

Prey Instinct

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/80380041) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/80380041>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Heated Rivalry (TV)
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Consensual Non-Consent , Roleplay , mask kink , motorcycle , primal play , mild injuries with slight bleeding , Outdoor Sex , Anal Sex , Dom Ilya Rozanov , Sub Shane Hollander , Aftercare , Rape Roleplay , shanes dreaming big (with sex roleplay ideas)
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-02-28 Words: 9,451 Chapters: 1/1

Prey Instinct

by [Wintersbane](#)

Summary

Shane's fingers hook lightly into the front of Ilya's jacket again, tugging him even closer. "Next time," Shane says, voice lower now, warmer, "maybe don't apologize so fast."

Ilya's eyes darken slightly. "Crazy," he murmurs.

Shane pauses to think. He probably doesn't think for long enough, considering what he's about to say. "Okay so, what if you were an intruder?"

Or- Ilya and Shane play a 'game' of chase.

Notes

ok finished borderline now it's time for my sex fanfic

i just wanted to do a little canon-adjacent story for funsies.

please beware the tags lol. its very consensual and theres a whole scene of preamble before they get into it. it might be a little under-negotiated (no safeword or stoplight system) but they have fun the whole time so idk . i feel like shane and ilya would be very fuck it we ball about sex and safewords but thats my personal take lol.

also i realized there are like 5 other fanfics in this fandom based on this Exact premise. i guess we're all geniuses and thought of the same thing. please go read the other ones too if this one suits your fancy haha!!

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

Steam clung to the ceiling in a low, shifting cloud, turning the bathroom light soft and hazy. Shane has been standing beneath the downward spray of the waterfall showerhead much longer than he needed to, forehead tipped against the tile, letting the heat unknot the tighter spaces in his shoulders. The season is over. Normally, that wouldn't be a cause of celebration for Shane. *Sure, he liked the cottage, and sure, he liked time off, and he liked eating more kinds of food.* But, the lack of hockey in his life signalled a loss of control. During the summer, there were no more red and blue lines to sort himself between.

That had changed, at least somewhat. Not that Shane had gotten back any further sense of control—honestly, it was the opposite.

Ilya was supposed to come by later. Late afternoon, maybe closer to dinner. Shane had been turning that over in his head since he woke up—what they might cook, what movies they might watch, what position Shane will be in at the end of the night, what they'll do for their whole two weeks together. The thought tugged a small, private smile out of him. *How many times was it possible to kiss a man in one night? Shane was eager to find out.*

Shane shuts the water off and the soft hum of the vent fan brings out the hollow quiet of the apartment. Despite Shane's lovely thoughts keeping him company, it's just him here. *But it won't be for long.*

Everything reminds Shane of Ilya. Even as he plucks a towel out of the shower-side towel-warmer, he thinks of him. It was something Ilya insisted that Shane buy, and although Shane thought it was kind of stupid and unnecessary at first, it's now something he can no longer live without. Shane buries his face in the warm, bristling fabric, and then heads to his bedroom after tying it off around his waist.

Shane puts on shorts and a worn t-shirt, and he's still adjusting the hem by the time he's moving down the hallway, his bare feet warm against the heated floors. He's halfway to the kitchen when he sees it—

Someone is standing at the counter.

Tall. Broad-shouldered. A dark and unreadable silhouette, a large mass in his kitchen. His brain doesn't process it at first—only the shape of a stranger where no one should be. He stumbles back a single step, shoulder hitting the hallway wall, breath catching just briefly in his throat.

And then Shane quickly realizes who he's looking at. *Stupid.*

"Ilya," Shane wheezes, "Fuck, you scared me." Shane's mind catches up to what he's seeing. Ilya is dressed in mostly black, and his motorcycle helmet hiding his face completely; visor dark and unreadable. Now that Shane's processing things normally, Shane's quick moment of panic takes a nosedive into giddy, affectionate excitement. He's already grinning, his posture already opening up, ready for a big hug.

Ilya normally doesn't wear his helmet inside, nor does he usually ride his bike out here. It's a long drive, but maybe he felt like it, for some reason. Shane still doesn't really get the appeal of riding a motorcycle. Ilya has a grocery bag held in both hands, which is probably why he hadn't taken his helmet off yet.

"Sorry," Ilya's voice is muffled through the helmet, a little distorted, but he sounds happy, "Hi, Shane." He sets his bag down on the counter; it rustles in the quiet kitchen. "Is okay that I'm early?"

"Of course," Shane says, "This is your home too."

Ilya reaches up, unclasping the helmet. The click sounds loud in the apartment. He pulls it off, shaking out his flattened curls, his cheeks flushed from the ride, sweat damp on his forehead. *He looks so pretty like this.* Ilya manages to just set his helmet carefully on the counter beside the bag before Shane closes the distance between them in three quick strides.

Before Ilya can say anything else, Shane wraps both arms around him and pulls him in hard. The leather of Ilya's jacket is still cool from outside, faintly smelling of wind and gasoline and his distinct cologne—generously applied, for Shane's benefit. Shane presses his face into the warm crook of Ilya's neck, like a soft spot in the shell of leather he's wearing.

Ilya hugs him back equally as snug. They're both standing in Shane's kitchen, rocking each other back and forth a little, like they're both soothing one another; *it's okay, I'm here now, we're together. We're ourselves again.*

Shane leans back just enough to look at Ilya. He cups his face, runs his thumbs over his coarse sideburns—and then kisses him.

It's not tentative or slow, and instead it's the kind of kiss that still carries the echo of adrenaline in it, sharp and electric. His tongue pushes into Ilya's mouth with all that leftover heat from their too-short interactions over the season. That, and... Whatever carnal excitement flit through his head when he didn't recognize Ilya in his home, too. His heart is still pounding from that, but it's different now. *Not fear.*

The leftover fear burns down into something bright and restless. His pulse doesn't calm, it's shifting. What had been a jolt of instinctual panic turns sweet and charged, pooling low in his belly. The image flashes back through his mind; Ilya's wide shoulders in that leather jacket, his black helmet, dark visor, silent in his kitchen. Unknowable and dangerous. *Like an intruder.*

Fuck.

"Mm. You missed me?" Ilya hums, and, obviously Shane did. He doesn't bother answering, because Ilya already knows it to be true.

