And If I Stayed?

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And If I Stayed?

by you_wear_fine_things_well

Summary

Panicking in that dreaded elevator, Shane ends up going back to the one place where he knows the pain will go away: back to Ilya.

Notes

Welcome to my first Heated Rivalry fic! This idea came to me during my sixth reheat.

See the end of the work for more notes

We didn’t even kiss.

Shane gulped, trying to hold the onslaught of emotions at bay as he pressed backspace over and over again with his trembling thumb. His eyes were getting blurry again. He glanced up at the elevator ceiling to stop the tears from welling up. He felt like he was fucking dying. His hand was still shaking as he quickly packed his phone away. He didn’t know what he was thinking. He could barely hold his phone in the first place, other hand clenching his jacket. The world was tilting around him and the rattle of the elevator wasn't helping.

He was losing it. His heartbeat was pounding in his ears and there was this slow horrible sinking feeling in his guts, like he was sinking deeper and deeper into freezing waters the more the elevator lowered away from that room. The air, on the other hand, felt hot and heavy and it was getting harder to breathe. Shane pulled at his collar. This small space was suffocating him, but the idea of stepping out on the ground floor, of moving his legs, of putting one foot after the other, further and further away from the only place he wanted to be right now, made him want to crawl out of his skin.

He clenched his jaw and tried to fight it. To fight the deluge of emotions, to hold himself together, to keep his knees from buckling. Even just the idea of sitting alone in his own room... He really tried, but couldn’t hold it any longer. His breathing was still shallow when he quickly shuffled over to press the elevator button. He couldn’t face reality or any part of the world out there. He had to go back up. He needed to disappear, he needed to stop thinking, to stop this vicious cycle that was killing him from the inside. There was only one place for him. Only one place where it wouldn’t hurt, at least not like this, like ice spreading through his chest at every inhale.

Shane held his breath as the elevator reached the lobby. He pressed himself into the corner to hide from everything and everyone, his thumb continuously pressing the button to that damned level. He had to go back. Right fucking now. There was nothing else on his mind.

When the doors finally closed and he felt the floor shake as he was pulled back up, he finally let out a shaky exhale. He pressed his forehead against the elevator panel, trying to control his shaking. The world was still spinning. He didn't want to actually faint before reaching the one place he needed to be.

He dove out of the elevator the moment it reached its destination. His legs and feet were heavy, but he dragged them over the carpeted floor of the corridor as if pulled by an invisible force. It got harder to breathe again once he actually stood in front of that door. What was he doing? Was he really this desperate? This needy? This weak?

But he couldn't leave. He just couldn't. And he didn’t know what else to do or where else to go. All he knew was that this was fucking painful and he needed Ilya to make it go away. His lifted his hand just as a deluge of paranoid ideas rushed through his head. What if Ilya closed the door on him? What if he told him to fuck off?

He’s an asshole, but he wouldn't do that, he tried to reassure himself. He prayed for Ilya to show him mercy. To give him what he needed.

Quietly, he rapped his knuckles against the door. His hand was still shaking, he realized. His whole body was, really, as it shivered at every exhale.

Shane almost fell into the room when Rozanov opened, barely catching himself on the door frame. Ilya was probably staring at him, confused, but Shane didn't dare look at his expression. Instead, he kept his eyes trained on his necklace, and the way his chest rose and fell just as it had in that gym room all those years ago.

"Hollander."

He sure *sounded* confused.

"I-" he croaked as his voice cracked. Fuck, he couldn't fucking start crying in front of Rozanov. He gulped, his throat on fire. He took another staggering breath, forcing out the words. "I need you."

Please, please, please.

He clenched his jaw to fight the emotions when a hand swiftly pulled him in by his shirt. Shane fell forward. He pressed his face into that collarbone, melting into Ilya as he let himself lean on him. He didn't care that he was inhaling the smell of cigarette smoke. All that mattered was that warm feeling, of being in that place where all the pain was forgotten. It was this relief, when it hit, that finally burst the dam. Shane tried with all his might to keep his crying silent, but his body let out an embarrassing sob.

