your face is a language (i'm fluent by now)

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your face is a language (i'm fluent by now)

by messyjessy08

Summary

"It feels so strange. I've known you for eight years. I love you. No one alive knows me more than you do. But also. There's so many things I've missed–things that I should know."

Shane worries his lip for a moment, thinking. "What if…what if we just. Ask. Everything you can think of. Everything you want to know. We spend the last day we have just. Learning everything we possibly can. No question's off limits. Will that feel better?"

Ilya nods, eyes closing as Shane kisses his forehead. "Yes, I think so."

Or: Ilya realizes that for all of the years he and Shane have spent together, there's still plenty left to learn. As their last day at the Cottage before returning back to their respective cities, they get one full day of questions and answers to catch up on everything they've missed.

Notes

Hiya! This is a gift for Sage who requested one night at the cottage / day in the life. So, I mixed the two to give you this sweet fluffy slice of life.

This was so fun to write, hope you enjoy!

See the end of the work for more notes

It's their second to last night together at the cottage when Ilya realizes.

Shane's head is on his bare chest, his eyes closed and humming softly as he pets the tufts of hair on Ilya's navel. Ilya's mentally replaying the last two weeks–still unable to believe this is real. That they can really have this. He spent so much wasted time pretending he felt nothing, and so much time fighting it when he realized Shane was everything. And now, after all they had been through, they can have this. They can be together. Have a future together. Shane wants a future with him.

Ilya sighs happily, reaching down to scratch across Shane's scalp. Ilya knows they'll have to return to their regular schedules in two days–Ilya's direct flight to Boston bright and early at 9:45am. From there he'll get unpacked, return Sveta's calls (he had been ignoring her texts while in Ottawa, hesitant to step away from Shane for more than a minute to answer her questions about where he was spending his time). He'd eat dinner alone, go to bed alone, and wake up in time to squeeze in a workout before driving to Boston's practice rink to start off the pre-season.

He thumbs over the shell of Shane's ear, lost in thought, and startles at the sudden flail of Shane's arm across his stomach.

"Wow," Ilya giggles, sitting up to meet Shane's eyes. "Good dream? Are you kicking in your sleep like a puppy?"

Shane squirms, pulling away from Ilya's hands and holding his own head up. "No asshole, that tickled me." He wipes at his ear roughly, as if trying to scrub away the feeling. "Ugh, that was awful. I hate stuff being near my ears."

Ilya bites down on a smile, "Oh, so you are ticklish?"

Shane shoves Ilya's hands away from where they're slowly inching towards him. "Yes, Ilya. Everyone is ticklish or sensitive somewhere. Mine just happen to be my ears. And my neck. That whole area really."

Ilya hums in response, leaning forward to put his mouth on the side of his neck, kissing upwards until he can whisper in his ear. "But you usually like it when I touch you here, hm?"

Shane shudders, sitting up and putting space between them. "Yes, because it's…it's *sensitive*. When I'm not like, turned on or anything it's just too much. I just get overstimulated."

Ilya leans back against the arm of the couch, behaving. "So you'd only like to be touched there when we're…"

Shane rolls his eyes, "When we're fucking, yes. Or about to fuck. Or thinking about fucking. If we're just hanging out and my brain isn't ready for it, it just feels like. Bad. Wrong."

"Okay. I will remember." Ilya nods to himself, mentally filing it away. "I will add it to my list of *Facts About Shane*. Ticklish. Not in a fun way. Only if we're fucking."

“Your *Facts About Shane*?” Shane smiles, leaning his weight onto Ilya’s body fully and resting his chin on his chest. “You have a whole list?”

Does he have a list? What kind of boyfriend does Shane think he is? “What do I look like? Of course I have a list.”

“What else is on your list?”

“Hmm…” Ilya pretends to think, “Favorite drink is Ginger Ale. Partly because you are good Canadian boy, partly because it settles your stomach when you feel upset.”

Shane hums, “Favorite drink. Wow, it’s like you can see into my soul, Ilya.” Shane laughs as Ilya swats him playfully. “I’m just saying! That’s not exactly a hidden intimate piece of knowledge.”

“Didn’t say everything was hidden and intimate, just said I keep a list.” Ilya wiggles underneath him, leg coming up to wrap around Shane’s waist until they’re fully tangled together. “Let me think. Okay. Hidden and intimate. Youuuu,” He draws out the word, “Ah! You have a freckle on your dick.”

Shane pushes up onto his elbows, grinning, “You are such a fucking liar.”

“Really! Is cute little one. Right on the underside. I see it every time I suck your dick. He’s my friend.”

“You’re ridiculous.” Shane shakes his head, giggling.

They calm a bit after that, giggles settling into sighs as they enjoy being wrapped up in one another. Ilya kisses the top of Shane’s head, mind still turning over the same thought.

When they were…not dating. Having sex with ‘no feelings’. Ilya was obsessed with learning as much about Shane as he possibly could. Tormented, really. He would constantly watch game footage, eyes tracking the tiny 24 on the screen until they watered. He would watch interviews just to see if he mentioned Ilya, sifting through endless scrums and quotes about ‘getting pucks on the net’ until some journalist brought him up, just to see Shane’s reaction. He would read Shane’s Wikipedia entry front to back on the off chance some new piece of information had been included. Ilya was ravenous for any small piece of knowledge he could find. He couldn’t have Shane the way he wanted, so he resorted to learning whatever he could, however he could.