"You really did scare me," Shane opens with, so he can share what's on his mind. He leans back enough to look at the way Ilya's expression pinches into a sympathetic, dramatic pout.

“Ohh, moya lyubov, I am sorry,” Ilya croons to him, puckering up his lips for another kiss, but Shane slaps a hand over Ilya’s mouth in order to stop him, playful. As Ilya kisses at his fingers instead, Shane’s gaze drops to Ilya’s hands where they grip his waist, gloved. Then to the jacket, and then the helmet sitting just behind him, like a prop. “Forgive me. Gimmie kiss. I will make up for this.”

“Ilya,” Shane laughs, but Ilya grabs his wrist and pulls his hand away— which does not make Shane’s issue any better— so Ilya can plant a big, wet kiss on his cheek. Shane laughs, and Ilya keeps peppering him with kisses, keeping him trapped to his body. “You were pretty intimidating,” Shane hums out while Ilya’s lips flutter along his freckles.

“Intimidating?” Ilya repeats, nudging his nose into Shane’s cheek.

“Yeah.” Shane says, and Ilya stops his barrage of kisses to finally listen to what Shane has to say. “I didn’t recognize you, and you were so quiet. Like an intruder.”

A spark of something playful flickers in Ilya’s expression. Shane feels the idea fully form now, rooting itself deep and fast. *The thrill of it. The way his body reacted before his brain caught up. The rush. The... The chase of it.*

His fingers hook lightly into the front of Ilya’s jacket again, tugging him even closer. “Next time,” Shane says, voice lower now, warmer, “maybe don’t apologize so fast.”

Ilya’s eyes darken slightly. “Crazy,” he murmurs.

Shane pauses to think. He probably doesn’t think for long enough, considering what he’s about to say. “Okay so, what if you were an intruder?”

Ilya blinks. He lifts his eyebrows and leans his head in a little closer. Shane keeps going, idly rubbing his fingers along the zipper on Ilya’s jacket. “And I was home alone. You wanted to fuck me, so you were chasing me, through the woods.” Shane realizes this might sound too much like a game of tag. “And not as a game. Like, it’s serious.”

This isn’t the first time Shane’s suggested something like this. This might be the most intense one Shane has thought up, though. He recognizes that very quickly, especially when it takes Ilya a second to think it through. But, Ilya is always very good at playing along, even if it takes him a little to wrap his mind around the detailed scenarios Shane cooks up. “Okay, so I am chasing you.” Ilya says, “Am I Ilya, or am I stranger?”

“Stranger, definitely.” Shane answers.

“Ah, yes. Because if I was Ilya, you would not run. You would want my dick.”

Shane huffs out a laugh, “Yea.” *In fact, he wants his dick right now.* “And I’ll say no, but, I really do want it.”

“Right, yes. I know.” Ilya responds. *They’ve played this game enough times now to know.* But... “Do you want to be hurt?” Ilya asks, because that’s the clear evolution of this

conversation. Ilya playing a dangerous intruder who's chasing Shane through the woods with the intention to , well, *rape* him. It's an obvious question.

"You could be rough," Shane answers, and he wriggles out of Ilya's hold, just because he doesn't want to get too hard or too needy while talking about the rules of this new game. He's got to lay them out, to get them out with no distractions. He leans against the counter instead, and starts looking through the bag Ilya brought home with him. "You could push me into the ground, and pin me." Shane finds the bag is mostly full of sweet treats, icecream and chocolate. None of which Shane will eat, and is definitely just for Ilya's consumption. "A little blood is fine. Just nothing too crazy. So... You can pin me against the boards, just don't take off your gloves." Shane uses hockey to illustrate his point, as he does with everything else in his life. *Ilya would never want to hurt Shane, not in a way that didn't make both of them feel nice. And Shane feels his hard limits are pretty obvious ones, ones Shane knows Ilya would never want to do, so they don't need stating.*

"Can I slap you?" Ilya asks, and Shane goes red.

"That's... Always on the table." Shane murmurs shyly. His thighs tense, like he's trying to tell his cock to behave. *Slapping is something they both like, a well-placed one can be really effective. Especially now that they're at the cottage, alone, for a few weeks, they can leave all the handprints they want on each other. The thought makes Shane a little light-headed.*

Despite Shane's efforts to put some space between himself and Ilya, Ilya's cold, gloved fingers find his jaw, tugging, pulling Shane to look at him. "You want me to make you take it?" Ilya asks, and Shane nods as much as he can with Ilya's fingers digging into his chin, "You want to pretend, you want me to make you scared?" Shane's just nodding more, mouth a little slack. "Then I will make you scared, Hollander."

Shane prefers it when Ilya says his first name, most of the time. It was special, a well-earned sound, something Shane could only hear off the ice. Shane likes saying Ilya's first name too for very similar reasons. He likes the ease of it in his mouth, whispering it and moaning it and scoffing it, and he likes knowing that he can say it properly while a lot of other people don't bother learning how. But, their last names are still fun. It harkens back to a time when it was all they had, something that could be playful or, like it is right now, very sexy. It provides a certain coldness and puts distance between their typical affections for each other—something that is very useful for the situation Shane has cooked up.

Shane makes a hummed noise, something excited, content, and a little needy too. Ilya pushes his fingers up, pressing at the corners of Shane's lips, puckering them. "You'd need to catch me, first." Shane says, a little muffled between the push of Ilya's fingers.

Ilya grins, wolfishly, like he's going to swallow Shane whole. "No, I think you will make it easy for me. Because you are so very easy."

"I'm not going to," Shane says, and Ilya's expression shifts, because maybe he's realizing Shane is very, very serious about how real he wants this to feel. "I want to be fucking scared, Ilya. Make me scared."

Ilya is quiet for a minute. He seems perturbed. "...What if I cannot catch you?" Ilya knows good and well Shane can outpace him, that Shane is far more physically fit than Ilya is, packed with hard muscle built for speed. Shane is a fucking hockey machine, which means he's also very good at lots of other things. But, Ilya isn't usually able to readily admit that. They're so competitive that Ilya could never fess up that Shane is the faster of the two. But, apparently the idea that Ilya might not be able to win Shane's little intruder game has him worried enough to voice his concerns.

Shane just shrugs. "Then you don't get to fuck me."

