

Baby Girl

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Baby Girl

by [hoko_onchi](#), [toomuchplor](#)

Summary

Rose Landry is shooting yet another X-Squad sequel in Montreal this month, and they planned her visit to Shane and Ilya's place in Ottawa ages ago; it's just a weird coincidence that Shane is out for a few games with a shoulder strain, and able to hang out with Rose tonight while Ilya's busy playing a home game against Dallas.

In which Rose and Shane drink a little too much wine on their girls' night, and Shane winds up with a face full of makeup. It would be a shame if Ilya came home unexpectedly and caught him looking like this!

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Or: Rose is an ally, makes Shane pretty, and Ilya rails him about it.

Notes

Happy birthday to the loveliest lately! With apologies from your co-authors because you definitely thought we were blowing you off the last few days when actually we were frantically writing smut in your honour. Sorry? We hope this makes up for our neglect?

With thanks to Smug for the lightning-quick beta. Smug, you legend, you icon, you're a hero!

C/N: read the tags.

This work uses a skin that will translate the Russian on click/hover. Leave the work skin on if you want this to function as intended.

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

“No, not tight-shut,” said Rose, leaning in close enough that Shane could smell the wine on her breath, a sharp acidic note over her more familiar scents of expensive skincare products, hair stuff. “Come on, I know you’ve worn makeup before, you know what I mean.”

“Wearing makeup for ad shoots isn’t the same as this,” said Shane, blinking his eyes open again. She was kneeling up over him on the couch, eyeliner pencil in hand, hair pulled back with a headband. “Nobody draws on my eyelids.”

“Close them,” said Rose, demonstrating with a slow blink of her big eyes. “Soft, like you’re sleeping.”

“Hm,” huffed Shane, obeying anyway. He wasn’t as tipsy as Rose; he’d matched her glass for glass tonight, but she probably weighed a lot less than him. Still, her hand felt steady as it dragged the pencil gently over his closed eyelid. The pencil lead – or whatever the makeup stick thing was called – was softer than Shane had expected. He’d imagined the scratch of a pencil crayon, dry and hard. But this was smooth, moving easily over his skin, not dragging or pulling at it.

“Okay,” said Rose, finishing with his right eye, taking him by the chin and tipping his face up assessingly. “Look at me.”

Shane opened his eyes, blinked. He couldn’t really feel the makeup on his skin, but he imagined he could.

“Holy shit, you look so fucking good.” Rose’s eyes were wide, her mouth a little O. She was wearing eyeliner, too—a dark green sparkly olive or something with shimmery gold eyeshadow. It wasn’t something Shane would ordinarily notice—or not until recently, anyway. Not until he’d seen Fabian perform a few times. The way he dressed, the way he looked. It made something in Shane feel a hint of—he didn’t know what. Envy, maybe. A little bit of longing.

“Yeah?” Shane’s stomach flipped. “Are you sure? Because if it doesn’t, you should probably wash the whole thing off.”

“No, honey.” She put her hand on his and squeezed. “Here.” She shuffled around in her bag and pulled out a silver compact, a pattern of a rose on the top. “Look in the mirror.”

“That’s, like, *just* a mirror? There’s no makeup in it?” Rose smiled, scrunching up her nose, and nodded. Shane took it. It was cool and smooth in his palm. His eyes darted to Rose. “Is it weird that I’m nervous?”

“Oh, definitely not.” She takes another sip of wine. “We’re, like, conditioned by the media to be nervous about this stuff. Especially men. Especially men in sports. Which is why” —she grabbed the mirror and popped it open— “you have to *look*.”

Shane looked. Sidelong, at first. A glance. That felt safer. He could see it—the stripe of black just above his upper lashes, the faint shimmer of pale gold just above, where Rose had

brushed a tiny bit of eyeshadow. His cheekbones were highlighted in a light peach tint, a few tiny sparkles catching the light.

He thought it would feel scary or wrong or like he was going to get in trouble. Like when he realized, at fifteen, that he liked his friend Ian a little too much. But, tonight, it just felt—

“Pretty,” he said. He touched one cheek.

“You look *so* cute.”

She said it in the same way Shane had heard her say it to Miles, before, helping him adjust a shirt to his liking, affirming his choice of jewelry for a night out together. Shane hated that word – *cute* – when girls said it to him, usually. It made him feel like a little boy, harmless, helpless. It was different when it came from his mom. It was different when Ilya said it.

Ilya rarely said it.

But now, with Rose saying it, with Shane seeing himself look like *this*, it didn’t feel demeaning. It felt...true. Good.

Shane took a deep breath and looked at himself again in the little compact, directly this time.

Rose had only finished the one eye with liner, and it was striking how different that eye looked: so big and dramatic.

“I look a little like Mulan before she meets with the matchmaker,” Shane said.

Rose fell over laughing, loose-limbed and silly. “Oh my god, you really don’t,” she said, shaking and giggling. “Shane, baby. You really, *really* don’t.” She kicked him in the stomach with one bare foot, wrinkling her nose. “You gotta let me finish, though. Right now it’s just a bit... Clockwork Orange.”

Shane was laughing, too, mostly because Rose’s giddiness was contagious. He struggled to stay still when she sat up and came back in with the eyeliner pencil, still fitfully snorting through his nose. Maybe he was a little tipsier than he’d realized.

“Why am I letting you do this,” he wondered, even as he secretly delighted in how gently Rose was touching him, how she was pushing the flat of her thumb to his eyebrow with her free hand to steady him. He was probably smiling. It felt good to smile about this. Usually when someone was putting makeup on him, he kept his eyes carefully averted from his reflection, looked at his phone, made sure it was clear that he was tolerating the process, but definitely not enjoying it at all. Here, in the small space between him and Rose, Shane could give in to the fact that it felt *nice*, even if he couldn’t quite say it aloud. This was friendship, maybe.

“Because under all the compulsory hockey manliness, you’re actually a little soft baby girl,” said Rose in a soothing, pouty voice.

“Fuck off,” Shane said automatically, hearing the smile in his own voice.

Rose let go of him, then came back in with a fingertip to smudge or blend something on his eyelid. She blew a little stream of air, then said, “Eyelash. Got it.” Her hand vanished, and Shane could hear her sitting down again with a satisfied sigh.

He opened his eyes and held up the compact that was still in his hand. It was hard to see the full effect in the little mirror, but Shane couldn’t quite get over that it was *him* in the reflection, anyway. Every blink of his eyes looked heavy, flirty, coy. The shine on his cheekbones gave him that faint glow he sometimes saw on himself when he was fresh out of the shower.

