

love and lust (wanna be yours)

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love and lust (wanna be yours)

by [blankjournals](#)

Summary

“You really wouldn’t mind if I had sex with someone else?”

Ilya does mind. Hearing it said back to him, almost makes him flinch, a sudden and brittle sound right next to his ear that he fails to recoil from in time. But he swallows back the bitter truth and replies, “Of course not. If that is what you want.”

He waits, sitting on his living room couch, phone pressed painfully against his ear, his other hand gripping his knees till his knuckles blanched. He could feel his own heart rattling behind his ribs, pulse rockingly loudly. His mind was an echo of alarm, demanding of him: *Why isn't Shane saying anything?*

It was the loudest silence he’s ever lived through, until Shane finally said, “Okay.”

OR: inspired by the fight in TLG where Ilya tells Shane he can sleep with other men. But this time, Shane actually takes the offer.

Notes

update (2/19) - translation available in mandarin [here!](#)

once again, no cheating, we are strict.
title inspired by the song LOVE. by Kendrick Lamar.

this turned out more melodramatic then I initially thought. too late now I already wrote 11k.
skim the internal monologue if you must.

also i could not figure out the year this fight took place. in TLG its 2021 when ilya opens up about the fight with his therapist and he says it happened "couple of years ago". my brother in christ your relationship = a couple of years. it definetly happened while ilya was in ottawa because shane had driven back home (montreal) afterwards and had a game in philadelphia 4 days later . so 2019 or 2020. and i looked into NHL schedules for those years to figure out, ok, what month could ottawa and montreal be playing on homeground, and then montreal has a game in philadelphia couple days later. and then they both need to be back in canada for the purpose of my fic and, jan 2020 had this exact schedule for hence why i used the washington and new jersey teams. all is to say, i still dont know what year this fight took place LOL.

“You really wouldn’t mind if I had sex with someone else?”

It’s the first thing Shane said when he finally got in contact with Ilya, after three days of silence. No calls, no texts, not even a read receipt to let Ilya know his messages were seen.

Ilya had told Shane that if he wanted to, he could sleep with other people. They spend most of their time on the road, with little time together. He does not believe in *cheating*, because he does not own Shane; he doesn't have that kind of agency over him. Shane never got to explore his sexuality much outside of himself. And Ilya doesn't want to imagine Shane regretting settling down with him too early.

How could Shane possibly know that Ilya is enough? They’re not vanilla, but there is a kind of parameter to their sexual dynamic. No matter how vast the list of things explored and shoved within the borders, there are some things they will not do, will not step outside for, because neither Ilya nor Shane is interested in doing those things with the other.

But what if Shane’s desire is influenced by what Ilya likes? What if there is a partner out there more entused about bottoming than Ilya, and that's enough for Shane to realize he might be more inclined to top?

He had loved Shane all those years, loved him even when Ilya slept with people whose names he couldn’t recall. *Sex and Love* aren't *dependent* on each other; they are not two sides of the same coin. He trusts Shane to—just like him—be able to fuck someone else, but still love Ilya. Loyal to each other in the way that actually matters.

Love and Lust, they could be separated; they could be free from each other.

That is what he thought, that is what he believed, and he convinced himself it made the most sense. He was being selfless; he was doing this for Shane, so his boyfriend wouldn't feel like he was missing out, trapped in something he hadn't consented to.

You really wouldn’t mind if I had sex with someone else?

Turns out, Ilya does mind. Hearing it said back to him, hearing those exact words come out of Shane’s mouth, almost makes him flinch, a sudden and brittle sound right next to his ear that he fails to recoil from in time.

He doesn't know whether Shane is asking because he already slept with someone or is about to.

It starts with an itch in his ear, a muffled throbbing in his eardrum, yet Ilya still lied and said, “Of course not. If that is what you want.”

Is that what you want?

He heard Shane suck in a sharp breath over the line and then go completely mute.

Ilya waited, sitting on his living room couch, phone pressed against his ear, hand gripping his knees till his knuckles blanched. He could feel his own heart rattling behind his ribs, pulse rocking loudly. His mind echoed an alarm: *Why isn't Shane saying anything?*

It was the loudest silence he's ever lived through, until Shane finally replied, "Okay."

Ilya blinked rapidly, eyes snagging on the television. He couldn't tell you what or who was on.

What the fuck does "okay" mean? Was Shane saying that because—did he have someone in mind? Was someone waiting for him? Was—

The next thought gets lodged at the base of his throat. Swallowing only scrapes him raw as it travels down. That's where he finds the second itch.

Did Shane already sleep with someone? Is that why he didn't text for three days?

No—that is ridiculous. Shane isn't spontaneous like that. He plans, researches, and works with intent. It's not possible he found someone in three days, from heading to Philadelphia to his game today. Impossible; not enough time. Not enough space for Shane to think. Shane needs his space—

Your first hookup wasn't preplanned; you asked for his hotel room number and showed up, his brain unkindly reminds him.

Different, Ilya snaps back at himself, that was different.

Was it?

Yes.

"What is *okay*?" Ilya asks as he clears his throat. He rubs the palms of his hands across his knees to dispel some of his restless energy before he stands up, legs groaning from sitting down for so long.

"It means, okay. I... understand where you are coming from." Shane simply replies, an odd twinge to his voice that Ilya can't make out, the voice he uses when he's not trying to give any part of himself away. Hearing it directed at him hurts and surprises him in equal measures.

"You were very upset when you left," Ilya says carefully, trying to remind him.

"Guess, I'll get over it," Shane bites back.

Ilya's eyes narrow, and a question escapes faster than he can catch it. "Ah, Hollander, do you have someone in mind? Is there—" *Is there someone? Did you already sleep with them?*

"No," Shane answers back quickly, but it does little to settle Ilya's mind.

"Okay, so—"

"I need to go," Shane cuts in, and Ilya hears the rustling of movement behind him. "We'll be heading out to play soon."

Ilya nods, then remembers Shane can't see him and makes a sound of acknowledgment.

"I'll talk to you later, I love—" Shane stops himself mid-sentence, and Ilya waits with a beated breath, a terrible feeling in his stomach.

Can Shane not tell him he loves him anymore?

“I love you, bye,” Shane whispers, barely audible, like he doesn't want Ilya to hear it. Before Ilya can catch the words and send them back tenfold and layered in warmth, before he can even feel a sliver of relief, Shane hangs up.

The line runs dead, and Ilya keeps his phone pressed up against his ears longer than he'd care to admit.

Ilya's been in a state of limbo for days, forced to be aware of others and to be out of body when alone. There is a strange dancing in his stomach that doesn't deserve to be called dancing. Or butterflies. Those words are too nice.

No, it's as if a parasite is crawling around in him, telling him something is *wrong*. That uneasy jitter you get when you know you're about to throw up, so you loom over the toilet bowl, bracing for the inevitable.

Ilya thinks it's worse than when the nausea hits you out of nowhere. The wait for what's about to come only furthers the dread.

It's bad. Saying it's bad is an understatement. He overcompensates in the locker room, hoping no one notices that he's actually going green. Makes fun of Dykstra for his taste in country music. Gives unsolicited tips to Hazy on being a better goalie, earning a pointed middle finger in return.

Be loud. Point somewhere else. Do not let them know anything is wrong. Nothing is wrong.

Even when Coach Wiebe looks at him with a quiet concern, the same look when one of them is trying to power through and play when they're clearly coming down with something.

It doesn't affect his playing enough for the team's performance to be blamed on just Ilya having an off day.

His and Shane's text chain has been a little stale for a few days, a never-ending loop of “hi, how are you?” and “good, you?” and “fine, good game” and “thanks, you too,” and then again, “hi, how is your day going?”.