Ilya smiles. He laughs between grit teeth, grabbing Shane's shoulders and giving him an aggressively playful squeeze and shake. "You are bad," Ilya snarls between his grin, and Shane's smiling too, probably like an idiot. "I will catch you and fuck you in the dirt like you deserve."

"Mm. Fuck," Shane hums, happily horny. Ilya starts attacking his throat, biting and kissing and loving on Shane, just how Shane's been imagining it for the past months.

"Yes, I will take you like cheap whore," Ilya growls, but Shane can still hear the smile in his voice, the excitement he has to play, "And you will say no, but your body will say yes. I will make you cry and scream, and nobody will hear you—"

"Fuck, Ilya. Please, want it—"

Ilya kisses Shane's cheek, then his lips. He pushes his tongue into his mouth, licking all the way to Shane's molars, deep enough that Shane thinks he'll be able to taste the warmth of Ilya's saliva for weeks. Ilya pulls back, rubbing his nose against Shane's.

"You want head-start?" Ilya asks.

"What?" Shane immediately asks. Ilya looks confused in return. "No, no, we're not doing it now." *The scene is all wrong. It would be too rushed, they need to commit to the act. It would be weird if he were suddenly afraid and running away from the man kissing him and holding him so lovingly right now, wouldn't it?* Ilya doesn't seem to be as strict about their playing rules, and he's frowning. "We need to set the scene. Maybe tomorrow? You can go out on your bike, maybe get some groceries or something. I do need eggs..."

"This was a trick." Ilya says flatly.

"No, shut up. Asshole." Shane playfully slaps Ilya's chest. "Listen. Tomorrow, you go somewhere. It doesn't have to be the grocery store." Ilya rolls his eyes, "When you come back i'll be outside. And then we can play." Shane drapes his thick arms over Ilya's shoulders casually. "I want it to feel real."

"Okay, fine, yes. I can do this." Ilya nods begrudgingly, but maybe he's starting to get the picture now. This isn't their usual roleplay scene, this one's got more details, more steps. That's what makes these sorts of things fun, though. Shane likes the thrill of the preparation. Speaking of... "Will you prepare yourself for me? Get your hole loose, so I can take you right when I catch you?" Ilya croons.

“Yea, sure.” Shane readily agrees, trying to ignore the heat rising to his cheeks. He gazes at Ilya, at his dark eyes and his still-matted curls. His line of sight drifts, drifts to the very thing that stuck his hair to his forehead to begin with, and made him so deliciously sweaty and flushed. The helmet sits on the counter still, visor reflecting the kitchen light in a dark, blank sheen. Just minutes ago, that visor hid everything; Ilya’s sleepy eyes, his lovey expression, any softness. It turned Ilya into shape and presence alone. He was just his height, his wide shoulders, and an intimidating silence.

For a split second, Shane hadn’t known him.

It’s the very thing that probably made Shane startle in the first place, that obscured Ilya’s features enough to give Shane a momentary heart attack. But it also made something else boil dangerously hot in his belly.

“You should keep your helmet on,” Shane says.

Ilya raises his eyebrows again. They nearly go into his hairline, before scrunching up over his eyes, skeptical of Shane’s intention. “Why? So it is harder to catch you?”

“No, not that,” Shane says, although that might be an unintentional benefit. It’s hard to put into words exactly why Shane liked the helmet so much, it’s still very new to him and he hasn’t had a lot of time to think it through yet. It’s strange, realizing how thin the line is between fear and thrill. Maybe Shane likes the way his brain had filled in the blanks with something larger, more dangerous, more unknowable. Stubbornly, Shane’s pulse kicks up again at the memory. “It’s kind of sexy,” Shane answers, “You looked different.”

“Different?” Ilya questions in a purr, clearly liking where this is going.

“Like I didn’t know you.” His fingers brush over the knuckles of Ilya’s gloves.

“Oh, Shane,” Ilya croons at him, so deprecating that it makes Shane doubt the strength in his own fucking knees and they tremble in accordance. “Your beautiful, freaky little mind thought all this up right now, because I scared you?”

Well, yea. Of course. When else would he have thought about this? “Maybe.”

Ilya smiles, laughing, and Shane’s smiling again too. Two smiling idiots, in their kitchen. “Okay, yes. I will keep my helmet on.” Ilya says, “If I break my ankle…”

“You won’t,” Shane groans, a warm laugh still stuck in his throat, underlining all of his words. He’s buzzing, happy, happy to have Ilya, happy to keep him all to himself, even if it’s fleeting. He’s happy conversations like this are so easy, that Ilya fits so well in his heart and in his perverted brain. Shane has been ashamed to *want* his whole life, but Ilya makes it so very easy. *Even when he wants something crazy like being chased through the woods.*

“Right, yes. Because I will be breaking you,” Ilya tries to pull Shane closer, growling his words into his throat, but Shane’s pulling away, fighting him, giggling as he shoves his hands against his chest and pushes on his knees. “Come here to me, moya lyubov—” Ilya murmurs, “Let me have you. I missed you.”

“I missed you too,” Shane hums as Ilya kisses his jaw, “Put your icecream away, before it melts.”

Ilya lets go of Shane very suddenly. “Ah! I forgot,” He says, “You are bad distraction.” He hauls the brown paper bag up into his arms again. Ilya trots the short distance away to the freezer, unloading all of his snacks into Shane’s once perfectly organized space.

Shane sighs, his body feels fuzzy. *Welcome home, Ilya.*

There’s dirt under Shane’s nails. He is no stranger to calling handymen and gardeners in to do work around his house, but the cottage has always felt more special than that. It was his, he took pride in it, and he took pride in caring for it, too. So he’s weeding, pulling the sprouting plants from between the cracks like this is any normal afternoon. The woods crowd the cottage on both sides of the road—dense pine and maple, shadows layered deep between trunks. It’s quiet, sunlight dappling between thick brush. The road is all flecks of gold and green, warm in that early summer way.

Despite Shane’s intention of playing along, he can’t help but steal expectant glances toward the road. Every few minutes he peers over; over his shoulder, down the winding, quiet road that no one ever uses. When sweat starts to bead on his forehead from the midday sun’s relentless heat, Shane debates checking his phone. He decides not to, and tries to tuck his mind back into unexpected ignorance in an attempt to play his role well and really get into character.