Or freshly out of bed with Ilya. That, too.

“Ooh,” said Rose. “Someone’s feeling himself, hmm?”

“Shut up,” said Shane, but he didn’t stop looking, kept blinking and turning his face so he could catch each angle.

“You are serving,” she declared. “But that outfit is not it.”

She got up from the couch and headed towards the guest room.

Shane wondered, briefly, if he was meant to follow Rose. He picked up his wine glass and drained the last of it, instead. It was white wine, which he rarely drank. Well, Shane rarely drank in general; when he did drink, it was usually a lager, but sometimes Ilya would open a bottle of red with dinner and Shane had a glass. He liked the white wine, though. It was sharp and almost fizzy, an edge to it that reminded Shane of fresh water, sunshine.

There was some wine left in the bottle, and Shane stared at it, knowing he’d had enough. He wouldn’t normally have more. But then, he wouldn’t normally wear eyeliner.

Shane refilled his glass, killing the last of the bottle, reckless and giddy.

“Okay,” said Rose suddenly, reappearing with something silky and long draped over her arm. “Literally I think this is the only thing I have here that will fit you, but it’s still better than – what are you wearing? Sweatpants?”

“Yeah.” Shane plucked his white t-shirt. “This is literally what I always wear at home. What was I supposed to do? Have a little red dress handy?”

“You’d slay in a little red dress.” Rose handed him the—whatever she had—this flowy silk thing.

“Is this a... robe?”

“Yep.” She popped a kiss on his cheek and pushed him towards his bedroom. Anya, who had been sleeping on her little bed all evening, popped up to follow them as they went. “Now, I know your stylist has bought you more than just white t-shirts.”

Shane huffed. “Yeah, but that’s like for—events. Going out and whatever. I don’t wear most of it. Some of it she just gets from shows, and I swear she just drops it off here.”

“Sure, sure, sure.” Rose walked him to his closet and flicked on the light. It was mostly white and black and grey—his requested color palette—with a few ‘pops’ of color here and there. “And does she bring you anything not blazer-related? Something more exciting.”

“Exciting to me, like, personally?” Shane took another sip of wine and put it on the dresser. The robe was still hanging over his arm; it was peachy-pink and covered in roses. “I’m not excited by clothes.”

“What are you excited by?” Rose was already opening drawers like she owned the place.

“Hockey.”

Rose snorted. “Wrong answer. Hockey doesn’t count. Name something you’ve seen on a man...something you think is sexy, but that you wouldn’t normally wear.”

“Like, um.” Shane scrunched up his nose. His cheeks were hot, like they always got when he drank wine. “Oh, I really like silk boxers. I just don’t wear them much. That’s kind of a turn-on.”

“I don’t want you aroused. Just—”

“Oh, my god. I didn’t mean *aroused*.”

“By the way, I’m not going to find any dildos in here, am I? For the record, I am very supportive, and I’m sure you keep them obsessively clean—”

Shane groaned. “No dildos. Jesus. They’re—elsewhere.”

“So.” She gave him a triumphant grin, holding up a pair of burgundy silk boxers. “You admit that there’s more than one?”

“You’re so gross. Your fanbase would be deeply disappointed in you.”

“My fanbase would not be surprised. But they might be *aroused*.” She threw the boxers at him. Shane tucked them beneath his arm, along with the robe. “This is a start. I think we ought to paint your nails.”

“What?” Shane studied his hand, as though he might see polish appearing there just from the mention of it. He probably shouldn’t have started another glass of wine. His head felt weirdly light. “I don’t think we own nail polish.”

“Pfft,” said Rose. “I have some in my bag. And I think it’s a colour you’d like.”

Shane had been avoiding eye contact with his reflection in the full-length mirror at the back of his closet, but he found himself looking up now. It was his whole face, not just the little glimpses allowed by Rose’s compact.

He half-expected the image to be bracing, a welcome dash of reality to drag him back to sobriety and sense. Instead, he got caught looking at himself with shock: not just the sooty dark eyes, but the gleam on his cheeks, the pink flush from the wine staining his face down to

his jaw, to the tips of his ears. His hair was falling around his face in pieces, since he hadn't bothered with any hair product after his shower earlier; he'd been expecting a cozy night in with Rose, after all. But the effect was – well. Without the styling paste he usually used, his longish hair was shiny and curling in gently, cupping his jaw, softening the squareness there.

“Should I leave you alone with him?” Rose said, laughing at him as Shane impulsively stepped towards his reflection, turning his face this way and that. “I’ve literally never seen you look at yourself this way, baby.”

Shane chewed on his lower lip, still transfixed, and saw how red his mouth got. “Do you have, uh. Lipstick?”

“Oh my god,” gasped Rose. “Are you serious? I didn’t think you’d let me. I’ll be right back! You can’t change your mind, now! A deal’s a deal, Hollander!”

Shane waited until she was out of the room before he dropped the robe to the floor and hastily stripped out of his t-shirt, joggers, boxer-briefs. It didn’t take long to get dressed again: silk boxers, which he normally found distracting to wear, the texture so slinky and clingy. And then the robe over them, wrapped closed and secured with the dark blue sash-tie thing.

He stepped back from the mirror and studied the effect. He’d never worn a robe around the house, only terrycloth ones when getting a massage at work. He and Ilya tended to lounge around in track pants, shirtless. They weren’t, like. Men who wore silky robes.

They should maybe reconsider that, Shane thought now, dragging his finger up the inky blue trim bordering the edges of the robe, the V of the neckline where the sides crossed. He shrugged his shoulder to readjust the robe, which was tight across his back, but the shoulder slipped down instead, and then Shane was staring at himself all over again: the prettiness of the view. The way his muscles and creamy tan skin teased his eyes over to where the robe hid more of his chest.

He didn’t look like a *girl*, really. He was the wrong shape, the wrong proportions. Even with the makeup and his long hair, Shane was masculine. But there was still a sort of softness to the way he looked in the robe, with his dark-rimmed eyes and his loose hair. There was something on the edge of delicate, maybe. Something sweet. It made Shane’s stomach twist with a feeling that might have pivoted into anxiety if he hadn’t had so much wine.