But now that they were together…now that they were boyfriends. How much *does* he really know about Shane?

He knows the most important things. That he loves him. That he wants to share his future with him. Knows the feeling of his body underneath him. Knows all his hockey stats. But Ilya struggles to think of anything more complex than that. Does he know his favorite color? Or his favorite movie? Does he want kids? Does he have any allergies? Christ, Ilya should know these things, he’s cooked for Shane–what if he fed him something that could’ve *killed* him?

Shane cracks an eye open from his spot curled up on Ilya's chest. "Your heartrate just sped up like 20 bpm. What's wrong?"

Ilya's eyes refocus, petting Shane's hair from his forehead. "Not…wrong. Just." God Ilya's only been a boyfriend for a week and he's already proving to be terrible at this.

"Ilya," Shane grabs the hand in his hair, pulling it down to kiss Ilya on the wrist softly. "It's okay. You can talk to me. We're saying how we really feel, remember?"

Ilya's eyes close, settling at the touch of Shane's lips against him. "Of course. You're right. I was just thinking…there are many things we still don't know about each other."

"Like what?"

"Like…" Ilya puffs out a breath, "Like, did you have any nicknames when you were younger?"

Shane quirks an eyebrow, "Not really? I mean, I've been in sports my whole life so pretty much everyone just called me Hollander. Did you?"

"I did," Ilya smiles. "My family called me Ilyushka which is…mmm. Just sweet nickname for Ilya. Sveta calls me this. It's for people closest to you. Friends and family." He brushes his thumb across the freckles at the top of Shane's cheek, smiling wider when Shane leans into his touch. "But *you* could call me Ilyusha."

Shane nods seriously, always so intense when he shows he's listening. "Okay. I will. Was there anything else?"

Ilya lets out a breath, "My mama called me Solnyshko."

"I've heard that one before. Right?" Shane's eyebrows furrow, trying to place the few Russian phrases Ilya had been repeating lately.

Ilya's heart feels so full it could burst, "You have. It means sunshine. It's what I sometimes call you. *Solnyshko moya*."

Shane's eyes widen, hands stroking the sides of his waist, soothing. "Oh, Ilya."

Ilya shakes his head, not wanting to think about it for too long. He's cried enough. "So now I know one more thing. Good. I want to know everything."

"We still have time for that," Shane says, leaning up to kiss Ilya's lips, nose butting against his.

"Yes, but." Ilya leans his forehead against Shane's, trying to find the words. "It feels so strange. I've known you for eight years. I love you. No one alive knows me more than you do. But also. There's so many things I've missed–things that I should know."

Shane worries his lip for a moment, thinking. "What if…what if we just. Ask. Everything you can think of. Everything you want to know. We spend the last day we have just. Learning

everything we possibly can. No question's off limits. Will that feel better?"

Ilya nods, eyes closing as Shane kisses his forehead. "Yes, I think so."

"Okay," Shane nods. "Then we start tomorrow." He pushes himself off of Ilya's chest, Ilya giving a grunt in pain when he leans too sharply on his stomach. "Now, c'mon. Let's go to bed."

Ilya lets himself get pulled from the living room back towards Shane's bed. He has one more day and night with Shane. He's going to make the most of it.

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Ilya wakes to rays of light filtering in over the trees, the same way he has every morning they've spent together at the cottage. Shane's head is tucked under his chin, their legs tangled together under the blankets. Shane's still beneath him, chest rising and falling slowly.

He pulls Shane in closer, burying his nose in his hair, inhaling deeply at the smell of Shane's specialty shampoo. Shane stirs, always waking at the slightest touch. "Good morning."

Ilya hides his smile at Shane's sleepy kitten yawn. "Good morning, sweetheart."

Shane wipes his face once and rolls over to face Ilya, all traces of sleep gone. He looks fresh and well-rested and so so soft. Ilya's heart melts.

"Are you hungry? I can go get some breakfast started. Or we could do some sunrise yoga outside if you wanted?" Ilya's smile widens despite himself. Shane is the most obvious example of a morning person Ilya's ever seen, immediately ready to get out of bed and start the day seconds after waking.

Shane clocks the smile and bumps Ilya's chin with his nose, "Or you could watch *me* do yoga while you drink your coffee."

Ilya hums, "That is a wonderful idea."

They use the bathroom and brush their teeth side-by-side. Ilya bumps Shane's hip with his, grinning around the toothbrush in his mouth. Shane changes into some of his workout gear, Ilya following behind with a blanket wrapped around his shoulders. Shane turns on the coffee-maker for Ilya, choosing to crack open a protein shake for himself. He sips it quietly, checking his phone and responding to new messages. Ilya watches him, leaning against the counter.

"You don't like coffee?"

Shane keeps his eyes on his phone, thumbs moving as he answers a text. "Occasionally. I don't usually need the caffeine. I'll have some if someone on the team makes a run before practice or if I didn't sleep well."

Ilya opens his phone to the notes app, starting a new locked entry and titling it *Shane Hollander Boyfriend List*. He creates a numerical list and next to number 1 writes *Coffee* -

Rarely. “If someone got you something–Tim Hortons or another coffee shop. What would you want?”