Then, as if rewarding Shane for his patience, there is a low vibration that lingers just at the edges of hearing. It’s a distant growl, one that doesn’t belong to the birds or the wind. It builds steadily, unmistakable, rolling through the trees and into his chest. *Motorcycle.* The sound grows louder, fuller, the engine reverberating through the narrow stretch of wooded road. It feels bigger than it should, closer than it is. Shane’s body reacts before his thoughts can—pulse spiking, breath catching, skin prickling along his arms. Shane stands slowly, as if he doesn’t know what’s coming, as if he hasn’t been waiting for this exact sound.

The bike turns down the road, gravel crunching under it’s tires. The engine roars so loud Shane can feel it rattling up into his ribs, and then it cuts abruptly in the driveway.

Shane doesn’t let himself picture Ilya’s face, it’s a rule he made in his own head, and maybe the most important one of all. He doesn’t imagine Ilya’s mischievous grin, or the familiar warmth in his eyes, or his handsome moles or the darling curve of his cupid’s bow. Instead, Shane focuses on that black visor. Completely blank and cold, unfeeling. Shane can almost convince himself he doesn’t know who’s under there.

A stranger. He slides off his bike, and Shane doesn’t have a reason to run yet despite the little thrum of unease sliding along his spine. The bike’s kickstand is flipped out, and the stranger

steps forward in three, confident strides. The woods swallow the edges of him, making him look broader, more imposing.

“Hi, ah, do I know you?” Shane starts, awkwardly festering in his pretend unease, when really he’s so fucking horny he can barely stand straight. *People don’t ever come down this road*, his roleplaying mind thinks, *this stranger must’ve taken a wrong turn*. “You must be lost, huh? It’s a maze out here.”

“I was lost,” A thick, Russian accent rumbles out of the stranger, muffled and distorted beneath his helmet. “I do not think so, anymore.”

“Hm?” Shane tips his head to the side, fitting a confused smile over his features. “Sorry, I don’t understand?”

The stranger squares up his shoulders, standing even taller somehow. The visor gives nothing away. No expression. Just Shane’s own reflection warped in its curve, looking very small. “I think I have found just what I am looking for.”

“My husband will be home any minute.” Shane blurts out. That wasn’t part of their pre-established story, but Shane thinks him and Ilya can manage a little improv. *Shane’s life was full of structure and routine and he liked it that way, but his little pretend scenarios can have a bit of feasible wiggle room*. Although, maybe the problem in the *husband* comment moreso lies in the fact that Shane just heavy-handedly suggested he wants Ilya to be his husband. And, he said it during a fucking intruder roleplay scene, no less. *Oh well. They’ll, uh, talk about that later...*

Ilya rolls with it. Dependable as always. “Oh, you will not be needing him.” The stranger growls, “I will give you everything you could ever want, pretty.” Like this, Ilya is larger than himself. He is pure presence and intent.

Shane runs. He bolts down the road without looking back, sneakers slamming against the asphalt. The trees blur at the edges of his vision, dark and towering, smothering. In contrast, the air feels thinner already, sharp in his lungs—and that sharpness makes the world so vivid; the green of the trees too bright, the sky too wide, the road stretching endlessly ahead. The adrenaline rush is intense, and the world seems much more beautiful yet much, much larger than ever before.

Shane risks a glance back.

Ilya swings onto the bike in one smooth motion. He twists the throttle twice, and like it’s like the machine is snarling out a warning. Then it howls, and the bike surges forward. *Fuck, fuck, fuck*. Shane’s heart leaps into his throat. He runs harder, stubborn, but the motorcycle closes the distance in seconds. The screaming rumble of it swallows everything—the wind in the trees, his ragged breathing, the pounding in his ears.

The bike lurches ahead of him, but then tapers back down. For a moment, they match pace.

It’s surreal—Shane sprinting full tilt down the wooded road, and beside him Ilya is gliding, controlled and powerful. He can feel the vibration of it in his ribs, the heat of the engine as it

brushes his bare leg when he veers too close. Shane would've laughed with how giddy he feels— how wild and ridiculous and unhinged— if he wasn't so smothered out by suffocating adrenaline.

Is Ilya grinning under the helmet? Or maybe he's all focused, with his eyes set firm and his jaw hard? Regardless, it does not matter, because all Shane can see is his own reflection— flushed, wild-eyed, breathless—mirrored back at him in black glass.

The stranger edges his bike slightly ahead, then slows, like he's herding Shane without touching him. The message is clear: *I can catch you whenever I want.* But Shane will not give up so easily. He is running for his life, after all. He cuts hard toward the trees— leaping off the road, and into the woods.

Pine needles slip under his sneakers, traction gone. Along with that, the ground turns uneven immediately, roots and soft earth replacing pavement. Branches scratch up Shane's arms but he does not care, and keeps running. Behind him, the motorcycle brakes sharply. The engine revs once, frustrated, then cuts off. Even over the pounding of Shane's own heart and the rustle of leaves and thud of his own feet, he can still hear the bike stand click down and boots hit dirt, clear as day. The chase continues on foot now, far more intimate.

It spurs Shane forward faster, and his legs burn as he pushes through low branches. Shane manages his breathing, sucking in that shade-cool air in rhythmic pulls, but his skin feels like it's burning. The sound of his stranger crashing through the brush not too far behind Shane sends a spike of adrenaline through his bloodstream. As fast as Shane is, he knows Ilya is not too far behind. His stranger is coming after him, eventual and certain. Shane will eventually run out of energy, he will eventually need to stop; just as his pursuer will eventually catch up to him.

Hunted, the word slides into Shane's mind uninvited. He lets it stay.

Shane can't afford looking back, but his imagination fills in the blanks eagerly—the faceless stranger sprinting through the trees, visor gleaming in the filtered light. Not his boyfriend, not gentle hands and familiar smiles. *Hell, not even teasing, cruel words rolled off that clever tongue of his.* It's all just pursuit.

The fear is pretend, deep down, Shane knows that. As much as he wants to feel it for real, he knows the difference between this and real danger deep in his bones. But his body doesn't care, and that's the fun part. His pulse is a drumbeat, wild and crazy. The smell of damp moss, the sting of scratched skin, the thrill of the chase.

Shane knows what his body can do. He knows how to make his body less weight and more forward motion, he knows how to settle his breathing into efficient patterns, he knows how to push through the moment when most people slow down. Shane is a machine on the ice, controlled and regulated, unstoppable.

The issue here lies within the fact that he is not on the ice. The arena is one clean, flat sheet. Shane's foot catches.