“Okay, okay – I’ve got this plum and this one is more like burgundy, but I think with your colouring, we – oh *shit*. Baby. You changed!” Rose was gleeful and warm about it, which made Shane feel gleeful and warm right back at her, grinning at her delighted face over his shoulder in the mirror. “God, I forgot how insane your body is. Ilya is a lucky man.”

Shane laughed. “Have you seen Ilya? I’m the lucky one.”

“You know,” said Rose, coming up behind Shane and wrapping her arms around him, reaching up to adjust his collar slightly, “I haven’t actually seen Ilya, not really. He’s not in all these commercials in his underwear and wet t-shirts like *some* guys.”

Shane huffed, pushing Rose's hand away. "He does post-game interviews with his shirt off all the time."

"Yeah," said Rose, "that's not quite the same, is it? He's all sweaty and the camera is like, shoulders-up, because it's a straight guy operating the camera."

"Yeah. I mean, I guess." Shane snorted; he could feel his cheeks getting red. A little thrum of excitement bloomed in his belly when he thought about Ilya. His body. The planes of his chest and stomach, the cut of his jaw. "I guess I've seen a lot of him. So. I feel like the lucky one?"

"Trust me. He's the one dating a supermodel." Rose tugged on Shane's hand until he shuffled after her and sat down on the sofa, buzzing with wine and the new excitement of looking like this. Looking pretty.

"No, I'm—I'm definitely not."

Rose rolled her eyes. "Sure. Now. Give me your hand."

Shane was deeply aware of the nail polish, and not in a way that he expected. His hands were never a part of him that he considered beautiful—intellectually, he knew they were good hands. Capable and strong. Deft and quick and skilled. People complimented his hands, magazines talked about them. But Shane thought of them as asset more than ornament, a tool for his profession more than anything else. But tonight—after another glass of wine and a little hockey gossip while Rose finished his nails—Shane couldn't stop looking at them. His eyes were drawn to the color. It was satisfying, especially, how it matched what he was wearing, matched the drama of his makeup.

"So, Ilya's here tomorrow, right?" Rose tapped her own nails—painted pale pink—against her glass. They were back in the living room, having returned there to complete Shane's look with lipstick and nail polish. They'd opened another bottle, which was possibly a mistake.

"Oh, um. No. Yeah. Like late late tonight. Just for a night." Shane cleared his throat, hearing how his voice sounded a bit raspy, a little off somehow. The mention of Ilya had him feeling – something. Something jarring.

"Are you going to keep the polish on?" Rose bit her lip. "Because you definitely should. You should actually take a few pictures with the makeup—"

"That's super unnecessary. I don't think—" Shane was shaking his head.

"I definitely *do* think. He might actually ascend if he saw you like this." Rose grinned. "Because you look—"

"Horny?" Shane blurted it out, hoping it sounded like a joke, and not like a confession.

Rose broke out laughing, thankfully. "No, I was going to say beautiful. Or, you know, hot. I think your man would appreciate it."

“Okay. Fine, maybe one.” Shane was actually a little impressed with himself for allowing this much; he would probably have preferred losing the Cup in overtime to agreeing to such a thing only a few years ago. Growth!

Rose already had her phone out, fiddling with the camera settings, before Shane reached the last syllable. “We’ll need to do a few dramatic poses—”

“Dramatic.” Shane hated it when photoshoot directors used words like this. He never knew what they meant.

“Yeah. Not uncomfortable, like that wet t-shirt contest for the sports drink. Or like a Hunger Games tribute—”

“Like a *what*?”

“That Rolex ad. I still see it all the fucking time when I’m the gym. It looks like they’re about to shoot a cannon and show your district number.”

“Do you have a problem with my branding?” Shane started laughing. “You’re going to need to talk to my manager.”

“You mean your mom?” Rose was already up, arranging pillows on one of Shane’s armchairs. “No thank you. I actually value my life. I’m not telling your mom you look like a dead kid from District One.”

“Isn’t that where all the evil kids come from? I wouldn’t be one of the evil kids.” He nearly stumbled when Rose pulled him up and shoved him towards the chair.

“You so would be. And they’re not evil. Everyone is a pawn of the Capitol. You’d just be trained to kill from a very young age.”

Shane’s belly hurt from laughing. It was good, being with Rose like this. Nice when she touched his face and hair and tilted his chin for his impromptu photo shoot. Nicer still that she didn’t expect anything of him beyond this, that she just wanted to spend time with him because she loved him. “I love you,” he said, only noticing as he spoke that he had probably passed tipsy a while back.

“I love you too, you sloppy baby,” she said, fondly, tapping around on her phone’s camera settings. “Okay. Tilt your face like this. No. Like this. You’re really not getting it.”

She was doubled over laughing at Shane’s expression, and Shane was in the process of falling out of the chair in slow motion when a car door closed outside. Shane registered the sound in a distant way when he climbed back into the chair, but it wasn’t until he heard footfall in the stairwell that he realized he hadn’t actually checked the time in maybe two hours, and that it was already *late, late tonight*.

Rose had her hand in his hair, still gasping with laughter and simultaneously trying to work her phone when Ilya came into the living room, dropping his backpack to the floor, yawning

and sighing and completely oblivious for one blissful second, bending over to scratch Anya on the head when she came over to greet him with her little tail wagging.

Shane froze. Here was the moment of sudden sobriety he had been looking for. Jesus *fuck*. Ilya was home.

Ilya, who abruptly seemed to take in what was happening in his living room, who was straightening up and blinking stupidly at the scene before him. “

“Ни хрена себе!” “Oh my god, holy shit!” he swore, literally reeling back in the doorway. “I leave you alone for one night?”

Shane fell the rest of the way out of the chair with a heavy thud, aware as he went that his robe wasn’t tied shut anymore. He was on his back on the floor with his chest bare and his silk boxers showing.

“I swear, he’s not as drunk as he seems,” Rose gasped, still laughing to the point of tears.

“He’s—” said Ilya, and stopped. “Shane?”

“I told you it’d take him out, seeing you like this,” Rose said, bending over to grab Shane by the hand, tug him up to his feet. “Isn’t he so pretty, Ilya?”

Shane came to his feet with careful grace, trying his best to prove that Rose was telling the truth, he wasn’t *that* drunk. He shrugged the robe back up onto his shoulders, then decided against tying it shut again when he saw the hungry way Ilya was raking his gaze over Shane’s chest and stomach. “She made me do it,” Shane said, which was – okay. Not his finest moment of truth-telling. But it *had* been Rose’s idea to begin with.

Even if Shane had been the one who wanted the lipstick.