Shane grins at his phone, eyes glancing at Ilya before moving back to the screen. He hasn’t noticed Ilya typing away on his own phone yet. “I don’t know, maybe green tea. But if you’re talking specifically coffee, probably an Americano. I’m usually pretty basic.”

Ilya hums and adds Shane’s order to the first bullet, quickly filling in other small facts he knows by heart. He was mostly kidding about having a list but at this point, he doesn’t want to forget anything. He wants to be a good boyfriend, and a good boyfriend remembers his boyfriend’s coffee order, even if he hardly ever orders one. He does already know Shane’s favorite protein shake flavor. Though, he only knows because the first time he met Shane at his Montreal apartment, he opened his fridge and found it filled to the brim with meal prep containers, cases of Canada Dry, and strawberry protein shakes. He knew he didn’t drink often, but that when he did he preferred beer–whatever was on tap, and he hated straight vodka. He was doing great! The first five bullets were all beverages, but Ilya was on the right track.

Shane puts down his phone when the coffee-maker beeps, coming to stand next to Ilya while he pours him a cup of coffee in a brightly garish rainbow mug. Ilya raises an eyebrow as Shane sets out the creamer. “It was from Rose. She had it sent to my apartment after I came out to her and said I needed something with rainbows on it if I was going to be gay.”

Ilya hums. “She is right. They will take your gayness away. Gone just like that. No more sucking dicks for you.” Shane rolls his eyes, adding a bit of creamer until the color is just barely no longer black. Exactly how Ilya likes it. His eyes slide to Ilya’s phone, still awake on the counter. “Is that…you actually made a list?”

Shane picks up his phone, scrolling through the bullets he’s already entered. “‘*Star sign - Taurus. Stubborn and boring. Height - 5’11, says he’s 6 foot*.’ I am 6 foot, asshole!” Shane shoves at Ilya’s shoulder, grinning. Ilya yelps, holding his gay cup of coffee out of reach of Shane’s wrath. “I’m gonna make a list for you, too. *Personality type - aggravating*.”

Ilya snickers into his cup, watching as Shane scrolls to the bottom of the list. *#24 - Is the love of my life*.

Shane’s cheeks flare, his freckles standing out in contrast to the blood in his cheeks. “Oh.”

“Yes, *oh*.” He leans forward for a kiss, tasting strawberry and Ilya’s own coffee on their lips. He commits the taste to memory–he’ll miss this when they’re apart, he knows. “What happened to your sunrise yoga? Thought you wanted to give me a preview of how bendy you are? Hm?”

Shane rolls his eyes, leaning in for one last peck before leading Ilya to the large open room he uses for yoga while at the cottage.

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“What’s your favorite food?”

Shane looks up from his bowl, covering his mouth as he swallows his oatmeal. “Like in general?” Ilya’s watching him, plate of eggs and toast already finished.

He nods, taking a sip of his second cup of coffee (first cup for caffeine, second cup to enjoy). “Like…If you could only eat one thing for the rest of your life. What would you choose? Something you’d never get sick of.”

Shane purses his lips, thinking. Normally he might say salmon. That’s his safe food when he’s conditioning, the perfect amount of protein and fat. But that doesn’t make it his *favorite*. If he’s thinking for pure enjoyment of the food itself, it’s something where he doesn’t consider the macros at all.

“Probably…” He trails off, smiling. “My grandmother had this dish she’d cook for me when I was sick. I don’t remember the name, but it was just broth and dumplings with vegetables. Some green onions maybe? But everytime she made it…have you ever had a food that feels like it just. Warms you? Not like literally. But like. Down to your soul?” Ilya nods, encouraging him to continue. “It just always made me feel that way. She died when I was younger. Maybe 7 or 8? It hit my mom really hard, she doesn’t talk about her much. But I wish I had her recipe somewhere. It’d be nice.”

Ilya nods, thumb moving across the surface of the table absently. “There was a dish my mother made that made me feel the same. Zharkoye, just stew. Meat and potatoes. But it was my favorite.” He makes a face, “all my grandmother would cook was Borscht. I hated going to visit her. All we would ever eat. Beets are disgusting. Taste like dirt.” Shane laughs at the way Ilya sticks out his tongue in disgust. “She was a miserable old woman. She hated my mother…” He trails off, eyes unfocusing.

Shane reaches forward and threads his fingers through Ilya’s, bringing him back to the moment. “Is that your choice? For favorite food? The Zar…Shar?”

“Zharkoye.” Ilya brings their hands to his face and kisses Shane’s knuckles, pressing the back of Shane’s hand against his cheek. “And maybe. But it’s been years since I’ve had it. She made it special somehow, I’ve never had a stew that tasted the same. Maybe…” He puffs out a breath. “Pasta of some kind. I love pasta. I’m not like you, I could eat nothing but carbs forever.”

Shane mentally edits their dinner plans from grilled chicken to the penne pesto recipe he’s been meaning to try. “I like carbs. It’s just when I’m conditioning I tend to focus only on whole grains and–”

“Yes, yes. Ancient grains from when the earth was formed or whatever. I know. I ate the toast.”

Shane moves their joined hands and pinches Ilya’s cheek, smiling. “It’s good for you.”

“Something that tastes that dry can only be bad for me.”

Shane rolls his eyes, rising from the table and clearing their plates. He places them in the dishwasher and turns to face Ilya who’s followed him across the kitchen. “What now?”