He doesn't even see the root. It hooks under the edge of his shoe and yanks him forward hard enough that the world tilts sideways. There's a sharp, startled sound torn out of him before he can stop it. Then he's falling. Momentum carries him over, shoulder striking the slope, and suddenly he's rolling—down a short, steep dip he hadn't noticed in his blind rush. Pine needles tangle in his shirt and gravity blurs and that wet dirt smell gets dislodged as Shane tumbles through the brush.

Shane doesn't register the sting in his knees or hands, not right away, anyway. He's too blurred up by the urge to run, clashing with the tipsy-turvy fear of tripping so catastrophically. He whips around as he pushes himself upright, and freezes when he sees the dark, foreboding figure of his stranger *watching* him. Standing just on the lip of the hill Shane fell over, his head slightly tilted. Dizzily, it feels a lot more like the stranger is playing with his food than it does Ilya checking on him.

If Shane were perhaps more normal, he would call it here. He's bleeding, his hands poked with sticks and rocks, his knees red and raw. He'd go, *Ilya, enough, I'm hurt*. And, if Ilya were more normal, he'd also stop. He'd take off his helmet, and kiss Shane's fingers, and walk him back to the cottage, and they'd fuck nicely in their bed and make love.

But that's not happening. The pain only makes Shane feel more distinct, the panic more real, more alive. Shane's heart squeezes, pumping a roar of blood that doses him with wild energy, and he turns heel and just keeps sprinting. There's the skidding of leaves and the thudding of boots just behind Shane, and he can nearly taste how close Ilya is, fuck, he's already gagging on it. *He's gaining on him*; not because Ilya is faster, but because Shane's adrenaline is starting to work against him. It's too much, it makes his legs feel like jello, his head feel frantic. All the trees and brush blur together into this terrible smudge of green and brown, and now Shane's breathing comes in steep and unsatisfying, lungs pulling against his ribs as his mind scrambles to get away in a blind panic.

He is easy. Not in the way him or Ilya would've thought, though.

Fuck, Shane thinks, and he might even say it outloud—broken between his straining lungs and the knot of exhilaration in his throat. The clean efficiency of a trained sprint has unfortunately dissolved into something frantic and messy, and it's enough of an opening for the sound of boots to close in. His stranger is gaining ground, fucking relentless, steady.

Shane cuts left sharply, trying to break line of sight, but he's half a second too slow. A gloved hand brushes his arm. He jerks away with a startled sound, heart detonating in his chest. The touch is brief, barely there—but it's enough to send a shock through him. So fucking close. Shane pushes harder, lungs burning, legs feeling unreliable beneath him. His thoughts blur at the edges, instinct taking over since strategy has gone out the fucking window. *And that's amazing, isn't it? No more thinking, no more counting his breaths or making sure he's pacing himself or boxing himself up in all of his favorite little ways. All that's left is instinct and the rabbiting rhythm of his heartbeat. So twisted, so freeing.*

Shane can feel the heat of his pursuer on his back. He makes one last attempt to surge forward, and Ilya tackles him.

The impact is solid and immediate—weight crashing into his side, arms wrapping around his waist. They both go down hard, momentum carrying them into a tumble through dirt and leaves. The world flips; the sky and earth trade places in a blur of green and brown. Shane hits the ground with a grunt, Ilya's weight rolling with him, decidedly not gentle at all. It's sort of familiar, like when Ilya slams him up against the boards, but it's also so different—no mouthguard, no rules, no audience. Just Shane and his stranger deep, deep in the woods, alone. No one else is around to hear the thud of Shane's body as he hits the ground.

Before Shane can even think of struggling, Ilya forces his knee between his shoulderblades, hard enough to bruise. He then grabs a fistful of Shane's hair, wrenching his head up, tipping back until his spine arcs so sharply it aches with resistance. Shane's chest heaves, his heart is pounding so violently he can feel it in his throat, in his fingertips, everywhere at once. Leaves cling to his shirt, his hair is in his eyes, his knees bleed into the dirt. He tries to twist free on instinct, but his limbs feel overcooked—trembling and reactive. His body is all instinct and electricity, thrumming under Ilya's hold. He gives one more half-hearted struggle, more for the feeling of it than any hope of escape, and the movement only presses him more firmly into the earth.

Shane realizes he's held up like a hunter posing with his kill.

The stranger purrs, deep and rumbled from atop him. "Got you," He says, a little breathless, but his words are very certain. He runs cold, gloved fingers over Shane's exposed neck, dancing around his bobbing Adam's apple. Shane is breathless, caught. Held down by something bigger, stronger, meaner. The thought sends a hot, dizzying rush through him.

"Oh, please," he croaks, warbled and desperate, basically whining. What is it he's pleading for? To be let go? To be fucked, ravished? God, Shane doesn't even know. "Please, don't hurt me..."

"You cry so pretty," The stranger says. And then Shane is getting pushed face-first into the dirt, shoved down by the grip in his hair. "I will not hurt you. I'll make you feel very good, but no more running, yes? I will give you what you need." Ilya effortlessly keeps a very tired Shane pinned with one hand centered on his spine. With his other, he shoves down Shane's shorts in one smooth motion, and a noise of surprise squeaks out of Shane. "So pretty. You really made me work for it."

"N-no," Shane yelps, squirming enough to move his head to the side, one eye peering up at the foliage overhead. He desperately tries to get a look at his pursuer, but based on the angle, he cannot. "Don't, don't fucking touch me—"

Cold. Shane feels the cold press of leather pressing on the sensitive, hot skin of his hole. The reaction is delayed, arousal and shock tangling themselves up and crossing wires in Shane's head, until it all hits him at once; and he moans, ragged. *Ilya is pressing a thick, gloved finger inside. So impersonal, no warmth or drag or familiar callouses. Just indifference.* "Already so wet for me." Ilya croons. Taking Shane's lubed, prepped asshole as an open invitation, Ilya sinks his finger all the way to the knuckle to test the pliancy of Shane's body, and as usual, Shane opens up easily for him. His body clenches, involuntary, needing more. "Oh, you are sucking me in," the finger pulls out despite Shane's best efforts to keep it inside,

and a gloved thumb traces around the rim, “Deny all you want, the truth is right here. Your hole is very needy.”