“God,” said Rose, looking at her phone screen, “is it already past eleven? I should – I’m going to head to bed.”

“Mm,” said Ilya with a curt nod. His eyes shot over to Shane again. “Yes, I think, maybe.”

“To my bedroom,” said Rose, “which is on the far side of the house. Have I mentioned I packed a white noise machine? Just – thought I’d mention that.” She was still choking on her laughter, but she was also making a slow retreat out of the room, hands up like she thought Ilya might pounce before she could escape. “Okay, goodnight!” she squeaked, hysterically, and fled.

And then Shane was alone with Ilya.

It was rare that Ilya saw Shane in clothes other than t-shirts and athletic pants, and the few, Shane-approved outfits that his stylist selected for him. These things were mainly for events where Shane and Ilya might be seen and photographed, or dates they planned well in advance. Ilya looked forward to those evenings: Shane in luxe fabrics and properly-fitted

shirts that showed off his broad chest and trim waist, Shane in pants that hugged the curve of his ass and thighs. Ilya liked touching him, hand to the small of his back, fingertips light on his nape. Shane was beautiful, always, but it was a treat for Ilya to unwrap his husband when he looked his finest.

This, Ilya knew from the flush on Shane's cheeks and chest, was something entirely different. An erotic thrill bloomed in the pit of Ilya's stomach. Shane had asked for this—he never would have agreed otherwise—and it was spontaneous. Ilya grinned.

“What?”

“I think you know what.”

“I’m—I didn’t expect you to be back so soon.”

“At the time I said I am coming home?” Ilya crossed the room—a little quiet, a little tentative—because Shane still looked a little like he might dart away given the opportunity. When he was close enough, he ran his fingers over the trim of the robe. “Or did you forget because you are looking so pretty?”

“I look ridiculous,” Shane scoffed, but the words were instantly undercut by how he was holding his pink mouth, the pout of his lower lip, the slight purse of the upper. He blinked sooty lashes, and the effect was devastating—all the more so because it was so unstudied. Shane wasn’t trying to play the ingénue, but he was still trapped somewhere between disarming innocence and instinctive seduction.

“Hm,” said Ilya, letting his hand slip down to the loose sash that was trailing from its loops. Shane had left the robe unknotted, but was hanging closed, mostly obscuring Ilya’s view of his stomach and the silk boxers underneath. “You know how you look.”

Ilya could see the battle play out on Shane’s face: to smile with pleasure, or frown with annoyance. His mouth twisted between the two, and then settled on a faint upward quirk of lips. “Tell me,” he said, barely above a whisper.

Ilya let go of the sash and reached up to cup Shane’s jaw in his hand, tip his head up. Shane had trouble with eye contact, especially when he was overwhelmed, but Ilya was patient. He waited for Shane to blink a few times, gathering his will, and then finally Shane looked at him, big dark eyes brimming with tears the way they did when he was feeling too much.

Ilya squeezed his jaw gently, just enough so that his mouth fell open slightly. “You want me to tell you how pretty you are?” he asked. “Is that why you put all this on your face? To be pretty for me?”

“Rose put it on me,” Shane protested thinly, not able to keep the smile off his face. He was a terrible liar. “It was her idea.”

“Okay,” said Ilya, letting go of Shane’s jaw. “I call her back. She can take it off you again.”

“Ilya,” said Shane. He didn’t even reach for Ilya, didn’t gesture. Just said Ilya’s name, like he knew that this would be enough to persuade him.

Ilya felt it like a tug in his sternum, the drive to do whatever it took to please Shane. It was impossible to resist, much as he wanted to keep teasing. He huffed out a sigh, then put his hand flat on the bare plane of Shane’s chest, the dip between his pecs. Slid his palm over until he could flick his thumb across Shane’s nipple, squeeze the muscle there. Ilya loved Shane’s chest, always had, but Shane got huffy if Ilya ever said – “You have the nicest tits I’ve ever seen.”

Fuck you, was Shane’s usual response. But tonight, his mouth went slack and his lashes fluttered. His breath shuddered out unevenly.

“I think about fucking them,” said Ilya, bringing his other hand up to squeeze the other side of Shane’s chest. He knew he couldn’t really push Shane’s pecs together to make cleavage, but he tried anyway, being a little rough about it. Shane hunched his shoulders forward, helping, and they both looked down at Ilya’s hands as they cupped and kneaded. “Would you let me fuck your tits, куколкаdoll?”

Shane just nodded, his head heavy, his eyelids low. His breathing was noisy and jagged.

“But that would be a waste,” said Ilya, letting go of Shane’s chest, reaching up to drag his thumb across Shane’s plump glossy lower lip. “This mouth is painted so pretty. You did this so you could look beautiful with my cock in your mouth?”

Shane’s nod feels helpless, like a head dropping as sleep overtakes it.

“Go wait for me in the bedroom,” said Ilya.

Ilya took his time. He’d always gotten off on Shane’s easy submission, his need to be good for Ilya. And he’d learned that Shane was even softer and easier and needier when made to wait. Ilya puttered about the kitchen, poured himself a glass of Stolli, drank a few steady sips. He let Anya out one last time, watched her little body going around the backyard as she looked for the perfect spot to pee. He went upstairs with the little dog at his heels, directing her to go lie down on her bed for the night. He tucked his bags away in the closet and took his time in the bathroom, where he knew Shane could see him. He’d showered before coming home, so Ilya just spritzed himself with cologne, brushed his teeth, added a little curl cream through his hair. And finally, threw his shirt in the hamper.

The bedroom was lit with the soft glow of Shane’s reading light, and there was Shane, sitting on the bed, the robe pooled around him. Fuck, he was beautiful. Soft in a way Ilya normally never saw, and loose and flushed from the wine, like he was made out of liquid instead of stiff lines and sharp angles.

“Thank you for waiting, малышbaby girl.” Ilya cupped Shane’s jaw, and his lips parted, dark lashes fluttering closed. “You look like a precious jewel, and you are all for me.”

Shane nodded. There was a tear beneath one eye, and Ilya wiped it away.

“Tell me why you wanted this.”

“It was Rose’s idea,” Shane repeated. His eyes wandered to Ilya’s shorts, where his dick was obvious by now, but Ilya wasn’t there, not yet. He tugged Shane’s chin up to get his attention.

“You cannot suck my dick until you tell me.”

Shane pushed out a harsh breath. “Feels nice.”

“What feels nice?”