Even the thumbs-up emojis Shane uses in reaction to the silly little memes and gifs he sends him don't feel the same. Like he's sending them on autopilot instead of quietly smiling, or rolling his eyes with a kind of exasperated fondness, Ilya didn't realize was possible to do.

Ilya's too afraid to call, to make whatever this is, worse. He doesn't know what he's supposed to do. He barely knew what to do when Shane got so mad at the initial suggestion that he'd left Ilya's house and driven back home to Montreal. And now, he's supposedly “okay” with this? What does “okay” even mean?

Okay, like *I understand what you're saying?*

Okay, like, *thanks for telling me, but I won't do that?*

Okay, like *I will take your suggestion—*

In the end, Shane breaks the weird cycle of timid messages. He texts a link with a simple message: “at your earliest convenience,” like they're coworkers in some boring office.

He clicks on the link, and a Microsoft Form titled “**Establishment of Boundaries to Pursue Sexual Partners Outside of our Relationship**” pops up, and Ilya immediately clicks out.

What the fuck?

He tentatively goes back to his browser, hoping, praying, that his eyes are playing tricks on him, but they're not. Shane had actually sent him a quiz to figure out what kinds of things he can and can't do if he were to hook up with someone else.

There are a dozen questions. Each sexual act has additional follow-ups.

Ilya is going to kill himself right after he blows up the Microsoft HQ.

Second base (ie, heavy petting, touching over clothes)

The images flash without his permission, hands bigger than his touching Shane, hands smaller and softer than his, feeling Shane over his clothes till they've memorized the outlines of his body. Map out a journey Ilya's already discovered, practically founded. Spent hours, days, years learning the beauty and intricacies of. With love and care and worship. *How can anyone even attempt to—*

He stumbles back to the edge of his bed, legs feeling weak, the weight of his discomfort too strong for his body to bear any longer.

Third base (genital stimulation)

Can they offer me oral sex?

Can I offer them oral sex?

No, no, they can't. They won't know what to do. They don't know when you liked to be teased and when you need to be taken fully. Won't know when you like to be used and when you like to do all the work until the other person is left to your mercy. *Won't know about that particular ridge that you like to have teased with the underside of my tongue—*

He swipes his clammy hands against his bedsheet, feels them spasm like someone's sticking sharp pins in all the fleshy areas of his arm.

Home run (anal sex, full penetration)

Can they penetrate me?

Can I penetrate them?

Can they penetrate me with toys?

Can I prep myself, or are they allowed to finger me too?

Finger limit?

His stomach flips painfully, acid spilling over the rest of his organs till it burns and rots. Bile climbs up his tract till it reaches his esophagus, and Ilya slams a hand against the base of his neck to stop it from moving any further.

Are there positions you don't want me in?

Can I kiss them?

Can I use tongue?

No. No! They can't, they can't do any of this, I'll rip their arms right out of their—

Ilya feels his molars ache with how hard he's clenching his jaw, his eyes burn holes into his screen as he jams his fingers across his phone. *No, no, no*, he ticks next to all the questions.

His fingers are trembling by the time he gets to the last question, and his entire jaw drops somewhere in the pits of hell when he reads it.

Can we have sex without condoms if they show proof that they have no STDs?

Ilya is up and pacing, calling Shane before he can think better of it.

Shane picks up after the third ring, "Hello?"

Hello, Ilya wants to mock, but instead he barks out, "Shane, what the fuck is this? Is this a joke to you?"

There's silence on the other line before Shane answers back in an irritatingly calm voice, "You think I spent 2 hours making a *questionnaire* as a joke?"

Ilya barks out a humourless laugh. "I said you could fuck other people, Hollander, I don't need ___"

"I need," Shane cuts in strongly, "I need to know the rules. So neither of us is left feeling hurt at the end of this."

You're already hurting me—

"And you were too afraid to talk on the phone? You had to send a fucking exam paper on it—"

"Fine. We can talk about it over the phone. I thought maybe you'd need time to think it over." Shane tells him, his voice rising. "Should we start with the first question? Second base—"

"Stop," Ilya chokes out, trying to steady the trembling in his voice, "I don't—"

I don't want you to do this. I don't want to share you.

"You don't..." Shane says cautiously, "Are you having second thoughts about this?"

Yes, Ilya wants to scream into the phone. *Say it, just say you take everything back*, his heart begs.

"No," he lies again.

He hears Shane sigh after a moment. He sounds almost disappointed when he finally says, “Okay.” He hesitates before asking, “Do you want to fuck other people?”

“No,” Ilya answers immediately, without a doubt, “No, I don't want anyone else. This is—this is about you. For you. You have not been with many people.”

“Yeah...” Shane says quietly, “For me.”

The bile has crawled its way up to his throat now, no matter how hard he tried to push it back down; he can feel it eroding away at his tissues, at his ability to talk.

“Send back the form, filled out.”

“Fine,” Ilya grits out before he wrenches the phone away from his ears and tosses it somewhere behind him. Hears it bounce, then clatter off the bed, landing with a loud thud that echoes across the room.

It isn't until he's smoked away half of his pack and his lungs are protesting at him to stop, that he finishes the stupid form and finally submits. It feels like he signed his own death sentence, committed the crime and prosecuted himself.

Maybe he deserves it.

Yes, yes, yes to everything for Shane to go out and do, even as it burned him inside to imagine.

There was only one question he stupidly answered *no* to on the form, and that was whether Ilya wanted to know about the people Shane would meet, details, names, and what they did.

He's not too sure whether the American saying “ignorance is bliss” applies to this.

He and Shane go back to their mindlessly-numb ‘hi, hello, how are you?’ texting loop, and Ilya fights the urge at every waking moment to ask: *Did you hook up with someone? Did you find someone? Did you find some guy to blow you in the washroom stall of a bar? Did you let a fan jerk you off behind the arena after a game? Did you let another player take you to their house? Did he bend you over his kitchen counter—*

He also just wants to—*блять, fuck*—talk to his boyfriend. Normally. Wants him to answer back honestly how his day was. Wants to ask him which species of bird diet he is copying today, and if he'll finally give himself a cheat day. He wants Shane to go back to texting him YouTube videos of “animals unlikely to become friends,” just so Ilya can reply, “is us,” and a billion hearts, like some love-sick fool in college. Wants to talk to him about this Russian movie called

The Blackout that Svetlana has been yelling at him to watch for months now. Ilya thinks it's mainly because they have an actress named Svetlana in it.

He wants to shit-talk with him about Scott Hunter and come up with the 40th way they can call him ancient without using the word old.

Scott Hunter is so old he probably helped bury Stalin.

Scott Hunter was still alive when gold was used as money.

Scott Hunter was probably friends with Jesus.

He wants Shane to send him thumbs-up emojis and knows he *means* it. Ilya can tell when his heart isn't in it.

They're trapped in a cold and dark chasm, one wrong move and they'll crumble the foundation both of them are standing on. But Ilya is already falling. He lives in the same country as his boyfriend, travelling to the States, then back to Canada, and they're forced to go weeks without seeing each other. These stolen moments are all he had, all he could get to fill the lonely hollows of his chest where Shane had filled. And now, even that has been snatched from him.

Or maybe Ilya was the irresponsible one and lost it himself. Let his slip right from his fingertips.

Ilya can't name the creature that's possessed his body, it's lit an inferno in him, and it's causing everything around him to set him off. It took three days for his team to figure out that something was wrong, because whenever he entered the locker room, everyone went uncomfortably quiet. He's snappy with his replies; his team prep talks edged a little too bitterly to amount to any inspiration. Enough that Coach Weibe interferes half the time to smooth the sting of his words.