Shane hears the sound of a zipper. It’s like a jolt to his system, his heart flying into his throat. “It is good thing I caught you,” The stranger says, “Your husband must be neglecting you, no?”

“No,” Shane gasps, “Th-that’s not—”

The stranger slaps his ass, the usually loud clap muffled by gloves. Shane yelps, the sound swallowing up his pleas. “Shh. No more talking.” The stranger croons, rubbing the spot he just hit. Although Shane wants to argue this point, his head goes blissfully silent as soon as Ilya’s cock presses between his cheeks. His tip kisses at him, already wet, already so fucking hard and throbbing. “Ohh, you’re a stupid cocks slut, aren’t you? Gaggling for it already?”

Is he? Fuck, he is. Shane’s lungs hurt from how hard he’s panting, from the burn of adrenaline and the swirling sear of his desire, his lust. He wants it bad, and his muscles flex, tightening, as if trying to squeeze around an intrusion that’s not quite there yet. Instead, Ilya teases him just a bit longer with the press of his cock, hot between his legs, drooling precum all over where Shane wants him most.

“Please, sir,” Shane whimpers out, wheezing, almost sobbing. *That does it.*

The fat girth of Shane’s stranger splits him open, pressing inside and pinning Shane even further. He cries out, going horrifically limp in defeat as that cock slides home, past all his defenses, *defiling him*. A muffled groan echoes behind him, a drawn-out *fuuuck*, as the stranger bottoms out. His hips press flush to Shane’s ass, grinding as if Shane could take him deeper. This angle is insane, it drives Shane crazy, even crazier as both hands press into Shane’s shoulders to hold him down.

“That’s it,” The stranger growls, “Sweet little hole.”

The stranger wastes no time. He fucks Shane hard and deep, claiming his victory and taking what he worked so hard for. Shane can’t keep up, he groans helplessly, breath-hitching in panic, cock trapped between his belly and his shorts. He hits Shane’s prostate relentlessly, the pleasure alone keeping Shane trapped and utterly useless. *He’s being used, fucked without any concern for his plight.*

Shane doesn’t realize he’s cumming until it’s over. His whole body clenches up in rhythmic pulses and it elicits a deep groan from the stranger, working out of the depths of his belly as Shane cries, spilling all over himself, making a mess. He writhes, probably making all sorts of embarrassing noises that he cannot fully comprehend while so fucked-out. Whatever they sound like, they encourage the stranger to fuck harder, faster. Shane cumming did not grant him any mercy whatsoever, and the overstimulation is borderline agony, white-hot sparks dancing across Shane’s vision with each strike of that potent little sweet spot.

“Such a fucking whore for it,” the stranger snarls, incensed, accent so thick Shane can barely understand him. *Or, or maybe Shane’s just gone stupid with it. He can barely think, he can’t even say words anymore.* “You beg, and you plead— Oh, please don’t hurt me, no sir, please

sir,” the stranger makes a cruel mockery of Shane’s own words, “But you are right where you fucking belong, taking my cock. Made for it.”

It’s too much. Shane’s cock has gone soft from the lack of direct friction on it but pleasure courses through him just the same, fuzzing up his senses and , fuck, *fuck, Shane’s crying. He can’t. He needs Ilya to cum, he needs him to mark him up so fucking deep that no one will ever satisfy him ever again.* “I can’t,” Shane hiccups, “It’s too much, fuck, please.”

There’s rustling. The sound of buckling, of something manufactured hitting the soft earth. Then , Ilya’s breath is right by his ear, unfiltered and so hot, puffing like a beast. “I don’t care.” He snarls.

Shane doesn’t hear the noise he makes— not entirely, at least — but he feels it, how it guts him, how his throat flexes around the shape of it. It’s a sob, probably, something close to it. Ilya crouches over him, pinning him with the entirety of his weight now, fucking him fast and brutal— how they both like it, but none of it is for Shane’s benefit. Ilya is taking, taking what’s his. Shane can feel his hands everywhere now; on his throat, tugging at his face, his hair, his ear. Ilya hooks a leather-clad finger into Shane’s mouth, pressing down on his tongue and tugging on his cheeks from the inside. Shane just lets him, thoroughly defeated, a pretty doll for his Ilya.

“Fuck,” Ilya hisses, pressing his forehead between Shane’s shoulder blades, “I’m going to cum,” he then laughs, hysterical and mean, “You want my cum? Hm? Want it in this slutty hole, yes?”

Shane is too far gone to answer, at least not verbally. He nods as best he can while Ilya’s pinning him down, his bones useless and limp. It’s enough though, and Ilya’s groaning, the sound rattling through his chest and into Shane’s spine.

“Easy,” Ilya snarls at him, mocking, “So fucking easy.” Each word is highlighted by a mean snap of Ilya’s hips, bullying Shane’s poor, poor prostate. Each knocks another desperate sound loose from his chest. “Poor Shane.” Ilya croons, and Shane’s too cock-dumb and broken to realize Ilya broke the scene by saying his name, “Scream all you want. Cry for that husband, maybe he will save you?”

And Shane does. “Il-ya!” Shane cries, “Ilya, ohh, Ilya!”

Pain lights through Shane’s system like a livewire as Ilya bites his throat, hard, so hard it kicks up some terrible animal instinct within Shane’s head that he thinks must harken back to humanity’s earliest ancestors, unlocking some primal sense of clarity that leaves Shane floaty and mindless. Ilya’s cock throbs inside him, spilling hot, each pump marked by a throaty growl that Ilya presses straight to Shane’s bloodstream as he chews on his pulse.

In a heaving breath, Ilya’s weight settles fully over Shane, no longer pinning. He’s collapsed, his chest heaving against Shane’s shoulders. The shift is sudden, exhaustion replacing pursuit. They both huff, their breaths knocking out of sync and then slowly falling into rhythm.

Shane lays there, in the dirt, on his belly. Leaves are stuck to his damp skin, heart still racing like it hasn't gotten the message that the hunt is over. His limbs still feel so heavy and pliant beneath Ilya's weight, like he's completely helpless, his submission lingering as he feels himself descend into something very small, and very quiet.

His muscles hum with leftover adrenaline, but it's softer now, melted down into something warm and diffuse. Little things pass by Shane's mind first, but none of them feel very pressing. *The earth under him is cool. His hands and knees sting. His shorts feel messy and gross. Ilya is heavy, but good heavy.*

Ilya lifts up his head, just enough to press his nose to Shane's ear, nuzzling him, kissing at the sensitive shell of it with damp lips. "You okay?" He asks.