“The silk. And the—the makeup.”

“Pretty. Yes, that is one word.” Ilya’s thumb grazed the plump line of Shane’s lower lip, painted a soft, rosy pink. “You are taking my breath.”

“Stop. I’m—”

“So gorgeous. And you feel good, don’t you? I can see it in you.” Ilya’s fingers wandered down the line of Shane’s neck, tracing the swell of his tits, thumb flicking one nipple and then the other. “I think you like it very much. And I think you wanted it. Tell me.”

Shane nodded, his breath hitching when Ilya brushed his knuckles down the line of Shane’s belly. “I did ask for the lipstick.” Shane pursed his lips like he was trying to hide their pink, embarrassed. But he was so good for Ilya, liked so much to follow instructions. “Because I liked how everything else looked. I liked it.”

“Good boy.” Ilya leaned in and tucked his hand around the back of Shane’s neck. Shane’s lips were smooth when they brushed Ilya’s, softer and more tentative when Shane opened to his kiss, to his tongue, like he was more aware of them, now that they were painted. The lipstick stayed well enough—a little messy when Ilya pulled back, but the look was good on Shane. “You can kneel for me now.”

Shane made a grateful noise, the softest sigh, before dropping to his knees by the bed.

Ilya was still surprised, sometimes, that it worked so easily with Shane. Every time, just like this—wide brown eyes gazing up at him, so trusting, shuffling forward so he was right between Ilya’s legs. The effect was even more now, with Shane’s eyes outlined, his long lashes curled, his freckles highlighted with little bits of shimmer.

“That first time, you had makeup. There was still liner on your eyes when you sucked my cock.”

Shane let out a sound, halfway between a laugh and something hotter, needier. “I didn’t.”

“You did.” Ilya pushed up on his hands, enough to wiggle his shorts down to his knees. “Take these off, rest of the way.”

Shane pressed a kiss to Ilya’s knee, then his thigh, then yanked on the waistband with his teeth and one hand, laughing when he pulled them down to the floor. “I’m very. Elegant.”

Shane kissed Ilya's other knee, then laid his head against Ilya's thigh. His mouth was close enough that Ilya could feel the hot air on his cock. "Can I?"

"Touch me first. Everywhere but." He ran his fingers through Shane's hair, savoring the desperate look in his eyes, the sweet rise and fall of his breath. "Be patient, солнышкоsunshine."

Shane groaned, but he ran his hands over Ilya's calves, up his thighs, the way Ilya liked best. Ilya watched, transfixed, focused on Shane's face, the pout of his painted lips, the flush spreading over his cheeks. But his eyes caught sight of something else, something glinting—something Ilya hadn't noticed.

"Stop." He took Shane's hand in his and ran his thumb along each shiny nail. "These are painted, too? Purple, yes?" Ilya grinned. He bit his lip when Shane hid his face against Ilya's thigh.

"Rose said they're plum." The words came out in a rush—*rosesaidthey'replum*. Ilya's heart squeezed.

"Plum." Ilya turned Shane's hand, touched their fingertips together, then cradled Shane's hand in his palm. "Look at me." Shane looked, and Ilya spit in his hand. "Best hands in the league; now prettiest, too. I want to see them on my cock."

Shane let out a shaky breath and wrapped his slicked hand around Ilya's cock. His painted nails were liquid-shiny, the colour deep and jammy against his skin. They were still *Shane's* nails, of course: neatly trimmed and a bit square, not the long pointed ovals Ilya was used to seeing on women's fingertips. That made it *hotter*, somehow – that it was both Shane and not-Shane all at once. Ilya let his hips rock up into Shane's strokes, his gaze darting hungrily between those plum, glossy nails and Shane's plush pink mouth.

Ilya was impatient, but he held out, because he knew Shane would cave before he did. Sure enough, Shane let out a shaky sigh and leaned his forehead on Ilya's upper thigh, turning his head and eyeing Ilya's cock with overt hunger. "Please," he said.

"Please what," Ilya prompted, even as his brain screamed at him to grab Shane by his shiny messy hair, force his painted mouth open.

"Please let me taste you," said Shane, voice already raspy as if he'd been sucking dicks all night. "Ilya, please. I need it."

"Show me," Ilya said, giving in a little, scrubbing his fingertips through Shane's hair, pulling gently.

Shane opened his mouth, eager as a baby bird.

"No," said Ilya, tugging harder. "Show me that you're wet for me."

Shane groaned, and the sound was a vibration through his skull that buzzed into Ilya's pelvis. He turned his face into Ilya's hip again, as though overcome with shyness, but in the next

moment he was reaching down with his plum-painted fingertips and hooking his silk boxers down over his ass, dropping them to his spread knees.

With some men, it would probably have just been a fantasy to say *wet for me*, but Shane never disappointed. His cock head was as shiny and slick-looking as his varnished fingernails, and only a little paler, hard and straining up, knocking with his rapid pulse as Ilya stared at it. “Good girl,” said Ilya, breathless and proud of his husband.

Shane groaned again, rubbing the straight, lovely blade of his nose into Ilya’s belly, desperate. “Please,” he said again, the words blurry against Ilya’s skin. “Let me.”

Ilya pulled him back. “You will get your lipstick everywhere,” he said, then yanked his head forward, Shane’s open mouth slotting over Ilya’s cock, wet and sloppy and eager.

Shane reared back long enough to look up at Ilya, eyes so dark, ringed, starting to smear just a little from sweat and heat. “Was that a warning?” he asked. “Or an order?”

Ilya grabbed his cock by the base and pushed the tip onto Shane’s full lower lip, dragging it down, smearing colour as it went. “An order,” he said. “Get it everywhere, Shanushka. Suck.”

Shane came back in and did as Ilya asked, sweetly and without hesitation, letting his lips kiss pink gloss down Ilya’s shaft. The more he kissed and licked, the more his mouth blurred around the margins. His lips got puffy with the effort, too. By the time he got back to the head of Ilya’s cock, he was a gorgeous, slutty mess.

“Fuck,” said Ilya, guttural, breathless. “You’re so beautiful, so perfect like this for me.”

Shane’s boxers were around his knees, cock straining. “I thought about you. Seeing me.” Shane was utterly cock-drunk, eyes glazed, robe falling off one shoulder.