Bood, who would have otherwise called him out and asked him "what the fuck his problem is", has resorted to gently talking to him like he's a hostage negotiator and Ilya has a bomb strapped to his chest.

Whatever crush Luca was harbouring for him seems to be momentarily put on pause as well.
Never meet your heroes.

He's angry, *furious*, and aggressive when he plays. And it worked for the first game, being an even bigger asshole than he already is on the ice. But it's very short-lived; when the next game he's banished to the penalty box more often than not, and by the time he's let out, it's too late for even a player like him to make up for it. Not when the team still so heavily relies on him.

There's a sick sort of satisfaction he gets when he catches relays of Shane and the Montreal teams' games. They're still winning more in contrast to his team, but Shane is clearly distracted, an observation noticed by both fans and commentators.

A sign, he wants *any* sign that this is affecting Shane as much as it's affecting him. The Shane who stormed away from his house during the fight is the Shane Hollander he knows. The Shane Hollander who sent him 25 questions on Microsoft Forms (fuck you, Bill Gates) to establish boundaries for a one-sided open relationship is also, uncomfortably, accurate to who Shane is. And he hates it, even though he feels like it should subdue his anxiety that Shane is able to look at this so... clinically.

There's no care or love in that form; it doesn't feel like Shane copied and pasted their sex life and is neatly arranging him in between rows of other people.

And yet, nothing helps. Nothing quells the feeling that everything is *wrong*. His body doesn't feel like his own; someone else has hijacked it. Someone younger, childish, throwing a tantrum because the bad man stole his favourite candy, and he's half a second away from going over and beating the thief blue and purple for taking what's his—

He is possessed, and he feels possessive. The heat in him is stifling, and it only further agitates the monster, banging behind his chest to escape and run after Shane, sink his claws into him and hide him behind his ribcage. Never let him out of his sight. Never let anyone else dare look at him.

It disgusts him how viscerally he feels the need to do this. Ashamed at how hypocritical he's being. He was the one who told Shane, *I don't believe in cheating, I don't own you*.

He doesn't. He does not. *Not mine, not like that*, he drills it over and over in his head, hoping any day now, it'll stick. Wants to believe in it so bad, wants it to stop the fire burning in him, the migraine-inducing screeching in his head. Wants it to uncoil every muscle in his body, that's twisted and bracing for a blow that never comes.

The final straw comes when Shane stops texting him. Ottawa is playing New Jersey at home, and Montreal is playing Washington at home as well.

For two weeks, even when his and Shane's communication had been abysmal to say the least, even after Shane sent that form that was clearly signed by Satan himself, they were still messaging each other. Even though any outsider reading their texts would think they were nothing more than cordial business partners. But still, *something*.

Shane doesn't text him all day, and Ilya doesn't know who else to fucking reach out to. If Shane doesn't want to talk to him, he doubts Pike will let him know where he is or convince his boyfriend to talk to him. He doesn't want to worry Yuna and David either, wouldn't even know how to explain why Shane could be ignoring him.

Ottawa wins, and he barely registers it, despite the fact that a win for his team is rare to come by, but he can't bring it in himself to care. The team doesn't even seem surprised when he declines their offer to celebrate.

Montreal wins against Washington as well, and he watches Shane's team cheer on his phone, watches them tell the reporters they'll be celebrating all night, watches Shane shake his head and offer a small smile in assent.

Then, Shane's location stops updating, and everything comes crashing down. He waits for a second, a minute, then thirty. And Shane still won't reply to his goddamn messages, won't pick up his calls.

LILY

good win hollander

winning shot was impressive

copying my moves?

not as good as me but acceptable

something wrong with your phone?

wont offer congratulations to me? polite canadian thing to do

location turned off?

hasnt updated? still at arena?

He bites the bullet and calls Pike, who lets his call ring out before Ilya's calling again, and again till he finally picks up.

"Jesus, did someone die? What the fuck, Rozanov, it's late—" Hayden's voice booms through the phone as a way of greeting.

"Where's Shane? He won't answer any of my calls." Ilya says, not wasting time with greetings.

"Hello? Rozanov? Is that you?"

"Pike," Ilya says tiredly, "Can you—"

"Rozanov, I literally can't—you sound like you're under water—"

"Where's Shane?" Ilya yells into the phone, like he's trying to get his voice to travel to Montreal.

"Did you say where's Shane? Shane's out with the team."

That pulls him short. "You're not with him?"

"Jesus, where the hell are you, dude? Hello? I'm not with Shane; Jackie is sick, so I'm at home with her. Shane's out with the team at *Ultraviolet*. Surprised he agreed, I mean not to brag or anything, it's not usually his thing, especially if I'm not there—"

Ilya hangs up without letting him finish. His vision goes blurry from how hard he's staring at the ground.

Ultraviolet.

The same nightclub, from years ago, where Ilya had spotted Shane with Rose Landry. Out and about, without shame, pressed up against someone else, surrounded in a cloud of purple and blue.

He stumbles once, and then, as if gravity had decided to sit on his shoulders, Ilya is sinking down, knees hitting painfully against the hard floor, and he has to shoot his arms out to brace himself.

Shane. *Ultraviolet.*

Someone is touching Shane. Someone is dancing with him. Someone is caressing his face. Someone is kissing his freckles. Someone who might not be safe—

He tries to stop it, tries to stop the pressure crushing against his chest, but he can't. His shoulder double over as his throat spasms. He gags once, and then a dry retching sound escapes his mouth. The sound slices through his empty house and echoes back, triggering him to cough and gasp again till he's throwing up bile. His throat itches with the burn, and his eyes water as he tries to get himself to breathe properly again.

He's tripping and swaying when he finally manages to push himself up on shaking legs. He has a flight to Buffalo tomorrow evening. Shane doesn't want to talk to him. Shane is doing exactly what Ilya has given him permission to do. Established boundaries and signed his life away, didn't take the bait when Shane tried to get him to back out.

It doesn't matter. *None of it matters.* He can't do this. Even if Shane never forgives him. Even if he humiliates himself. Even if Shane is with someone at the moment, discovering a part of himself he never could with Ilya.

He's going to beg, he's going to *plead*. Get on his knees and ask Shane selfishly to be his again. Completely, and without conditions, just Ilya's, down to the last cell.

It takes 2 hours to get to Montreal, and Ilya makes sure it does, even when the roads start blending into one, and the taillights of the cars in front of him appear as big fuzzy spots because of how blurry his vision is with unshed tears. Even when he feels his body lurch every few minutes, wanting to expel the last bit of food from his system till he's shaking and empty.

Pike texted him half an hour ago, saying Shane was still out but that he couldn't get a hold of him either. He nearly swerves into a ditch when the implication of that hits. It's well past 2 AM now.

He's forced to park 2-blocks away at some shitty abandoned construction site cause the streets are packed to the brim with cars. He almost decides to leave his car in the middle of the road, but takes in a forceful breath before he makes any more rash decisions.

He doesn't walk, doesn't jog, doesn't even run; he sprints to the nightclub. He has no plan. He doesn't even know if Shane is still there, if he already left to go home, left home with someone

else—

He's stumbling his way towards the entrance, trying not to slip on the ice and snow, the harsh wind biting into his skin, lungs protesting to slow down, when he gets his first bit of reprieve for that day, maybe in the past two weeks, when he spots him.

Shane. Exiting the doors, alone.