Ilya hums, thinking. “Maybe lazy day today. The hike yesterday wiped you out and I don’t want to waste it napping.”

“You’re the one who decided he wanted to hike to the overlook. I told you it was no joke.”

Ilya grunts in response, leaning forward to press his forehead against Shane’s. This close Shane can see the flecks of green in his eyes. He wants to paint the entire cottage that combination of blue/green and live in it forever.

“Maybe we keep playing your 20 questions game, hang around and just…do whatever we want?”

Ilya scoffs against his cheek, “Do what we want? *Crazy*. Why didn’t I think of that.”

Shane shoves him away, grabbing a bottle of water from the fridge and heading towards the back door. “C’mon let’s go sit outside.”

Ilya trails behind him, smitten.

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“Favorite day of the week?” Ilya digs his toes into the long grass in front of their chairs.

Shane cracks open an eye, tilting his head towards Ilya. “Um. I don’t know if I have one. Maybe Friday? After the weekly games, before a Saturday game. Feeling good from the win from the previous day, excited for the game the next day. Friday.”

Ilya makes a face, eyebrows raising, typing Shane’s answer in his ever-growing list.

“Why, what’s yours?”

Ilya keeps his eyes on his phone, thumbs typing away. “Wednesday.”

“Why Wednesday?”

“Hump day!” Ilya smiles wide. “Our assistant coach comes into the locker room every time and says ‘hump day, boys!’ This is hilarious. Incredibly inappropriate, but hilarious.”

“That’s actually not what that means, it’s saying you got over the hump of the first part of the week. Like because it’s in the middle?”

Ilya blows out a raspberry, frowning.

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“If you were an animal, what would you be?” Shane asks, fingers absently smoothing out wrinkles on the bedspread. Ilya continues folding his shirts, packing each away one by one, a physical reminder that this is their last day together.

“Mm, something big and impressive. Lion or panther.” He shoves a plain blue hoodie that definitely belongs to Shane inside his bag. “You would be one too, only smaller. Little cheetah cub.” He smiles, baring his teeth like he’s growling. “Very fast but tiny and cute.”

“I don’t even get to give my own answer? Wasn’t the whole point so you learn new things about me?” Shane laughs, tossing a pair of shorts at Ilya’s head. Ilya catches them before they make contact and sticks his tongue out at Shane.

“Nope!” He flops down on the bed next to him, knocking over the neatly folded stack Shane had made while Ilya had been searching for his sunglasses. He sighs dramatically and starfishes across the bed, his head hanging off the edge. “I don’t want to go back to Boston.”

Shane watches him for a moment, carefully petting through Ilya’s curls. “I know. It’ll be better, though. We can text and call and facetime. As soon as the team’s schedule is out for the season, I’ll text you and we can start planning. I can fly in sooner some days, if I’m able. You can too. And we just have to get through this season and next year, you’ll be in Ottawa.”

“If they take me.”

“Of course, they’ll take you.”

“And then I will be playing on a team that hasn’t won a game in three seasons.”

“I think you’re exaggerating a bit, but yes. We know they suck. But they’ve got a new coach so maybe that will help. And you’ll be nearby. That’s what we want. Right?”

Ilya tilts his head towards Shane, gaze soft. “Right.”

****

“What’s your most treasured possession?”

Unlike Ilya, who had been asking things whenever they popped into his head, Shane had googled a list of ‘100 questions to ask on a first date’. They’d kind of skipped that stage and moved from first date directly to ‘first extended stay together’, but the premise was the same.

“Championship ring. Or maybe McLaren P1.” Ilya laughs at the blank look on Shane’s face. “Fancy car. I got it when we won the cup. Only 375 units ever created. *Very* valuable. What about you?”

“Probably my rings, yeah. Or my medal. Or my first game-winning puck. Or…” Shane trails off, suddenly embarrassed.

Ilya’s eyebrows raise expectantly, “What?”

“Uh…it’s nothing, just.”

Ilya searches Shane’s eyes, grinning. He looks like a shark that’s just tasted blood–fitting considering the heat flooding Shane’s cheeks. “Just? What, Hollander? Your famous dildo? The big one?”

Shane shoves Ilya away, turning his attention back to his phone. “Just forget it. What annoys you the most?”

“Stubborn boyfriends with beautiful blushy cheeks who do not want to answer questions that embarrass them.”

Shane flips his phone face down on top of his thigh, sighing. “Fine. Just. Don’t make fun of me.” Ilya motions him to continue. “If we’re talking non-hockey related. Like a general item with sentimental value…It’d probably be. My…blankie.”

“Your…” Ilya’s making the face he makes when he really wants to laugh but doesn’t want to hurt Shane’s feelings. “Your blankie?”

“Yes! Look. I had a hard time adjusting to preschool when I was little and…if we’re talking most valuable and treasured possession, like irreplaceable…I mean, the manufacturer doesn’t produce them anymore, I looked it up once and–”

Ilya bursts into laughter.

“Asshole! You asked, okay?”

Ilya’s giggles quiet into a long-drawn out sigh, head tilting back against the couch. “Oh my god, I love you so much.”

******

“What’s your love language?”

Ilya looks up from their hands, twined on top of Shane’s thigh, the action movie they had been watching continuing in the background. “What’s that?”