“Did you?” Ilya would be sure to ask about this in detail later, but for now, he threaded his fingers in Shane’s hair and tugged hard, knuckles pressed tight to his skull. Shane made a hot, breathy noise and murmured something unintelligible. *Please*, maybe. *More*. Ilya shushed him and pulled hard again, maneuvering his swollen lips to the head of his cock. “I need your mouth.”

Ilya let Shane’s head fall forward and bucked his hips up to meet the pillowy slip of his tongue, up to thrust into the hot hollow of his throat. Shane was groaning around his dick, the vibration traveling down to the base, settling in Ilya’s hips. Those kohl-rimmed eyes fluttered shut, a hint of sparkle catching the light as Shane took him deep, swallowing around the head and working his spit-soaked hand at the base. With each slide, Shane took him deeper, nearly to the root. Spit ran down his cock, covered Shane’s plum-colored nails, dripped down Shane’s chin.

Shane, so broad and thick and strong, his hands so capable, jaw sharp and masculine—he was always so stunning like this, on his knees, taking whatever Ilya handed him. He was even more so tonight, softened at the edges, a spark of something newly-kindled in his eyes.

Shane was trembling, his hips twitching, as he took Ilya all the way to the root and held him in the back of his throat. Ilya could come like this, just from Shane holding him inside, but he rode the rise and crest of tension, gritting his teeth, biting the inside of his cheek. He wouldn't let tonight end without fucking him.

"Fuck, sweetheart. God, so close. You could make me come just like this." Ilya swept his fingers through Shane's hair, over the shell of his ear. Shane started groaning again, his body trembling, one hand clutching Ilya's thigh. He was gone, and it was gorgeous. It made Ilya decide to be bold with what he said next, to test how far Shane was willing to take this. "But tonight, I will fuck you. You want that? Fuck your pretty pussy until you are crying."

Shane's eyes fluttered shut at the word *pussy*; Ilya hadn't misjudged. Shane was nearly choking with eagerness, now, his face turning red before he gagged and backed off, took Ilya all the way down again. And again.

"Then I will come inside you. This is what you want, yes? Your cunt all filled—"

Ilya felt it when it happened—a seismic ripple through Shane's body, followed by a jolt of his hips. Ilya could see it when he glanced down, Shane's cock jerking, spurts of white splattering against the wooden base of the bedframe. Fuck, it had been a while since that happened, since Shane got so thoroughly into sucking Ilya off that he came untouched. So into sucking Ilya, and listening to Ilya talk about his pussy, *fuck*.

Ilya grabbed the base of his own cock just in time to keep from coming. He pulled Shane off with a slick, wet sound, then leaned down to kiss his slack mouth.

"This is what makes you come for me?" Ilya tugged Shane onto the bed, kissing him, feverish, devouring, hand groping Shane's still-hard dick. "My favorite trick, Shanushka."

"S'sensitive. Mmm. Hurts when you—when you do that. *Fuck*." Shane squirmed beneath Ilya's hand, but Ilya kept hold of his cock, thumb circling the head as it slowly softened.

"So sweet. So needy." Ilya buried his face against Shane's neck, nibbled at his collarbone. The robe, now rumpled, spread around him like a puddle of silk. Jesus, Ilya was hard, balls drawn tight. "Turn over. On your stomach."

Shane pulled in a quick breath. He tried to push Ilya's hand away from his dick. "Fuck, Ilya—I don't know if I can—it's so fucking—"

"You like it when it hurts, don't you? And you're a very good girl. So I think you will." Ilya closed his teeth on the tip of Shane's ear, added a little pressure with his incisors.

"Fuck *off*." Shane laughed and gasped, toes curling in the sheets. "It's not hot—not hot when you call me that."

"Sure, that's why you came all over yourself a minute ago when I was talking about your sweet little cunt." He grabbed Shane's shoulders and rolled him over, shoving him down against the bed sheets and flipping up the robe. His ass was the shape of a perfect heart, the

cleft smooth and tempting. Ilya grabbed the lube on the nightstand and poured a pool of it into his palm, hands shaking. “Now I will fill it with my cock.”

“Yeah, yeah, yeah—” Shane pushed his ass back, meeting Ilya’s hands. His breath hitched, muscles tensing, when Ilya spit between his cheeks and smeared lube and spit against his hole.

His body was wound tight, protective after he’d already come. It was this way, often, when Ilya wanted a second round, or when he dragged things out like he’d done tonight. It took Ilya a little while to work one finger inside—he added more lube, spit on the length of his finger to wet it more, pulled back, then pushed in again.

Shane wiggled and panted, face pressed into the pillow. “Please,” he was saying, then, “please,” again, face turned to the side so Ilya could see the lovely slope of his cheek and its shimmer.

It took another careful finger—going slow, so slow—and shushing Shane, reassuring him in English, then in Russian. Ilya’s cock was throbbing, painful, the skin pulled tight and shiny at the head. When he crooked his fingers down and pressed, Shane yelped. Goosebumps spread over Shane’s back where it arced away from Ilya, his fists clenched in the pillow.

Ilya’s fingers glided lazily, back and forth. A smile settled on his face, a tender tug of tension gathering behind his navel, a little bead welling up at the tip of his dick. He kissed his way up Shane’s back, lips brushing his shoulders when he replaced his fingers with his cock.

“Need to fuck you.” Ilya pushed, the head popping inside. “You are so fucking wet, my pretty girl. Soft and hot.” Ilya’s hips hitched forward, and he sank a little deeper. “You are gorgeous” —Ilya gasped— “little” —pulling back and plunging deeper still— “cocksleeve.”

Tears had welled up in Shane’s eyes again, but he was quiet, mouth hanging open, as Ilya fucked him slow, pushing halfway inside, then pulling back again so he could see Shane’s rim dipping in and out. It was gratifying how limp Shane had gone, as if his body had just accepted, finally, that this would hurt, that it would be too much, and that it was precisely what he needed.

“Please,” Shane whispered. Tears were wicking into his pillow. “It hurts, but—” Shane’s smeared eyes fluttered closed, lips wet and open, a smudge of lipstick on the white pillowcase. “All the way—all the way in. *Please.*”

“Mm, are you sure you can take it?” Ilya pressed his thumb against Shane’s hole, massaging the rim. “You are so tight. Maybe too tight.”

Shane made an anguished sound. “Ilya. Please fuck me.”

“You ask so nice. I think maybe you mean it.” Ilya hitched forward and pushed. The convulsive clutch around Ilya’s cock—fuck, it was *so* good, so snug—made him harder, made him drive forward until he was fully seated against Shane’s hips. Ilya’s hand settled into place on Shane’s hip, squeezing as he started to pump in and out, faster now. His rhythm was steady and slow, so he could watch as his dick disappeared inside.