He looks, *god*, gorgeous, hair falling in his face, his white dress shirt tucked into his pants because, of course, Shane fucking Hollander was going to dress semi-formally while going to the club. He has one arm wrapped around himself as he shudders, puffs of air visible from when he breathes as he stares down at his phone with a little frown. Music thumps behind him, the neon lights of the sign casting a hallow around him, the streetlight reflecting off his hair and painting the shadows of his cheeks. красивый. *Beautiful*. Handsome. Stunning. Every descriptive adjective in his name.

Ilya could've stood there and stared for hours, locked himself completely in the moment and gazed at the enigma that is his boyfriend. чудо. *Miracle*.

And then a burst of sound behind him pops his bubble.

"Shane," someone calls as they exit the club. "Hey, man, is this yours? Found the girls who stole it."

The man, definitely not one of his teammates, Ilya notes, who towers over Shane, towers over Ilya, walks right up to him, completely in his personal space, Shane's leather jacket in his hands.

"Oh, thanks, Zayn, you didn't have to go through the trouble of finding it—"

"Nah, dude, can't believe Montreal girls have resorted to stealing your clothes now," the man, Zayn, teases with a blinding smile.

Shane huffs out a little sound of laughter and looks *up up up* at Zayn, and something ugly coils in Ilya's chest at watching Shane having to crane his neck up to look at this person. *Stupid tall man*.

Shane reaches for his jacket, then stops as Zayn offers it to help him put it back on.

This is where Ilya loses all sense of rationality.

"Hollander!" Ilya yells as he marches over. Twin heads whip in his direction, and Ilya watches as Shane's face twists from confusion to shock and finally settles on alarm.

Fuck. Calm down. Do not do something stupid, something that will truly have Shane hating you

"Rozanov?" Shane manages to say, eyes going wide as he takes him in.

Ilya ignores him in favour of putting himself between the two, hiding Shane behind like it's that easy to conceal all 200 lb of him. "Friend of yours, Hollander?" Ilya asks, with the fakest smile he can force, as he tries to seize the guy up, even though he's three inches taller than him.

Shane sputters a little behind him before he manages to rasp out, “Um, Zayn, this is—this is Ilya Rozanov, he’s a—”

“Friend,” Ilya finishes for him, eyes narrowing as he looks at Zayn. Friends, *if friends were lovers and called each other their boyfriends*.

“I’m his friend, I’m here to pick him up, designated driver, right, Hollander?”

“Oh, um,” Zayn looks between the two, raising an eyebrow at Shane, who’s starting to look mildly uncomfortable now. “Nice to meet you, Mr. Rozanov. I’m cousins with one of the boys on the Montreal team.”

“I will take that jacket,” Ilya says to him, completely disregarding his introduction. “Hollander should really get going home now.”

Zayn makes eye contact with Shane before he slowly offers his jacket up again, which Ilya takes back with more force than necessary. He turns to put it on Shane, who gives him a disapproving look and snatches it from his hand and puts it on himself.

“Goodbye, *Zaid*,” Ilya says, already turning away and ushering Shane forward.

“It’s Zayn—”

“See you —thanks, Zayn, nice meeting you,” Shane calls out over his shoulder, ever the polite Canadian boy.

It isn’t until they’ve walked far enough that even the hum of the club is just a distant memory, the tension between them thickening with every step, that Ilya finally breaks the silence. “Shane—”

“Did you bring your car?” Shane asks in a tight voice, his jaw locking right after. He walks side by side with Ilya but leans away the instant Ilya tries to nudge their shoulders together, as if it burns to touch him.

“Yes, had to park far away. Stupid roads, no double parking—”

“Why are you here, Rozanov? What the fuck,” Shane hisses, shooting him a glare before he tears his gaze away and looks around, afraid that someone will spot them.

Ilya’s shoulders tense, but he forces out a sardonic laugh. “You’re not happy to see your boyfriend?”

Is it too late? Can I take back what I said? I drove all the way here to tell you—

“My *boyfriend* should be in Ottawa right now. You have a flight in 16 hours, so excuse me for being confused—”

“Are you sad I interrupted your night with *Zaid*?” Ilya cuts in, his words edged with jealousy as they step into the dimly lit lot where he parked.

Shane's head whips to him, eyebrows jumping and his mouth parting open, "What?"

They've stopped a couple of meters away from his car now, finally turned to each other, caught under each other's gaze.

"I am here to surprise my boyfriend, and he is very angry at me, after I catch him with another man—"

That is *not* what he was supposed to say; he had a plan, barely formed, but he was supposed to do something else. He was supposed to apologize, tell Shane he doesn't want him fucking anyone else. But all of that seems distant now. Ilya can't think, can't think when his mind is muddled with every kind of emotion, and Shane keeps inching away from him and is not even *happy* to see him—

"Shut the fuck up," Shane snaps, his face going red. "His name is *Zayn*, first of all—"

Irritation flickers across Ilya's face as he rolls his eyes. He has the horrible urge to question why Shane is blushing, who he's flushing for. "I don't care what his fucking name is—"

"And don't say 'caught' like—like you found me in a compromising position," Shane spits back, stepping closer, the space between them shrinking with every word. His eyes are striking, and Ilya can't look away. There's a fire blazing in his pupils, and Ilya wants nothing more but to let himself burn away in it.

"Oh, so what should I call it?" Ilya shoots back, "When you go the whole day ignoring me, and when I finally find you, you're—"

"I'm what?" Shane demands, fists clenching at his sides as he steps forward, bringing them nearly chest to chest. The heat of his anger radiates between them, and Ilya can't help but feel it ignite the hunger in his own belly, sparks licking up his spine.

"You see someone talking to me, and you assume I slept with them?"

"Did you?" Ilya asks, his voice dropping low. He cranes his head down, gaze lingering on the hard set of Shane's mouth, before flicking up to meet his eyes, daring him to look away.

With a jump, he realizes Shane's already watching him, and he's definitely caught him staring at his lips. Ilya knows the way Shane watches him, the journeys his eyes make, first his lips, the apple of his cheeks, then finally meeting his eyes. Like he needs a moment to take it all in, step by step.

But Shane looks defiant right now, *challenge accepted*. He doesn't break eye contact, and hysterically, Ilya finds himself smug at the fact. *I am the only one whose eyes he can look into.*

The air between them feels charged, crackling with something unbearable. Ilya's chest felt tight with anticipation, hands restless and ready to spring, ready to grab and pull and crash into Shane.

A complicated look flickers across Shane's face as he leans in, their foreheads nearly brushing. His eyes gleam with something Ilya can't name: anger, hurt, want, all twisted together. When he finally speaks, it's a whisper meant only for Ilya: "You answered the form. I thought you didn't want to know who I fucked?"

And then Shane breaks away from his orbit, stealing back his warmth as if punishing Ilya for daring to get close. He stomps the rest of the way to his car, fingers clenched into fists at his sides.

A flash of something hot and jagged courses through Ilya, propelling him to move forward and march after him. He grabs Shane with desperate hands, spinning him around and crowding him up against the cold metal door of the car. Ilya looms over him, eyes dark, his body jumping at every brush of contact between him and Shane. His pulse pounds when he catches sight of Shane's flushed face, freckles vivid even in the low light, pupils blown wide as he stares up at him.

"Oh," Ilya laughs bitterly, "It turns you on, yes? To have your boyfriend catch you in the act."

Shane grunts, and then he's shoving Ilya out of the way, and for a second, Ilya thinks he's going to go around and sit in the passenger seat. But instead, he opens the back door and, without preamble, grabs Ilya and pushes him inside. Ilya makes a shocked noise of confusion as he flops back on the seats, trying to figure out what the fuck is going on before Shane jams the front seats forward and gets in the back seat with him, plopping himself ungracefully in Ilya's lap.