“You’ve never heard of it? Like what’s the way you prefer to have love shown to you? Or show to others. There’s physical touch, gift-giving, words of affirmation. Uh, hang on.” Shane picks up his phone with his other hand, quickly searching for the remaining two. “Oh, quality time and acts of service.”

“Acts of service?” Ilya’s voice has pitched low and husky, eyes half-lidded. “Can I choose that one? I love when you service me.” He leans down and places open-mouthed kisses to Shane’s neck, hand sneaking under the leg of his shorts.

“Ilya, no. It’s where you…appreciate someone doing things for you without being asked. Like cleaning or running an errand, something to take the load off of the other person.” Ilya bites down on the tender spot between neck and shoulder. Shane gasps, tilting his head to the side to give him room.

“Mmm,” Ilya’s hand finds Shane’s dick through his boxers, massaging the hardness already growing. “Maybe. What are the others?”

Shane grunts, head falling back onto the arm of the couch. “Maybe. Words of affirmation?” The end of the word tilts up into a question, like he’s seeking Ilya’s approval on his own

answer.

“Which one is that?”

“It means like…being told you’re good. Or, fuck. N-not good, but.” Shane’s thighs spread wider, Ilya moving to kneel on the floor in front of him.

Ilya squeezes his hands around Shane’s thighs. “Keep going.”

“It’s when…like saying ‘I appreciate you’ or ‘I’m proud of you’ or…or ‘I’m grateful to…to have you’. Stuff like that.”

Ilya leaves a smacking wet kiss to the inside of Shane’s thigh, moving to pull him out of his pants. “I think you need to hear that sometimes, but I don’t think it’s your favorite.”

“M-maybe not. Ilya, *shit*.” Ilya bobs his head, taking Shane’s full length in his throat. “Oh my god, you feel so good.”

Ilya pulls back, inhaling deeply, jacking Shane slowly while he waits for him to continue. “What else?”

“Uh, maybe physical touch? Holding hands, k-kissing. Showing your affection by touch?”

Ilya moans, pulling off from where he had been suckling the head of his cock. “Yes, that one I think. You need touch to ground you if you’re upset. Touch is always the best way to speak to you, more than words. Makes you feel good.”

Shane tangles his hand in Ilya’s hair, pulling him forward. “Yeah, make me feel good.”

“What about me? What’s mine?” Ilya moves his head out of Shane’s hold, leaning forward to tap the head of his cock against his pursed lips. Shane whines in frustration. “C’mon, baby. Let me hear you. What’s mine?”

“Fuck, Ilya. I don’t know.” Shane groans when Ilya pulls away further. “Touch! You’re physical touch, too.”

Ilya chuckles lowly, pausing where he had been grabbing at Shane’s chest from under his shirt. “Probably, yes. Okay, good boy. I’ll keep *touching* you.”

****

“Mm, most used emoji?”

Shane shakes lake water out of his ears, paddling closer to Ilya on the dock. “I don’t have my phone right now.”

Ilya makes an ‘oh my god you are useless’ face. “Use your memory, Hollander. Mine is little devil boy.” He holds up two fingers over his head like horns. “The little evil smirking guy. I

like that one."

"That makes sense for you. Maybe the trophy emoji? Or the smiling emoji? Just the basic one?"

"The basic smile emoji?" Ilya kicks a wave towards Shane for emphasis. "Even you are not that boring."

"It's professional! I use them a lot in tweets, so that's probably my most used one. Actually, I take that back. The eye roll one. Because I *definitely* use that with you 20 times a day."

Ilya sticks out his tongue and rises, moving back a few paces to jump a safe distance away from Shane. He breaks through the surface and swims closer, spewing water in his direction like a fountain. Shane blows water back at him in response and then they spend the next five minutes spitting water at each other like children.

"What is this from?" Ilya asks when they run out of steam, pointing at the scar on Shane's shoulder. "I've always wondered."

Shane cups a hand over the scar, wincing at the memory. "Took a skate to the shoulder when I was 12. It was the first day of hockey camp and we weren't wearing pads or anything, just messing around. Some kid tripped me and I got run down."

"Little bastards." Ilya leans down and places a gentle kiss over the scar. "That was all? Why does it look so bad?"

"I may have…not told any of the counselors when it happened even though it clearly needed stitches."

Ilya grins like Shane just handed him the Stanley Cup. "*Hollander*! I can't believe it!"

"They didn't know we were on the ice! And it was only the first day, I didn't want to get in trouble and get sent home or something." Shane has the decency to at least look sheepish. "One of the older kids broke into the first aid kit and fixed me up. I spent the entire year trying to hide the scar from my mom. I wore long sleeves the entire summer."

Ilya shakes his head, wading closer and wrapping his arms around Shane beneath the water. "Who knew you could be so naughty. You probably gave your poor mother a heart attack when she found out."

"She was *pissed*. She threatened to switch me to band camp if I ever did anything like that again." Shane grimaces. "But she thinks it's a funny story now. That probably was the worst thing I ever did as a kid." They float together, Ilya clinging to him like an octopus. "Do you have any stories like that? Funny things from when you were a kid?"

Ilya gets the faraway look on his face he sometimes gets when he thinks about Russia.