"Mmhumm," Shane responds, bleary. It's a mess of a noise, but an affirmative one.

Ilya huffs, an affectionate sound. "I caught you," He murmurs, sounding a little boyish, "I'll take care of you, now."

In Shane's stupor, he's not quite so sure what that means, nor does he care. The past and present simply do not exist, as Shane can only manage to grasp what is readily in front of him. Things simply are just happening to his body, and he has no control over that. Ilya is moving him, and Shane is suddenly looking up at the sky, filtered through the leaves overhead. *He's on his back.* Then, Ilya's lips are on his, gentle and so sweet, running his tongue between Shane's lips as his big, still-gloved hands gently brush the dirt off of Shane's face.

Ilya's cheeks are flushed, his eyes are bright, his curls are very matted and he is so, so sweaty. He probably needs a big glass of water. More pressingly, his lips are just the most darling pink color, so very kissable and heart-shaped. Shane wants to kiss him forever. He groans, tipping his head up just enough in a wordless request. As always, Ilya knows what he needs, and gives him another sweet kiss.

Then another, and another. He kisses down Shane's neck, over the vicious bite he left on him. Before Shane knows it, Ilya is between his legs. "Such a messy boy," He rumbles, adjusting Shane's shorts to expose his soft cock. Despite Shane being very fuck-drunk, the sight of Ilya revealing the evidence of his early orgasm is humiliating in the worst way. It makes him flush down to his chest, and Shane makes some disgruntled sound as he watches Ilya, lazily tipping his head to the side. "Don't worry, I'll clean you up."

Shane doesn't fully understand the weight of those words until his soft cock is in Ilya's mouth. A startled moan wrenches out of Shane's throat, and his hands grip Ilya's curls, tugging hard as he laves his hot tongue all over. It hurts, makes Shane tremble with overstimulation, but his cock still throbs, still *wants*. Ilya hums, his grin smug, his hands dipping beneath Shane's dirt-smeared shirt to hold his hips. He swirls his tongue around the tip, licking up the mess there and making Shane horrifyingly hard again. Shane writhes, not so sure if he's speaking english anymore, but he's pleading, begging regardless. Wordless and desperate. He doesn't know what he wants, he wants this forever yet he wants it to stop so badly— "Ilya," Shane gasps, "Ilya, fuck, Ilya—!"

A second orgasm tears through Shane, leaving him sobbing and trembling, every muscle drawn taut and curled while he spills into Ilya's wanting mouth. Ilya holds him in his throat for as long as it takes, looking wrecked *and* very good with a cock between his lips. Shane becomes lost in the gooey look Ilya gives him, his pretty blue eyes all unfocused where he blinks up at Shane, a silent *I love you*.

Ilya pulls off of him, dragging his tongue along the underside just to get one more terrible moan out of Shane's throat. Shane pants. He falls limp in the dirt again. "Fuck." He wheezes.

"Yes, fuck," Ilya echoes after a moment. He drops his head onto Shane's thigh.

"Ilya..." Shane murmurs, because nothing else makes sense. The towering trees overhead look so big, endless, and Shane feels warm and floaty all over, euphoria, like he's still running without the burn of it. Shane clumsily threads his fingers through Ilya's damp curls, petting him.

Then Ilya is brushing at his knees. Shane hisses, the pain waking him up a little. "Sorry," Ilya murmurs, "I did not mean to..."

"I wanted it," Shane says, again aware of his bloody, scraped knees. It's hard to see the damage, because dirt has clumped in the wetness of the scrape, but it's definitely not bad. Just one of those surface-level cuts that stings really fucking bad. He has a matching set on both knees, and Shane distantly thinks it's a good thing that the season is over. "It's okay. I wanted it." He reassures Ilya again, and Ilya nods, nuzzling into the crease of Shane's hip. He goes to touch the cuts again, probably trying to brush the dirt off— "Stop touching it." Shane scolds without any real bite.

Ilya climbs back up his body. Their mouths meet gently, the frantic edge gone, replaced by warmth and something almost giddy. Shane's hands slide up into Ilya's hair, mussing it further and making Ilya groan in contentment, like a happy dog. "You are dirty," Ilya grumbles against Shane's lips, and *yea, he knows*.

"That was fun," Shane just murmurs, and Ilya nods, tucking a laugh into Shane's cheek.

"Yes, very." Ilya hums, "You are fun to chase."

"Thanks," Shane says, because he doesn't know how else to respond to that comment, but it does make his stupid cock twitch in weak interest despite being fully, totally spent. Shane decides he doesn't want to lay in the dirt anymore, especially because it's getting dark, and *especially* because he can hear the buzz of waking insects. *Shane does not want to be stuck with a thousand mosquito bites*. "Bring me home." Shane says, and Ilya nods, kissing Shane's cheek.

Ilya gets off of him. Shane pushes himself upright first and immediately feels the protest in his knees, the wobble in his thighs. The world tilts faintly—not from injury, but from everything still draining out of him. Ilya notices, as usual. "Come here," he says, already reaching for him.

Shane rolls his eyes half-heartedly but accepts the help. Ilya steadies him with a hand at his waist, brushing some dirt from his shoulder with the other. They're near equal in size, but right now Shane feels very small. He likes it, and wishes he could just melt into Ilya and become a part of him for a little while.

They start back through the woods together. It's easy to figure out where they came from, following the obvious trail they left behind when plowing through the brush. They reach the edge of the trees and the road opens up in front of them, the sky starting to turn dusky. The motorcycle waits where Ilya left it, angled slightly toward the cottage.

Ilya walks ahead, swinging a leg over the seat, and then he looks back at Shane. Without a word, he holds out his helmet in offering.

Shane blinks. "What?"

"Put it on," Ilya says, "I only have the one. You should be wearing it."

"You want me to get on your bike," Shane says, because that's the more pressing matter.

"Yes, it is short ride," Ilya smiles, "Come on, Hollander. I am a good driver, promise." He reaches behind himself to pat the back of the seat in a 'sit' gesture

He doesn't want to walk home by himself... Shane frowns. Sighs. He steps forward and takes the helmet. He wants Ilya wearing it, ideally, but Shane really does fear taking a tumble without it. When he slips it on the inside presses gently against his cheeks, almost like a hug. It smells like sweat and wind and leather and something unmistakably Ilya. The scent is close, intimate. It makes his stomach flip in a way that has nothing to do with motorcycle-based fear.