All the breath gets knocked out of his lungs, every vessel depleting as Shane's straddles his thighs and his comfortable weight settles onto him. *Боже. Oh my god.*

"What—" Ilya begins to ask, but his voice dies halfway through when Shane's hands go to his waistband, stripping off his jeans and underwear till they're pooling at his knees. His jacket is forcefully tossed away next.

"Hollander—" Ilya tries to stop his frantic movements, but Shane just swats his hands away.

"You looked like you were going to fuck me right there in front of Zayn, what happened to all that?" Shane says, eyes taunting him.

Before Ilya can reply, Shane barrels on, voice breathless, "Does it turn you on, to know I've slept with men other than you? Is that why you wanted me to sleep around again?"

Whatever control Ilya had left snapped in that moment. It doesn't turn him on; nothing about it does. It makes his vision go red with rage, makes him want to tear at his own skin, to be nothing but raw, exposed nerve endings until Shane is the only thing that can patch him back up.

Desire is a word only meant for Shane; he is what he wants and nothing else.

The tendons of his neck are where Ilya attacks first, as he leans forward till Shane's back is cramped up against the rear of the front seat. His fingers travel to his dark hair and pull his head back so he can sink his teeth into him.

Shane lets out a startled gasp that breaks into a hiss as Ilya bites at his skin. His teeth scrape and worry at the delicate skin, blurring the line between pain and pleasure. Shane only encourages him more, eyes rolling to the back of his head, baring his neck even further, fingers pulling tighter into Ilya's curl, every pull of his strands unforgiving, begging for *more more more*.

Ilya moves with purpose, not caring for how these marks would look tomorrow, caring only that the bruises would show anyone looking from a mile away that Shane was branded, that Shane

Hollander was his.

Shane's fingers loosened their grip from his hair before they travelled down to his chest, then to the fly of his jeans, urging Ilya to move faster.

Ilya couldn't tell you anything that happened after that. It was like he was drunk, the type of intoxication where everything still felt good and floaty and slow. But his movements said otherwise. It was freezing outside, and they didn't even start the car, but Ilya feels like he's boiling over. Every time he moves, he feels like he's going to slip right off the leather of the car seats.

He doesn't know how far Shane wants to go, tries to tell him they don't have anything to work with, but Shane's already reaching for his wallet that fell on the floorboard, digging around in it before he pulls two square packets of lube and shoves them towards him.

He fumbles to catch them, another flare of irritation coursing through him, before Shane reminds him with a scowl, "You put them in there, asshole."

And then Shane is ripping one of the packets open, hands slippery with the lube, before he's pushing two slick fingers inside himself. He grimaces at the temperature, leaning forward to get a better angle.

Ilya catches him immediately, fingers digging into his hip, completely mesmerized by the sight of him, unable to look away even if he wanted to. He wants to see Shane flushed in all the colours, wants to see the contrast of his freckles against his cheeks, wants to see the marks he left on his neck. Wants to see the indent he's making on his lips from how hard he's biting them. But the car is still off, and the only illumination they have is the moonlight, dancing its way inside.

He takes over, opening Shane up, fingers moving with practised ease—something no one else will ever know, could ever understand, could not hope to study. Ilya knows exactly where to press, when to push, when to widen his fingers, and when to add another. Knows when it's too much, and when it's not enough.

Knows by Shane's sounds when it feels good, when he needs more, knows by the way his voice cracks between words that he's near his sweet spot. And he knows, like right now, when Shane grunts and urges Ilya to move faster, that he's not ready, that he's pushing his limits. Still, for a moment, Ilya wants so badly to give him what he asks for, wants to say yes to everything, but he can't, he won't. Not if it means hurting him.

"Fuck—ready, I'm ready," Shane chokes out, eyes squeezed shut as he rocks back on his fingers.

But Ilya ignores him, adding a third finger, and Shane makes a frustrated noise at the back of his throat. "I'm—"

"No, you are not," Ilya growls, pausing the movements of his fingers. "You will let me do this, or I will not do this at all."

Shane stares down at him, breathing heavily between them, fingers digging into his shoulders. Something in Ilya's tone makes him back down, and he doesn't argue further. No matter how

mad, how badly he wanted to snap back at him, Ilya knows, beneath it all, Shane craves to be good for him, will preen as soon as Ilya calls him his *good boy*. мой хороший.

When he is finally satisfied with his work, Shane mutters a *fucking finally*. Ilya slicks himself up with the other packet of lube, trying to be thorough before Shane is lining himself up and sinking down on him with a strangled moan.

Too fast, too much. Ilya feels like he's been swallowed whole as Shane's heat consumes him. "Fuck, Shane, it's okay?"

Shane doesn't slow down, only nods frantically; he waits just as his body's barely gotten used to the stretch before he's moving himself up and bearing down. He moves against him with a hunger that boils with desperation, one hand braced against Ilya's chest, the other against the chilled window.

Ilya watches him with dark eyes, every nerve alight. Every roll of his hips sends a jolt of pleasure straight through his spine. It overwhelms, in a way, only being with Shane does, being aware of everything all at once.

But he wants it, craves it like oxygen. To listen to his sounds, to see the way Shane's face twists in bliss, what angle makes him break and what touch makes him shiver. He wants it all, wants to be in control of it all, makes him feel safe in a way nothing else ever has before.

His hands grab everywhere, annoyed that they are still half-dressed. But he needs, *wants*, every part of him. His fingers move beneath Shane's shirt, feeling the hard lines of his body, skin slippery and hot to the touch. His hands cup around one bicep and squeeze hard, and Shane groans, nodding for more.

It's hard to move. There is a seatbelt digging into his back; he doesn't think Shane is any more comfortable, being crammed between Ilya's chest and the car seat. He has no choice but to keep his head buried next to Ilya's, cradled by his larger hand so it won't accidentally hit the roof. He sends a silent apology, knowing the skin of Shane's thighs and legs will hurt tomorrow from how roughly his jeans are rubbing against bare skin.

When he feels Shane's pace falter, thighs trembling with exertion, the sound of that hoarse inhale where he can't get enough air cause he's used it all up, Ilya takes over.

"Still okay?" Ilya asks him as Shane stills his movement. Shane breathes out an eager *yes* in reply, sounding absolutely wrecked, leaning his entire body weight further over him, trying his best to angle himself to let Ilya move at his pace. Ilya plants his feet firmly before he snaps his hips up in return, punching another groan out of both of them.

"Do you think *Zayn* could have given this to you?" Ilya rasps out, muscles tensing as he gets close to his release.

"Ilya" Shane chokes out, voice high-pitched, a wanton sound leaving his throat as the angle changes, and Ilya hits that bundle of nerves, has him squeezing his eyes shut and his toes curling in pleasure.

"Answer me," Ilya demands and then he halts all movements, fights every fibre in his body from thrusting up in reckless abandon.

Shane makes a wounded sound against his neck, and he pulls back, face wet with tears, eyes shining with betrayal. “No one,” he whispers, shaking his head, his damp hair falling into his eyes, “Ilya no one, just you, just you, please, *please*—”

“Just me,” Ilya grits out, as he resumes his movements, trying to chase the delicious friction between them, “Only me. You hear me? No matter who else you go to, no one could ever make you feel like this. Pretty and needy, ruined. Just for me.”

“No one, no one, Ilya—” Shane’s voice falters as he convulses around him, bowing forward, as he falls apart. He gets his revenge when his mouth latches onto the left side of Ilya’s neck and bites down as his orgasm tears out of them.