"You don't have to…if it's not. Good memories. I'm sorry, I should have…"

“No, it’s okay.” Ilya leans his upper body backwards, arms spreading and floating peacefully while his legs stay wrapped around Shane, grounding.

Ilya blows out a breath, “Funny stories. Okay. There was the time Svetlana and I snuck into her father’s trophy room and put on his medals.”

“No shit,” Shane laughs. “Did you get caught?”

“Not really. He was super paranoid afterwards. He said he could see smudges on the glass cabinets. Truly, I think he just wanted a reason to hate me. He never liked me much. He’s too similar to my father.”

Shane squeezes Ilya’s thigh under the water, anchoring him. “How long have you known each other? You and Svetlana?”

“Mmm. Since we were very small. Our families were in the same circles. Her mother passed when she was a baby and Mama liked to watch out for her. Said if she ever had a girl she would want her to be like Sveta. *Derzkaya devchonka*. Like. Spunky. Tough. Her father tried to sign her up for figure skating when we were young and she wouldn’t have it. Screamed and screamed like an emergency siren. He wouldn’t let her sign up for hockey, but he couldn’t stop her from knowing more about it than all the boys did.”

“I’d like to meet her,” Shane says, hands rubbing soothing paths down Ilya’s thighs under the water. “She seems…cool.”

“She has been there for me when no one else has. She is my family. Truly. I would love for you to meet.” Ilya leans forward, chin resting on Shane’s shoulder. “She might threaten to kill you, but don’t worry she just pretends to be scary. Or, well. She is scary. But she will not kill you. Probably.”

“Why would she want to kill me?” Shane asks, panicked.

Ilya flops backwards in the water, groaning dramatically. “Because of all the *crying* and *whining* she’s had to put up with. Jane this, Shane Hollander that. The woman is a saint.”

“So she like…knows?” Shane tries to finish the sentence without sounding like he has a puck lodged in his throat. He sort of accomplishes it.

“She suspects. Heavily suspects. She’s a smart one.”

Shane releases a breath. He can be okay with Ilya’s best friend knowing. His parents know, it’s only fair. “You can tell her. If you need to. If you’d like to. She sounds pretty level-headed. I mean, wanting to kill me aside.”

Ilya paddles close, face just barely poking out of the water, shy. “Really?”

“Yeah,” Shane nods. “Of course.”

Ilya smiles. “I’d like that.”

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“Do you think you’ll want kids?” Shane asks, squinting from behind his sunglasses.

Ilya takes so long to respond Shane almost thinks he’s fallen asleep like this, the two of them lounging on towels in the grass, soaking in the sun’s rays like reptiles.

His head is pillowed in his arms, face half-hidden. He hums, quietly. “I think so, yes. I…did not think about it too often, before. In Russia.” He huffs out a sigh. “It scares me, I think. I do not want to be like my father. Or my brother. Whining about having to support a family, then doing nothing at all to support them.”

He picks at a blade of grass next to him, eyes locked on the ground between them. “I don’t want…to ruin my kid’s life because of the way I am. I don’t want to…” He hesitates, words coming out slowly like he’s not sure he should be saying it. “I don’t want to break apart in front of them and leave them to pick up the pieces alone.”

Shane reaches across the distance between their two towels, stroking his thumb across the top of one of Ilya’s hands. “It scares everyone, I think. Even if they had a positive example to go off of. You’re good with kids though, if it’s worth hearing. I’ve seen those promotional videos of you guys visiting hospitals, or with the Littles before your games. They’re sweet.”

Ilya nods, smiling. “I like those days. Much better than shaking hands with dusty old white men while they talk about bullshit charities they’ve created for tax evasion. I like the days we visit the junior teams. It means a lot to them, you can see it.” They sit there in companionable silence for a beat before Ilya realizes only *he* gave an answer. “And you? Do you want kids?”

“Yeah, I think so. Yeah.” Shane tilts his head back, watching the clouds pass by. “It scared me too, to think about it. It was always just this…nebulous concept in the future. You know? Like, when I retire, when I get married, when I have kids. Some shadow-y faceless woman next to me.”

He turns to look at Ilya, smiling. “It’s a lot less scary if I picture doing it with you.”

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“What would you be doing if you didn’t play hockey?”

Shane looks up at the question, cheeks puffed out adorably as he swallows around his bite of shrimp skewers. He has sauce stuck in the corner of his mouth. Ilya feels like his heart could stop beating. “Why wouldn’t I be playing hockey?”

Ilya takes a bite of his own food, nudging Shane’s foot with his underneath the table. “*If* you didn’t. In alternate world where Shane Hollander isn’t boring hockey player. What would you be? Boring accountant? Real estate agent?”

“I mean, what’s the situation? Is it like, I had to give up playing ‘cause of an injury? Or like. I’m retired and–”

“Shane. If hockey was not a sport. Didn’t exist. What would you do.”

“I mean. Realistically, some form of the sport would exist, its conception traces to the middle ages with other stick and ball games–”

Ilya throws his wadded up napkin at Shane’s face. “Forget it. You’d be a florist. I’ve decided.”

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“Okay. This one.” Ilya hands Shane his phone, letting him see the result for himself. “E-S-T-P. Entrepreneur!”