The world narrows, and sound dulls slightly. His breathing echoes faintly inside the shell. For a second, dizziness brushes him again—*not unpleasant*. Just the memory of being pinned, being caught, being looked at through this exact dark curve.

"Oh, yes, I see the appeal now." Ilya hums.

Shane huffs, and climbs on behind Ilya carefully. The bike feels taller from up here, more precarious. *He's never been on one before, and, oh come on, Shane. Be a man.* He settles in. Shane presses close, chest to back, wrapping his arms tight around Ilya's middle. The leather of his jacket is warm now, softened by body heat, and the solidity of Ilya's frame beneath it makes something in Shane's chest loosen. *The bike isn't too scary, because Ilya's got him.*

"I will go slow for you, moya lybov." Ilya coos, and Shane smiles, a little embarrassed, but touched by Ilya's sweetness. Shane tightens his grip, fingers curling into the jacket.

The engine roars to life beneath them, vibrating through Shane's thighs, through his ribs. Shane exhales and lets himself lean into it. The road slides under them, and trees blur at the edges of the visor. From this angle, tucked against Ilya, the speed feels different. Less like danger, and more like surrendering to something guided and sure. *It's sort of... Romantic. Shane likes going on drives with Ilya and this is much the same, if not even more intimate.*

Although, Shane could do without the danger of it. But the woods look pretty, the rattle of the bike's engine feels nice.

...It's kinda hot too. Maybe they should fuck on the bike sometime.

By the time they reach the driveway, Shane's nerves have melted into a quiet hum. Ilya kills the engine, and the sudden silence rings softly in Shane's ears. He pops the helmet off, blinking at the familiar view of the cottage.

Shane glances down the road. *Like, really looks.* He ran really fucking far, farther than he realized in the heat of it. A slow grin spreads across his face. "Holy shit, I really made you work for it," he says, a little breathless still. *All the bag skating he did really was worth it.*

Ilya glances back over his shoulder. "Yes, you're very quick. Good stamina... Maybe not in orgasms, though."

Before Shane hands Ilya his helmet back, he swats his shoulder in lieu of a scolding. Ilya laughs, and with it Shane feels a buzz through his heavy, satisfied body. His muscles are pleasantly sore, mind still replaying flashes of the chase.

He ran hard, he got caught, and now he's home.

By the time they make it to the couch, Shane feels like he's been wrung out and left in the sun to dry.

The shower they took after coming inside had been slow. So slow, and the hot water that poured down Shane's back washed whatever remaining adrenaline away, down the drain, leaving Shane boneless and exhausted. Ilya had knelt carefully to clean the scrapes on Shane's knees, gentle fingers steady and precise instead of grabbing and mean. The contrast makes Shane's chest ache in a softer way. *He loves Ilya's hands.* His touch can be as firm as it is gentle, and those strong fingers always know just how to pay attention to Shane the way he needs it.

Now his knees are neatly wrapped, his hair is still slightly damp and his skin feels warm and loose from the heat of the water. He sinks into his couch with a heavy exhale. Every part of him is sore—the good kind of sore, of course. His thighs throb faintly from sprinting, and his shoulders protest when he shifts. There's also this dull tenderness where he hit the ground, but it all feels earned.

Ilya sits beside him and Shane immediately tips sideways, fitting himself along Ilya without needing to ask. He presses close, cheek against the warm fabric of Ilya's T-shirt, one leg thrown loosely over his thigh. *He's so tired. So fucking tired, and Ilya is so very warm.* It's the kind of tired Shane can feel in his very soul, the kind that makes his eyelids heavy even though the TV is already playing.

Ilya put on some reality competition show , an older one, based on the grainy footage and the dated editing. Shane doesn't really care what it is though, as he is just happy to let lights and colors fill the space, a domestic white noise that slots in well with the gentle thrum of Ilya's heart against his ear.

Ilya balances a bowl of ice cream in one hand and nudges a spoon toward Shane's mouth with the other. "Open," he says lightly.

Shane obeys. The cold sweetness of creamy vanilla melts on his tongue and he sighs. He doesn't bother lifting his own hands. He just lets himself be fed, eyes half-lidded. "Ohh you are so wrecked," Ilya murmurs, mock-sympathetic, "Poor baby." Ilya takes advantage of Shane's vulnerability and feeds him another bite of icecream, probably enjoying this way too much. Shane, truly, cannot find it within himself to care too much. *Ilya is in charge. He can relax. His body feels heavy in the safest way, used up and satisfied.*

"You didn't slap me," Shane murmurs, sleepy.

Ilya grunts. "I had you on your belly," He says, "It's hard to slap."

Sure, that's true. Shane will give Ilya some grace on that. Especially since the sting of his bandaged legs are a good replacement for the lingering soreness of a slap. "Next time?" Shane mutters hopefully.

Ilya chuckles and the sound vibrates through his chest where Shane is resting against him. "Yes, next time." Ilya says, confirming the inevitable. Ilya pets his hair and kisses his forehead, and it's like a signal straight to Shane's brain, and he feels even more quiet than before. "Where do you come up with this stuff, hm?"

Shane smiles and shrugs. *Don't all couples play? A game of chase can't be that weird, right?*

...Well, even if it is weird, Shane decides he doesn't really care.

"Oh, my Shane." Ilya hums, so fond that Shane's heart flutters. *He loves being Ilya's. That feels similarly well earned.* "Here, have more." Ilya croons, so sweet to him, and holds the spoon to Shane's lips. Shane, again, readily obeys— he accepts a treat he would never allow himself to have, because that isn't up to him right now. *It's up to Ilya, and Ilya always takes such good care of him.* It tastes good, feels good. Ilya hums, content, satisfied in his victory. "Good boy."

End Notes

weeee thanks for reading!!! this was fun to write.

if you enjoyed, let me know what you thought!! i love reading feedback. no pressure though ofc <3 thank you so much for reading! I'm a little rusty with smut writing so i'd love to know what u think!

if you wanna yap w/ me about hollanov my twitter is @elk_en (i draw too!)

okyyy thanks bye!! gonnago start my hunger games fanfic now i fear

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