It's too much for Ilya, the sting of the bite sending sparks through his skin, Shane clenching around him like a vice, coming undone without Ilya touching him. His pace gets messy, off-rhythm before he's coming too, a flash of hot-white, before he empties himself inside Shane.

The car is fogged up everywhere, save for the messy handprint Shane left on the window next to him, which doesn't leave much to the imagination. The only sound is their ragged breathing, chests rising and falling against each other as they try to catch their breath.

Ilya’s arms were coiled tight around Shane, heart hammering so fast in his chest he was sure it was going to fail him any second.

For just a second, it was him and Shane, together, joined in every which way but still left Ilya wanting more, always *more*. Could never get enough of Shane. He smooths out his dress shirt where it’s been bunched up and open, half buttons still on, the other half probably littered somewhere in the car.

He moves to the nape of his neck, tracing the freckles he knows are there without looking, moving down to his shoulders, then his back, down to his hips, where he caresses the imprints from where he was digging his fingers. The stretchmarks on his ass and thighs are next, even though he can't see them.

He feels at peace, a balm to soothe the ache and anxiety of the last few weeks. His body no longer at war to have him belch out all the contents of his stomach. But there's an itch he feels in his mouth as he tries his best to clean them, like he's forgetting something important. Someone is telling him in a distant voice, but he can't make out what they're saying.

He wants to ask if Shane also has wipes in his wallet, but he spots a couple of napkins and makes do, wondering if he should have looked harder for condoms cause now Shane's going to have to sit with Ilya's release leaking out of him when he drives them home. *Sure*, the thought of it is hot enough to get Ilya hard again, but he knows Shane hates the mess.

But then again, Shane should've thought of that before he offered to have sex in the car. Practically sat on his lap and said *take me*. What was Ilya supposed to do, say no?

He apologizes when Shane winces at the napkin's rough texture. Shushes with, мой любимый, *my beloved*, sweetheart.

He's able to tuck himself back in his jeans, manages to pull Shane's underwear back over him cause he might as well be dead weight, refusing to move as Ilya tries to clean them. *Brat*, he thinks fondly, as his fingers graze through his sweaty hair, combing it back.

And then he hears snuffles, quite at first, restrained so as not to alert the wrong person. But then he feels wetness across his neck, hot tears against his already feverish skin as Shane hides his face further away.

"Shane?" Ilya asks, trying to blink back the stars behind his eyes. He tries to look down, tries to lift Shane's face, but his boyfriend refuses to move, looking away stubbornly as his sounds grow louder.

"Shane," Ilya repeats a little louder, hands scrambling to do something, fix something. "Shane, are you okay? мой милый, *my darling*, I can't—fuck I can't see you like this—Shane please let me—are you hurt?" Ilya asks, voice tinged with a plea.

Shane laughs wetly against him, the end of it breaking into a choked back sob, and Ilya feels his heart cleave in two.

"Everything hurts," Shane whispers brokenly between them.

The nausea is back, it hits him suddenly, the rise of something acidic in his throat. His hands leave Shane immediately. He shoves them next to himself instead, like he's afraid they'll only hurt what he touches.

A suffocating weight settles on his chest, and it becomes harder to breathe all over again, nothing like the way he was chasing for air before. This time, it only left him feeling cold.

"Shane, I'm—*fuck*—where did I—let me—" Ilya scrambles to understand, alarm bells blaring in his head.

"Do you like it that much, the idea of me sleeping with someone else?" Shane finally peels his head away from his neck and looks down at Ilya, his eyes pooling with tears, his mouth tugged into a frown.

The noise in his head stops, just for a moment, as he stares up at Shane, panic simpering to confusion. "What?" he breathes out, throat dry.

"This is some sick kink for you?" Shane questions, some of his earlier anger bleeding into his voice, underneath the hurt he's failing to hide. "This gets you off?"

"No," Ilya says, horrified, and his fingers hesitate before they find their way back to Shane's face, sighing in relief when Shane doesn't stop him. He swipes at his face, hands shaking to catch the tears faster than they fall. His own eyes flinch under the pressure, and he feels a weight gathering in the corner of his eyes.

"Shane, do you really think that's why I'm—"

“What else am I supposed to think?” Shane snaps at him, even as his face crumbles. “You told me I could sleep with other people. You answered the stupid form. You show up unannounced, after ignoring me all day. To— what? Mark your fucking claim? Tell me, Ilya, because you're going to have to spell it out for me. What else am I supposed to think? Other than the fact that my boyfriend doesn't want me as much as I want him—”

“No,” Ilya interrupts him, urgency coiled in his voice as his tears fall down the sides of his face. He pulls Shane impossibly closer, foreheads knocking. Because he needs to see, he needs to look into his eyes, needs to know Shane can see him and understand him.

“I was wrong. I was wrong when I said it would not bother me.” Ilya confesses, words he's been so desperate to tell Shane for weeks, finally bursting out of him. They bruise him on their way out, even as his chest feels lighter when the weight lessens.

“It bothers me—fuck, *Shane*—it's not enough to describe. I will kill anyone else who touches you. I thought I was... thought I was looking out for you. Thought I was—not enough. Maybe.” Ilya finishes, mouth twisting in pain. His excuses sound pathetic to his own ears, saying it out loud now.

“You are enough for me,” Shane says without hesitation, fingers moving to wipe at Ilya's face. “Ilya, *Ilya*, I don't need to sleep with anyone else to know that... you are *enough* for me.”

Ilya closes his eyes, a sound catching in his throat as he nods, his muscles relaxing as he lets Shane's reassurance wash over him, let it smooth away the sharp concerns of his doubt.

“You told me you didn't own me,” Shane says quietly, “Is that really what you felt like all this time?”

“Shane—”

“When I—it's embarrassing, I never really understood what people meant. About someone being *yours*. And then you told me you loved me and I thought you were—*finally*—no one else but mine?”

The grief and uncertainty in Shane's voice were enough to undo him, and Ilya feels the last of his walls shatter without care. Nothing but destruction and dust thick enough to choke on.

“I'm sorry,” Ilya gasps out, his eyes mourning with him as more tears fall, “I'm sorry, I'm sorry, *Shane*. Mine, you are *mine*, and I am yours. Never—never ever never was there a moment I didn't want that Shane—”

Ilya tugs him forward, and Shane all but crashes into him, like a thread between their hearts pulling them closer and closer together. Shane can't stop the sob that tears out of him, no longer able to hold it back, letting go in a way he rarely allows himself to. His arms circle around Ilya's head and neck, trying to grab for purchase like he was afraid Ilya was going to vanish into thin air. Ilya's strong arms wrap around him in return, even as they tremble, to contain Shane's shaking, to contain his hurt. Wanting to hide him forever in this space between them, just meant for them.

Родной мой. *You are my person. You belong to me.*

He wants to touch every part of Shane all at once, but he doesn't have nearly enough hands, nearly enough fingers to do that. Wants to touch and soothe and appreciate all parts of him at once; wants to be greedy with his affection. His hunger for Shane is bottomless; close isn't close enough.

He wants to kiss the pads of his fingertips, the proof of his pulse on the side of his neck, the shadows of his jaw, the flush of his cheeks, the freckles under his eyes, his lips—

Ilya jumps in his own skin as the realization comes crashing down on him. The strange itch he felt earlier on his mouth.

They didn't kiss. This entire time, he didn't kiss Shane. *We didn't even kiss.*

“What?” Shane mumbles between them, shifting slightly.

Ilya doesn't realize he spoke out loud, but he doesn't care, not when his heart is turning in agony. Somehow feeling so far from Shane, even when he's pressed right up against him, close enough for their hearts to hear each other.