Tears fell freely down Shane's cheeks, stained charcoal as they pulled at his makeup; his eyebrows were knit tight together. For all the tension in his face, for all the heightened sensitivity Ilya knew he was feeling, his ass and hips had finally relaxed. Fucking him was smooth and easy, and Ilya fell into rhythm, hard enough that his hips slapped Shane's ass in staccato bursts. Shane tried to push up onto his elbows, groaning, angling to get Ilya's cock where Shane's ass was most sensitive, where it was almost unbearable. He loved it like that, and Ilya could give it now that Shane was truly lost, his quiet tears now hiccuping sobs. Eyeliner was smeared beneath his eyes, muddled and muted on his lids.

"Please, Ilya. Ilya, please." The words were murmured, like a ritual, like a mantra, as Ilya fucked him. "It—fuck—it hurts. I can't—I need—"

"You can." Ilya draped himself over Shane's back and kissed his neck and his ears, licked the sheen of sweat from his shoulder. His cock was angled better this way—tighter, hotter, hitting Shane's prostate with every thrust. Ilya was close now, heat coiling in his hips, gathering like a cloud before a storm. "Just a little more."

Ilya's hips moved slower now, a rolling motion that Shane so often begged for. It made Ilya swear, made him bite the inside of his cheek, how fucking sweet it felt to be this near, this deep. His hips started to falter, threads of arousal rising and tugging until it was coming, unstoppable. His hips stuttered and stalled, stuttered and stalled again. He breathed through it and drove into Shane, rapid-fire.

"Fuck, Shane. Fuck. Oh, God." Pleasure gathered and spun out, a cloudburst of need and longing, of want and love slamming through him and pulsing out and out and out as Ilya shuddered and came.

It took Ilya a while to catch his breath, his heart juddering and leaping in his chest like it did after a hard cardio session, his breath sharp in his lungs. But he rallied, gathered his weight back onto his knees, preparing to pull out; Shane got anxious about mess if Ilya lingered too long after he came.

But – "Don't, don't," said Shane, reaching behind and putting a quelling hand on Ilya's hip. "Stay, you're still hard, I – fuck, I think."

"Oh," said Ilya, still panting, but delighted. "You can go again?" This was impressive; Shane rarely went a second time unless they'd been apart for weeks. Ilya reached under Shane's hips and found his cock, hard and leaking. Lower, felt his balls drawn up tight and urgent. "Oh, малышкаbaby girl. Your clit is so hard."

"Ilya," said Shane, tortured, rubbing his hot face on the pillow. "Don't tease. You're going to lose your boner."

"Don't talk shit about my boner," Ilya said, rolling his hips and holding onto Shane's cock. "My boner has been very good to you and your greedy little pussy." Shane was right, of course; Ilya's cock was going to go soft fairly soon, and his body was screaming at him to pull out, stop rubbing his over-sensitive dick inside Shane's tight ass.

Shane made a wordless moan in answer, which Ilya found wonderfully satisfying.

But bodies had limits, so Ilya didn't waste time, just gripped Shane's cock and jerked it fast and smooth and relentless.

Shane's back arched – Ilya had to adjust his weight quickly so his softening cock didn't slip out – and then Shane was keening, and then Shane was coming, his cock leaping, his pulses small and slick and hot.

“Okay, now get out,” Shane said into the pillow, chest heaving as he caught his breath. “Ilya. Out.”

Ilya got out, grinning proudly, and flopped onto the bed next to Shane. He reached for the box of tissues on his nightstand and dropped the whole thing on the mattress between them before grabbing a handful and wiping himself off. He had a moment's alarm when the tissue came away streaked pink, and then he remembered the lipstick. Some of it must have survived Shane's blowjob and the fucking afterwards. Impressive. Well, Rose probably didn't buy the cheap drugstore shit.

“Oh my god, I have lipstick on my asshole,” said Shane, apparently making a similar discovery as he cleaned himself up. “*Ilya.*”

“I'm not the one who got all painted up like a little whore,” Ilya said, unsympathetic.

“Fuck you,” said Shane, balling up his tissues, gathering himself to sit and then stand, a little shakily. “I need to shower. Are you coming?”

“No. I'll shower in the morning,” said Ilya, mostly because he knew that would annoy Shane.

“You can change the sheets while I'm in there,” said Shane, too fucked out to respond properly. “My pillowcase is a mess. And then you can shower after me.”

Ilya lifted a hand and mimed a yapping mouth with it.

Shane gave him the finger, but he was grinning anyway.

Ilya waited until he heard the shower running, then tiredly heaved himself up and began stripping the bed. Ilya had a fussy, particular husband, but it was no great burden to bear when it also meant he could have nights like these.

Rose woke with a light hangover but feeling well-rested otherwise. Shane and Ilya's guest bedroom was more comfortable than the short-term rental apartment the production had gotten her in Montreal. It was too bad Ottawa was so far away, or she'd have campaigned to stay with them for the rest of the shoot.

Not that they would necessarily want that, Rose reminded herself. They seemed to enjoy their privacy.

She rolled over in bed – the duvet really was sinfully fluffy and heavy – and picked her phone up off its charger. There were several unread texts, even more emails. It was nearly ten

thirty. She'd slept for ages, which was a treat after so many late-night shoots in recent days.

There was a string of messages from Shane, Rose saw. She tapped it, smiling, expecting him to be making some apology for the abrupt end to their night.

Shane 🖋️

Shane: How do you take this shit off

Shane: Rose

Shane: It's not coming off

Shane: I had two whole showers

Shane: ROSE

Shane: I'm googling it but I don't have any of the things I need

Shane: Do you have makeup remover here?

Shane: Fuck this, I'm doing an Instacart order

Rose looked at the timestamp, saw that the last text was just a few minutes ago. She hastily typed back:

Shane 🖋️

Rose: Shane, honey, do not get Instacart

Rose: I have a special cloth that removes makeup

Rose: I'll be right down, meet you in the kitchen

She got up, cast around for her dressing gown, and then remembered that she'd dressed Shane up in it. She dug in her suitcase and found an oversized t-shirt, threw it on over her cami and pj bottoms, and headed downstairs.

Shane came into the kitchen just a minute after her, dressed for the day, freshly showered, but with –

Rose clapped a hand over her mouth but it was too late to hide her laughter.