Shane reads the results over Ilya’s shoulder, squinting. After being teased mercilessly for asking Ilya what Hogwarts house he would be in, they went down a rabbit hole about different personality tests and quizzes. Shane couldn’t remember what his MBTI was, having only done it once before when it had become really popular. Ilya had never taken the test, which is how they found themselves laying side-by-side on the couch in the sun room, the Myers-Briggs test open on their phones.

“‘ESTPs are vibrant individuals brimming with an enthusiastic and spontaneous energy.’” Shane reads, his own phone forgotten next to him. “‘They tend to be on the competitive side, often assuming that a competitive mindset is a necessity in order to achieve success in life.’ Yeah, that sounds like you.”

“Ooh, there is a section that tells other famous people that are the same,” Ilya says, scrolling down to the ‘popular ESFPs’ section. “Need to call these Myers people and tell them to add me to their list. Wow, Shane! Madonna!”

Shane hums absently, continuing his own test. ‘You are prone to worrying that things will take a turn for the worse.’ Well. Yeah. Who didn’t.

“The test says I am a natural leader. I’m going to tell my team that the next time they whine at practice.”

‘You prefer to do your chores before allowing yourself to relax’. Obviously. ‘In disagreements, you prioritize proving your point over preserving the feelings of others’. Well. Yes. Sometimes. But only because he sometimes felt it was hard for people to understand him. Maybe that one was only a ‘slightly agree’.

“Okay, the weaknesses section is hurting my feelings. They said I am impulsive and defiant, Shane.”

“Well, you can be.” Shane hesitates over ‘agree’ or ‘slightly agree’. Yes, he does prefer a strict schedule, but he can relax. Like, right now. He and Ilya had been lazing around since lunch and he was fine. He definitely wasn’t vibrating out of his own skin at the lack of stimulation or a concise plan. Definitely not.

“Shane.” Ilya taps Shane’s thigh, pulling his attention back to him. “It’s okay. You’re thinking too hard.”

“This test is stressing me out.”

Ilya rolls over onto his stomach, laying his face in Shane’s lap. “It’s not meant to be stressful, moya lyubov. Just fun. Silly.” He places a kiss against Shane’s clothed tummy. “You don’t have to keep going if you don’t like it.”

Shane grunts, shaking his head. He can’t quit now. Then the test would win. And he’d spend the entire rest of the day thinking about it. ‘You complete things methodically without skipping over any steps.’ Hell yeah, he did.

Ilya busies himself with peppering kisses across Shane’s tummy, his nose poking into the hard planes of his abs. Shane taps a last strongly agree and waits for the results to populate. “I finished it. ISTJ. The Logistician."

His boyfriend hums approvingly, fingers pushing up Shane’s shirt and nuzzling the skin underneath. “What does it say?”

“‘ISTJs tend to be reserved yet willful, with a rational outlook on life. They compose their actions carefully and carry them out with methodical purpose’. Strengths are discipline, responsibility, organization…Christ, they think I’m boring too.”

“Mm, yes. My boring little logistician,” Ilya sucks a mark right above Shane’s hip, lap grinding against the seat cushion lazily.

“God, this is embarrassing. ‘Stubborn, Judgemental, Insensitive.’ Am I insensitive? ‘People with this personality type are not naturally receptive to others’ emotions, not unless they are stated clearly.’ Well, how else am I supposed to know what people are feeling if they don’t tell me? This is stupid.”

Ilya’s arm wraps around Shane’s waist pulling him even closer. “I agree. Let’s do something else.”

Shane looks down at him from over the edge of his phone, “Like what?”

Ilya looks up at him with barely restrained amusement. He gestures to Shane’s cock with his free hand in a ‘what do you think, Hollander’ kind of way. Shane’s face warms, squirming under Ilya’s piercing gaze. “Oh.”

“Oh,” Ilya smirks, reaching up to pluck the phone from Shane’s hand. He tosses it somewhere behind him–they’ll worry about it later.

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“Okay, ready?” Shane holds the phone in front of him, finger hovering over the start button.

Ilya cracks his knuckles, face set in a determined line. “Prepare to lose, Hollander.”

Shane scoffs and hits ‘start’. Fifteen seconds on the clock to answer as many rapid fire ‘ice-breaker’ style questions as they could. Shane was going to fucking destroy him.

“Greatest achievement?”

“Stanley cup.”

“Favorite smell?

“Dior Sauvage Elixir. Or puppy breath.”

“Gross. Do you play any instruments?”

“Tried to learn drums, but no.”

“Favorite season?”

“Spring.”

“Favorite place to travel?”

“Monaco.”

“What’s the last tv show you watched?”

“Degrassi.”

Shane pauses. “Wh-wait, seriously?”

“I’ve been watching it while you do yoga. I need to assimilate into Canadian culture.”

“Um, alright. Do you believe in soulmates?”

“Of course. You are mine.”

The next question on Shane’s lips evaporates into a broken puff of air. “Oh, Ilya–”

“The clock, Shane!”

“Shit, sorry. Who’s the most famous contact in your phone–” They’re interrupted by the shrill beeping of Shane’s phone. “Oh, that’s time.”

“Shane, that’s not fair! John Cena! Was on the tip of my tongue, you took too long and ate up my time, that is cheating.”

“I’m sorry for having a moment and realizing how much I love you!”

“You should be, I could’ve gotten that last one.”

“John Cena?”

“He is a very close friend.”