“We didn't kiss—I didn't kiss you,” Ilya rasps out, maneuvering Shane's face so he can look at him again. “*Sweetheart*, I didn't even—”

Shane closes the final distance, lips pressing onto his in desperation. It's like a breath of fresh air, his lungs finally expanding in relief. Ilya hauls him even closer, not wanting an inch of space between them, wanting to breathe nothing but *Shane Shane Shane*.

They make quite the sight, faces wet and still crying, grabbing on to each other like they're reuniting after years. Shane tastes like salt and shaking breath, no rhythm or rhyme to the push and pull of their lips. Ilya doesn't care, and neither of them cares. Every kiss feels like the first, every kiss leads them wanting more, and ends with them not wanting to let go.

“I didn't receive any of your calls; all your texts came through when I was at *Ultraviolet*. That's why I came outside,” Shane tells him later that night.

They're bundled away in Shane's bed, his head tucked beneath Ilya's chin, arm thrown over him, making slow, absentminded passes over Ilya's back, tracing his moles like they were constellations. Ilya's hand is cradled on top of Shane's head, his own chin resting there. Their legs are tangled under the blanket, and Ilya almost teases him about his leg hair that he can feel against his own.

Ilya sighs heavily before he replies, “Stupid Bell services,” he grumbles, his free hand tracing over Shane's jaw, as he hums back contentedly.

Shane's next words are quieter, but still firm in their conviction, “I was never going to sleep with anyone else, even with... even with you... okay with it.”

Ilya swallows hard, a bitter smile taking over his face before he leans down to press a soft kiss on the center of Shane's forehead, an apology for worrying his mind.

He hesitates before asking, the question seeming unfair, but pushes through anyway: "Why didn't you say, you didn't want to? You sent the..." he trails off, waving vaguely in front of them. *Quiz from hell.*

Shane bites his lips as he mulls it over, before exhaling and replying, "I really thought you wanted me to. And it was... just something I couldn't understand."

Ilya blinks at the faraway wall, the hidden meaning behind those words evident to him. *I took what you said at face value.*

"And maybe... You were not happy with me not having as much experience as you." Shane finishes with a sad smile on his face.

Ilya feels his breath leave him, and he quickly looks down, angling Shane's face up, cradling his jaw, his heart breaking at the look on his face. He shakes his head furiously before he manages to say, "No, never, that was never—never what it was about. Shane I—I love that all of your firsts are with me. I am a selfish man—"

"No, you're not," Shane cuts in quickly, his hand clasping over Ilya's and squeezing tight, "You are not selfish."

He says it so confidently that Ilya almost believes it.

"I wish I had all your firsts, too."

"You do," Ilya reassures him, bringing him closer and breathing in the scent of his skin, still soft from their shower and smelling of his citrus bodysoap. "All the ones that matter. First boyfriend, first person I loved." he smiles between them before whispering, "Only person I want to live forever with."

Forever for.

Shane's face glows bright and warm at the admission, and he presses another smile against Ilya's chest. "First lover?"

"You are the only person I have loved, so yes, first lover," Ilya answers, with the same tone of seriousness as when he told Yuna and David what they were when Shane was struggling to explain their situation to them.

Shane doesn't correct him on the meaning of the word 'lover' in English. It doesn't make him cringe the way that it used to; now, it only makes him feel shy and stupid when Ilya uses it.

"I am sorry," Shane says after a while, his finger tips tracing over the skin of Ilya's beating heart, feeling it move beneath his hands, "I should have told you, clearly, that I did not want to sleep with other people. Should have told you I didn't need that. I don't have any regrets with you, Ilya."

Ilya makes a soft noise of protest, “No, my fault, Shane, I lied. I am sorry, I thought I was okay with it, but I was not. You cannot read my mind.”

Ilya feels Shane gearing up to say something and stopping, so he knocks their foreheads together and asks encouragingly, “What is it?”

“We...” Shane starts, “are in a *monogamous* relationship.”

“Yes,” Ilya instantly agrees, he knows that word. “Me and you, no one else.” *Mine*, he wants to add, as he squeezes Shane’s waist.

“I still believe in cheating,” Shane continues evenly, “I don’t—I don’t see love and sex as—like you can love someone and then, still have sex with someone else. I mean, I know, open relationships are a thing, but I don’t think I can do that.”

“No open,” Ilya says to him, “doors are closed, Hollander,” he says firmly, and Shane huffs out a laugh when Ilya squeezes him tighter without noticing.

“Okay,” Shane says eventually, “cause if you cheat on me—”

“You will murder me?”

“Hayden will help me bury the body.”

“Will be the only time I have respect for Pike,” Ilya says with a resigned sigh. “You also cannot cheat on me,” he adds.

“You will murder me, too?”

“I will kill myself.”

“Ilya...”

“Joking, I am joking, Hollander,” Ilya says with a laugh as Shane attempts to look up and glare at him, looking all the more like an angry kitten.

“Ha ha, so funny.” Shane grumbles, his head pressing harder against Ilya’s chest as he settles down again. He lets out a long sigh, curling up even further, like he’s trying to crawl under Ilya’s skin. “When do you have to leave?” he asks, voice thick with sleep.

“Ah,” Ilya says, as he pulls the comforter higher over both of them, “I forgot.”

“Ilya..”

“*Shane*,”

“Rozanov,”

“Hollander,”

“You shouldn’t have—”

“Shouldn’t have what? Come here? Let Zayn Malik steal you away?” Ilya deadpans, fingers poking at Shane’s hip in annoying little patterns till he squirms and slaps his hands away.

“That was not, Zayn Malik, Zayn Malik is not that tall.”

“Whatever—wait.” Ilya twists his head so he’s looking down better at Shane, “How do *you* know Zayn Malik?”

Shane raises an eyebrow at him, “He was in One Direction.”

“How do you know One Direction?”

“Everyone knows One Direction.”

“Not Shane Hollander, you know nothing about—”

“Oh fuck off, I don’t live under a rock,” Shane huffs, smacking at his chest. “They were really popular—”

“Can you name the other members?” Ilya challenges, eyebrows dancing up.

Shane’s mouth clicks shut, and Ilya watches his face turn pink.

“Oh, so you only know Mr. Zayn Malik?” Ilya teases, his eyes narrowing.

“Why is that a big deal?” Shane answers, looking away.

“You only remember his name, why?” Ilya presses.

“Oh my god, Rozanov, why does it—are you—are you jealous?” Shane asks, letting out a small disbelieving laugh.

Yes. “No,” Ilya answers quickly, too quickly.

Shane looks at him, failing to hide his smile, who certainly doesn’t believe him. Feeling a little bolder, he says with a small shrug, “Okay, fine, I don’t know many of their songs, but I remember him.”

If looks could kill—no, if looks could gently poke, he would never hurt Shane like that. “Ah, so he was your favourite?”

“It would not be fair to have a favourite, I don’t know about the rest of them. But he...”

“He?”

Shane tries to keep his face neutral, “He was, well, I guess *still* is, a good-looking man. I guess I should’ve realized it then—”

“That you had a big gay crush on Zayn Malik?” Ilya says with a little annoyed huff, irrational jealousy passing through him.

And you were okay with him sleeping with other men, his brain reminds him dryly.

Fuck off, Ilya thinks back, miffed.

“It wasn't a big gay crush.” Shane pauses, for added effect, Mr. Comedian, before adding, “Well, maybe, I just thought, oh, I did not know men could be *pretty*—”

Ilya scoffs, and he looks adorably indignant now. “Ah, so now he was *pretty*, yes?” Ilya says sarcastically.