"Fuck you," said Shane, pointing at her. "This is all your fault."

"Baby, you never go to sleep with a full face of makeup," Rose said, still laughing even as she tried to sound sympathetic. "Oh, Shane." She came over to have a closer look.

The highlighter was gone, and most of the brow pencil, but the lipstick and eyeshadow and eyeliner had serious staying power, and the mascara – not waterproof, but stubborn anyway – was streaked everywhere. Shane's eyelids were pink where they weren't smudgy and dark, evidence that he'd been scrubbing at his face.

"Okay," she said, "next time, come get me before you exfoliate your whole top layer of skin."

"Ilya is going to be up any second," Shane said, urgently. "Can you just –"

“I’m pretty sure Ilya wanted you to look like this,” Rose pointed out, but she went to the sink and ran warm water on her microfibre cloth, squeezed it out, and sat Shane down on the barstool so she could reach his face more easily.

Shane pouted, but he didn’t protest. He couldn’t have fooled Rose anyway. It was easy enough to recognize that want in someone’s eyes. And it appeared that Ilya had gotten exactly what he wanted.

Rose bit down on her lower lip, running the warm washcloth first over Shane’s brows, then his eyes and the bridge of his nose. “This has actual makeup remover on it,” she said, “not hotel bodywash or whatever you wash your face with.”

Shane crossed his arms. “I’ll have you know my mom got me a pH-balanced cleanser. And a toner. And an anti-aging moisturizer—”

“And Biore watery cream skin sunscreen, or whatever it’s called. I know.”

“—but none of it works against your industrial grade actress-warrior makeup.” Shane rolled his eyes.

The sound of footfall echoed in the hallway and Ilya appeared, yawning and sleepy-eyed and, as usual, completely shirtless. “Good morning,” he said, scratching a spot on his belly and stretching. “Are you doing more things to my husband?”

“Undoing.” Rose grinned. Ilya looked pretty fucking pleased with himself, cheeks rosy, eyes darting in Shane’s direction while he put the coffee on and pulled out eggs and bread and tomatoes and bacon. “Though it looks like you tried to do that all yourself, actually.”

“Yes. It was very trying time for me. I try everything I know how to do to remove this makeup.” Ilya was whisking a bowl of eggs, his posture nonchalant. “I even try again very early this morning. Would not budge.”

“That sounds extremely difficult.” Rose swiped her cloth a final time over Shane’s eyes and pressed a kiss to his cheek.

“This man, he is a challenge. But I rise to the occasion.”

Shane groaned. “I really, really hate you both. I feel like I’m being bullied by the cool kids at hockey camp.”

“My husband is lying. He liked it when boys teased him.” Ilya set the eggs to cook, then started slicing cheese and tomato, sticking slices of bread in their toaster. God, she was glad he got Shane eating well. A few slices of toast every now and again, anyway.

“I didn’t.” Shane’s eyes fluttered open, and he rolled his eyes at Rose. “Thanks for helping. I don’t know how you do the makeup stuff all the time.”

“But it was fun,” she said, smiling, “wasn’t it?”

“Yeah.” Shane’s cheeks were pink, the pinpoints of his freckles standing out against the rising color. “Yeah, it was pretty fun.” His eyes darted over to his husband. “I wouldn’t mind learning more. Sometime.”

Rose caught Ilya’s wide smile at this. “I can teach you, if you like. Maybe get you a little kit for when you want to be pretty.”

Shane laughed, an edge of uneasiness to it. But his eyes darted to Ilya, and his body visibly relaxed, like a weight had been plucked from his shoulders. Ilya was staring right at his husband, his eyes roaming over Shane’s body.

“He is always very pretty. This is one of the first things I say to him. At nineteen.”

“Oh, my god.” Shane buried his face in his hands.

“I don’t know *that* story.” Rose let out a burst of laughter. Ilya walked over and handed her a coffee, just the right amount of cream.

“It is sex story,” Ilya said. “So maybe he will tell you next time you do makeover and nails.”

“Shit.” Rose took one of Shane’s hands, thumb running over the still-painted nails. “Do you want nail polish remover? I have a little travel bottle.”

“Um.” Shane swallowed, laughed a little. “If you could leave it here, maybe? I kind of like it. I’m out for a bit anyway. And I dunno. I’ve seen guys wear nail polish. It’s like, a thing, isn’t it? Ilya sometimes wears it when Hayden’s kids paint his nails, and nobody says anything.”

“It is definitely a thing guys do, even without using little kids as an excuse. And it looks really good.” Rose smiled at Shane, her heart expanding almost painfully against her ribs. She was so proud of him, of how far he’d come from the repressed, terrified guy he’d been when they’d met.

Ilya was still smiling to himself, a little strut in his step. It was clear he didn’t mind Shane with a little something extra. He set the table with omelets and toast and sliced tomatoes, then added two glasses of orange juice. Rose chatted with Shane as they waited for Ilya to finish, her arm around him, head on his shoulder. She was glad they were here, that they could do this.

And very glad she’d brought earplugs and a white noise machine.

“By the way,” Ilya said when he sat, “I will have the robe dry cleaned.”

“Um.” Rose laughed. “You know what, you can keep it. I’m, like, super rich. I can get a new one.”

Ilya grinned and gave her a wink. Shane mumbled an apology, blush extending to his ears.

“Besides,” she said, “maybe you’d like to have that in reserve. For, you know, a special night every once in a while.”

“Yeah.” Shane put his hand on top of Rose’s and squeezed it, a soft smile melting across his face. “I think I would.”

Notes from Plor:

Omg! I messaged Hoko on a total whim on TUESDAY this week and was like "do you ever collab? do you want to write something smutty and short for lately's bday?" and Hoko was immediately like YES AND. And that was exactly how the writing process went! Effortless and ebullient and so fucking fun. Our separate ADHDs combined to form a greater, more destructive ADHD like the Transformers or Power Rangers or some shit, and it was so damn enjoyable. And we only occasionally had to regroup and remember what city we were writing in, what year it was, and that Shane and Ilya HAVE A DOG.

Notes from Hoko:

Happy birthday my dear Lately! This is indeed how it all went down. I was SO EXCITED to work on this for a friend, and DELIGHTED to work with Plor, who I've admired so much for so long. It was truly a smashing collision of YES AND ALSO, and here we are at nearly 10k. We had SO MUCH FUN, and we hope you did too, dear readers!!!

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