"*Hollander*." The mix of worry and scolding in that voice only made things worse. He didn't want Rozanov to worry about him, let alone be upset with him. He just wanted to be held by Ilya and forget all the rest. "You are having a panic attack again."

"I don't want to be alone," he muffled into his chest, eyes squeezed shut. He knew he couldn't be alone. Not tonight. He couldn't do it. He didn't know what he'd do to himself if he was. He didn't want to know. That void of loneliness terrified him.

Shane groaned as he felt himself being pushed back against the door. Rozanov must have closed it behind him at some point. He'd been completely out of it since his forehead had pressed into that hot skin.

Ilya pulled the back of his hair and forced Shane's head up to met his gaze. He knew he didn't have to fake his pleading look as he glanced between those concerned eyes. Then Ilya moved his hand down and held his chin up instead. Shane blinked in shame and cursed at himself as he felt more warm tears fall. He'd never felt so serene and so ashamed at the same time. He looked away in embarrassment. Before that dreadful feeling swallowed him whole, Rozanov pulled him in and wrapped both of arms around him, holding him tight.

"Is okay," Ilya shushed him in his ear, one hand soothingly stroking through his hair. More tears fell, but at least this time he was quieter, only sniffing now and again. Shane lost himself in the feeling of those arms holding him, his own hands slowly lifting to follow Ilya's lead. He pressed his face into his neck, breathing him in. He felt weightless, the worries

drifting away, melting like ice on a warm summer's day as those hands rubbed his back in reassurance.

After a few moments, Ilya's hand slowly trailed downwards to pull back Shane's arm. Shane only then realized that he was still holding his jacket. His fist was clenched so tight that he wouldn't have been surprised if he'd ruined the fabric with all that pressure and sweat. Ilya gently pulled the jacket from his grasp and Shane let him throw it on the floor. Then another hand came to pull away his open bow tie. Then Ilya started fumbling with his shirt.

Shane shook his head into Ilya's neck.

I don't want you to fuck me, he wanted to say. *I just want you to hold me.*

Somehow, he didn't manage to find the words.

Ilya pushed him back so that he could to unbutton his shirt. Shane breathed hard as he braced himself on Ilya's shoulder.

"Rozanov," he begged instead, hoping the exhaustion in his voice was enough to get the message through.

"You can't sleep in your clothes, Hollander," Ilya chided as he kept going.

It took a split second for Shane to understand, but as soon as he did, a huge weight fell from his chest. He nodded slowly, helping Ilya undress him. Rozanov threw his shirt next to his jacket as soon as it was off. Shane winced at the disorder. When he dropped his pants, he was about to bend down to grab them when Ilya caught his hand. "Leave it, Hollander. I will fold."

Keeping his hold on Shane's wrist, Ilya pulled him through the room and towards the bed. Shane let Ilya guide him and sit him down on the edge of the bed. As he exhaled, Ilya knelt in front of him, pressing a hand on his cheek as if to check for a fever. It wouldn't have surprised Shane. He'd felt so hot and sick out there-

"I will get drink for you, okay?"

Shane let out a groan. "I don't think vodka is going to help." Drinking had probably made everything worse anyway. Shane wondered if his breakdown could have been avoided if he hadn't forced down that glass earlier. The bitter taste of the vodka still lingered in his mouth.

"Hollander." Ilya grabbed his chin again, forcing his gaze up. "I am getting you water."

Oh. Shane was an idiot. He nodded.

Ilya rose up then. As soon as his back was turned, Shane quickly smeared the dried tears from his cheeks. He listened to the clatter of glasses. A part of him wanted to get up and fold his clothes, but instead he forced himself to sit there, one hand rubbing his knee that was bouncing up and down. He tried to remind himself to breathe, to take in his surroundings. He glanced at the nightstand. It was covered in cigarettes. Then his eyes wandered to the bin, in which he could make out a half-full cigarette packet.