“Men can be pretty,”

“You do not call me pretty,”

“Because you call me pretty,” Shane corrects.

“What if I want to be called pretty?” Ilya argues.

“But that would mean you have to be pretty,” Shane says and then laughs when Ilya gasps out loud, mouth closing and opening like a fish.

“Oh, so who is the asshole now? Saying your boyfriend is ugly,”

“I did not call you ugly. I just said you have to be pretty to be called pretty.”

Ilya pinches his hips just for that, and Shane only continues to laugh at him, clearly amused, even as his boyfriend tries not to pout at him.

Shane places a chaste kiss on his sternum in apology and goes, “You are everything else you know? I thought you were the hottest man when I first met you.”

Ilya tries not to feel too smug about that, and his entire irritation from before vanishes just like that. But still he adds, “But you still do not think I am pretty—”

“I'm not saying you are not *not* pretty, just that word doesn't fit within your bracket—”

“Hollander, what—”

“There are categories to beauty, right? Like I think Hayden is *cute*, but I don't think he's *sexy*—”

“Oh god,” Ilya groans, he sounds like he's about to whine, “Hollander—stop talking and get your eyes checked out, calling Pike cute—”

“Shut up, that's my best friend, okay? Objectively, he is—”

He ducks down to kiss him, growling into his mouth so he doesn't have to listen to Shane call another man 'pretty' and 'cute'. Shane makes a soft noise of surprise, his mouth giving way and granting him access to slip his tongue in, exploring with measured strokes. Ilya kisses him like he wants to brand himself into him, pressing hard and hot enough that Shane won't be able to move his mouth without thinking of him.

Ilya pulls away when he can no longer starve himself from needing air, foreheads pressed together. Shane looks absolutely debauched, panting and flushed up to his neck, where Ilya can

see all the marks he left in the car. The ones Shane had finally taken notice of in the bathroom mirror and said dryly, *did you really have to maul me?*

Ilya had pointed at the actual teeth imprint Shane himself left on the side of his neck, the bruises on his shoulders from where Shane's nails had dug into him. He had looked a little too pleased with his work.

Shane's eyes are half-lidded as he gazes back at him in wonderment. Ilya can't help himself, pressing back, once, twice, thrice for short little kisses, softer this time, unhurried. Shane chasing them back just as enthusiastically.

For a moment, Shane just leans against him, breaths mingling as they try to quiet their racing hearts. And because he couldn't help himself, the need to reassure him, Shane says, "You are so many things, *handsome, hot, sexy*—"

Ilya makes a displeased noise and lolls his head back on the pillow like he's been shot, "But not *pretty*, only Zayn Malik is pretty—"

"I am not saying you are not pretty. The word isn't enough to describe you, wrong category. Objectively, Zayn Malik's overall—"

"Because he is Asian? Your culture?"

"We are not the same type of Asian—"

"He is—how they say—ABG, Asian baby girl?"

Shane chokes on his spit, and then he's coughing roughly before he spits out, "Who taught you that word?"

Ilya goes to reply, but then stops himself. He debates whether to tell Shane the full story or keep all his limbs tonight.

"Oh," Shane says, levelling him a look, "you have a type, don't you?"

"Yes, and his name is Shane Hollander," Ilya says very sweetly, smacking a wet kiss right on the tip of Shane's nose.

Shane rolls his eyes and wipes his face, freckles bunching up as he squints his eyes. "Sure,"

"One type, Shane Hollander, my Asian baby girl."

"I am not a girl."

"My Asian baby boy,"

Shane makes a face at that, "Not a baby," he grumbles, and then burrows further into Ilya's chest like a baby otter.

"My Asian boy?" Ilya offers at last.

Shane sighs like he's praying for strength before replying, "Sure, I'll take it. You already call me your *Wasian*."

"It is a fun word,"

"Just don't say it in public."

The room is silent for a moment, save for the rustle of their sheets, their breaths moving in sync, and the hum of the vents. After a moment, Shane says, very matter-of-factly, "You could have emailed me when you weren't able to call."

"Yes, I should have written, *dear Hollander, please do not fuck other men, sincerely, your Russian lover from Ottawa—*"

"Gross—"

"Subject line, *sweetheart come back*, high priority, CC Yuna—"

"Oh my god—"

"Make you Microsoft Form, one question, apology accepted, yes or yes?"

Shane snorts and then laughs silently against him, his shoulders shaking under the covers.

"I called Pike too," Ilya also tells him, as if it were the worst thing about this entire situation. "He told me where you are out with team at *Ultraviolet*." There's a pause in his words before he says, "Didn't matter where you were, I would have missed game and flown to America if you were there."

"I think you are trying to be romantic, but I would have been really worried about you missing a game just for me—"

"You matter more than hockey," Ilya tells him, and then winces at himself. It's not like the words aren't true, far from it. But he knows it's different for Shane, whose whole world is hockey.

"Oh," Shane says in a hushed voice, "that actually might be the most romantic thing anyone's ever said to me."

Ilya smiles fondly against him, not at all surprised by his response. "Can only communicate with you through hockey terms, yes, yes, I know," Ilya says in jest.

And then, because he can see him thinking too hard, he adds, "You do not have to say it back, моё солнышко; I know you see it differently." *My sunshine*.

Shane offers him a sheepish smile, before it softens into something more tender, his hand going up to rest over his chest, right over the crucifix necklace he's still wearing. Ilya shivers at the contrast between the cold metal pressing into his skin and Shane's warm palm on top.

“Hockey’s always been mine, but I’m always trying to belong to it,” Shane says softly, unwinding a piece of himself just for them to share. “With you, I already do. I’m yours.”

Ilya sucks in a sharp breath, not at all expecting that. He wastes no time in pulling Shane even closer, hauling him along with the blanket, hiding his face against the top of his head and squeezing his eyes shut to block the pressure behind his eyes.

“Shane,” he breathes out, a lifetime worth of emotion just in one exhale, “Mine, always. And I am yours, forever, родной мой” he promises him, meaning it from the bottom of his heart. *You are my person.*

Shane melts into him, wanting to merge with him. His mind stops running, just a pleasant thrum that has him floating somewhere peaceful, where he’s allowed to not run himself ragged trying to process the world around him. He can simply not think and be comfortable in that silence, feel safe that he won’t get lost here forever because Ilya will always pull him back, his anchor to the world. He knows they still have more to talk about, but for now, this is okay.

His eyes finally succumb to his fatigue, and his breath slows down. “I love you,” he calls out, one last time, hoping he hasn’t flown far enough away that Ilya won’t hear him.

“Я тебя люблю,” *I love you.*

Guess he heard me, Shane thinks distantly, thoughts fizzing out, as he drifts off to the edge of consciousness, letting the early morning finally take him under, Ilya—*his Ilya*—tailing not too far behind him.



End Notes

thank you to another talented hollanov/buddie writer on ao3 for being my beta reader, [daylightsashley](#) 💕.

also thank you to my friend alex for looking it over 💛, and my russian consultants liza and inga for all the lovely notes on ilya 👑!

and thank you ash and san, for being the most hyped about this 💛

also i am not calling shane's diet "bird food" bc im trying to mock him or something for his disordered eating, it's literally what everyone around him refers to it as (in the books) hence why ilya uses those words.

update 2/10 - omg thank you so much [hnji914](#) for the lovely artwork inspired by my fic aaaahhhhh i love it so much i cannot believe i can visually see microsoft form shane now 💕💕💕

OH even tho i am canadian i unfortunately know not much about hockey so if someone wants to be my hockey consultant that would be great please come yell at me in twt!

twt: [@twi](#)

that's all folks.

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