw love and emotion he feels for his husband. “I’m proud of you, and I’m not going anywhere so you don’t have to be underwater alone.” He punctuates it with a kiss to the tip of his nose. Ilya feels a tear leak onto Shane’s arm and he can just nod.

Because he will be.

He knows his fierce, stubborn, brilliant Shane will always find a way.

“I do not deserve you.”

“Yes you do.” he shakes his head before the words are even all the way out of his mouth. “And you deserve to be happy. Let me take care of you, let me love you. That’s what you can give me.” he adds and kisses his forehead.

Ilya just sniffles and nods, leaning his head back slightly more so he can meet Shane’s lips. He’s soft and warm around him and everything feels more tired and less like a fog than it did

earlier in the day.

“I love you.”

“I know. I love you too; so much.” he replies with a gentle smile. “Sleep. When we wake up we can do whatever you want, I’m right here.” He brings his arms around Ilya so that he’s close to his chest and squeezes him before shuffling slightly so that they’re tucked tight against each other.

The dark doesn’t feel so sharp anymore. It settles instead, like a blanket pulled up carefully, tucked around the edges. Shane’s arm is heavy across Ilya’s middle, solid and warm, a promise made without words. His breath brushes the back of Ilya’s neck, slow and even, the kind of breathing that teaches your own body how to do the same.

Ilya stares at nothing, then lets his eyes close. Earlier, the thoughts had been loud and messy, insistent, but now they’re dulled by the steady press of Shane’s chest, by the thumb tracing small, absent-minded arcs over his ribs.

This is care, Ilya thinks. Not grand gestures or speeches, just this: being held when you don’t have the strength to hold yourself together. He doesn’t say thank you. He doesn’t need to. Shane knows. Shane always seems to know.

Love, he realizes, feels like being allowed to rest. It feels like being chosen again and again in the dark, when you’re not impressive or strong or easy. Shane shifts slightly behind him, nose pressing into his hair, arm tightening just a fraction, as if anchoring him here. Ilya exhales, lets himself sink back into that warmth, into that certainty. Tomorrow can wait. For now, there is this, Shane’s heartbeat, steady as a metronome, and the simple, astonishing fact that he is loved.

End Notes

thank you for reading!!!

let me know what you think! baddies who comment get kisses on the mouth and i'm starved for attention!

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