His attention was brought back to Ilya as he returned, coming to a stop next to him. A glass was pressed into his hand.

“Drink.”

Shane glanced up at him. Despite the ordering tone, Rozanov still managed to look troubled. Then he lifted his eyebrows and motioned impatiently. Shane kept his eyes on him as he slowly sipped.

“Good.” The praise made shivers run up his spine. He sipped some more, still gazing up at him. Ilya nodded then. “Keep drinking, okay?”

Shane nodded up at him and watched him leave again. He slowly drank as he heard the rustle of fabric. Maybe Ilya was *actually* folding his clothes. If he felt any better, he might have laughed at the thought.

When he finished his drink, he set down the glass and rubbed one hand over his chest, still fighting that horrid feeling that had swept over him. It was slowly returning. That fear of being alone.

“Rozanov?” he called suddenly. He couldn’t have him gone another second. He felt hollow without him. Ilya was like a lifeline and he needed him right now.

“What?” Ilya was back again in a second, looking at him with that same look.

“Nothing,” Shane quickly said, both hands on his knees now, rubbing his skin. He gazed up at him, waiting for something. For him to tell him what to do. Anything.

“It doesn’t look like nothing.”

Anything but that. Anything but you worrying.

Shane groaned. “It’s nothing.”

“Right.” Ilya didn't sound convinced. He started moving again. Shane was about to beg for him to stay, when he realized he was just walking around the bed, undressing before diving in next to him, where Shane himself had been lying not even an hour earlier. Shane looked at him as he reached out his hand, motioning. “Come here.”

Shane lowered himself down as Ilya lifted the cover over him.

“Closer.”

Shane shuffled up to him until their legs intertwined, until Ilya's hand rubbed his upper arm, until their foreheads almost touched.

Shane stared at those lips, watching Ilya breath until his own breathing synced up. With that firm hand grounding him, Shane slowly felt himself wake up from whatever had taken him in that elevator. The dreadful weight that had pressed down on him earlier had lifted.

“Better now?”

“Better,” Shane replied as he blinked and then closed his eyes. His breaths came in steady now, and he wasn't shaking anymore. He felt safe. “Thank you, for not being an asshole,” he said, pressing his forehead to Ilya's.

Rozanov cupped his cheek to pull him away. Shane met his gaze just as fast. “Don’t get any hopes up, Hollander. I will stay asshole.”

“Yeah.” Shane smiled victoriously, pressing into Ilya’s hand. “But not tonight.”

“No, not tonight.” The fake disappointment in Ilya’s voice made Shane's smile widen. His mood only improved when Ilya started tracing over his cheek before raking through his hair. Shane's eyes fluttered shut as he lost himself in the sensation of those gentle fingers. “I am sorry I let you go like that.”

Shane let out a little groan, eyes still closed. “You couldn’t have known.”

“What, that you were miserable?” Ilya paused his movement and Shane met his gaze. Ilya was looking at him with those raised eyebrows, that sarcastic look of his. Shane couldn’t help but smile again. Then Ilya's expression changed. It became softer. With all the tenderness of the world, Ilya pressed a kiss to his forehead. Shivers ran down Shane’s spine, but it was a nice kind of feeling. The kind that made his stomach flutter. “I am sorry,” Ilya whispered. The hand in his hair started moving again. “I am happy you came back.”

“Thank you for letting me stay.”

Ilya gave him a teasing smile. “Anything for my poor little Hollander.”

Shane chuckled, shaking his head. “Still an asshole.”

It was Ilya’s smile that widened this time. Shane watched as those soft eyes darted down to his own lips. He ran his tongue over them like a Pavlovian response. Good thing too, because Ilya leaned in at that moment, capturing his lips in a slow kiss. With that, the final missing piece finally clicked into place. Shane felt whole again.

End Notes

I love comments as much as Ilya loves Shane!!!

You can find me on tumblr for requests, ideas, or just for a chat! I am mostly writing Winterbaron at the moment but I'm open to Hollanov requests!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!