Shane resets the timer and hands Ilya his own phone, where he'd been reading off a list of questions. "Okay, my turn. Same questions?"

"So you can cheat even more by knowing what's coming?"

"Ilya."

"Fine, fine. If you were fair you'd count that last one. But you are cruel and don't love me–"

"Ilya, Jesus Christ."

"Number to beat is seven!" He rolls his neck, stretching his arms and bouncing in place like he's preparing for a boxing match. "Ready?"

Shane bites down on a smile. "Ready."

****

Ilya watches as Shane moves around the living room, gathering all of Ilya's belongings that have been strewn across the cottage for the last two weeks, organizing them all on the coffee table where Ilya can grab them before he leaves. His headphones, his wallet, the Ottawa branded keychain he bought on impulse during their drive down.

"What helps you relax? When you're stressed or tired?"

Shane turns to find Ilya's eyes on him, thoughtful. "Oh, the normal things I guess. Reading, yoga. White noise."

Ilya bites his lip, considering. "And those things help you? When you're…upset?"

Shane shrugs, coming to sit on the sofa next to Ilya. "For the most part? I mean, there's some times when I can't focus on a book, or I'm not in the mood for yoga."

Ilya nods, eyes searching his face. "And when you can't do those, you do something else? Something else that helps?"

"I mean, sure. I figure it out. Sometimes nothing works, and I just…freak out. Like, you know." Shane gestures towards the windows where he had his panic attack the previous week. "You saw."

Ilya's brows furrow. "Right."

"Hey," Shane brings Ilya closer, pulling him to lean on his shoulder. "What's wrong? You don't have to worry about me. I'll be fine."

Ilya buries his face into Shane's chest. "I don't want you to be *just* fine. Yes, I'm worried. Because I know how this affects you. I know that you panic. What if someone sees, what if our phones get hacked, what if someone tracks your flight and sees you're going to Boston

during a break. What if, what if, what if. And there's nothing I can do to help. I can't make people be okay with us, I can't take away your stress, I can't…" He breaks off, head turning away. "I can't be there to help you through it, like I could with your family. And I just…I just need to make sure. That you will be okay without me there."

"Ilya…*baby*." Shane wraps his arms around Ilya, pulling him until they're laying on the couch together, Ilya's body pressing him into the cushions. Shane kisses his forehead, hand squeezing the back of his neck. "I'll be okay. I'll have you, even if you can't be where I am. I can text you and I can call. I can hear your voice and know that I'm safe."

Ilya squeezes back, arms gripping Shane so tightly he feels like he'll fall apart without Ilya holding him together. "I love you. So much, Shane."

Shane pushes a stray curl back into place, smiling weakly. "How do I say it? Ya tib…tibya?"

"Ya tebya lyublyu."

"Ya tebya lyublyu, Ilyusha."

****

Shane groans from atop Ilya, eyes squeezing shut. He doesn't know how long they've been here—long enough that there's a fine sheen of sweat on both their bodies, long enough that he can feel the distant pangs of hunger signaling it's approaching dinner time.

Ilya looks ethereal under him, tan skin glowing in the warm light of his bedside lamp. He brings a hand up to Shane's sun-warmed cheeks, the faintest hints of pink clinging to his skin after spending two weeks in the sun.

"Fuck, Shane," Ilya whispers brokenly. His curls even look brighter, more blonde, his skin soaking up the sun like a flower. "You're so beautiful. My Shane."

Ilya grips his hips, rocking upward in a slow, intense grind. "I love you so much. I can't believe you are mine."

Shane shies away from his gaze, hiding his face in Ilya's neck. Ilya grabs him tighter, hitches him up higher on his lap, pushing in deeper inside him. Ilya pets the back of his neck, soothing. "My love, moy solnyshko. Don't hide from me." Ilya gently pulls his head to the side, grinning brilliantly as Shane's widened eyes meet his. "There you are."

Shane gasps into Ilya's mouth, thighs clenching tighter around his lap. "'S embarrassing."

Ilya leans his forehead against Shane's. "What is? That I want to look at you? That I want to tell you how beautiful you are? How proud I am that you're mine?"

Shane nods, eyes flitting away from the open devotion in Ilya's eyes. He hums once under his breath, body twisting suddenly as he turns and lays Shane out on the bed beneath him, pulling out.

Shane whines, hand reaching out a half-second late to keep Ilya close. “Shh, moya lyubov. One second. There is something I want to do.”

Ilya stands from the bed, crossing the room to grab his pants from the floor, digging in the pockets until he finds his phone.

“What are you doing?”

Ilya doesn’t respond, focused instead on tapping on his phone. He smiles when he’s found what he’s looking for, turning the screen towards Shane. “How many?”

It takes Shane a moment to process what he’s seeing, squinting in the dim light of the room without his glasses. His heart seizes when he realizes: Ilya’s list. “3–Ilya, *300*? Seriously?”

Ilya smiles, smug. “327. Some are from what I already knew…some are from today. Some from just watching you.”

Ilya pulls up the sheet, laying next to Shane, tossing his phone to the other side of the bed. “Allllll day we’ve been talking and spending time together, learning more about each other.” He kisses his way up Shane’s shoulder to the hollow of his throat, hand coming up and tilting Shane’s face towards his. “Shane. I am obsessed with you.”

Shane smirks, forehead butting against his. “Yeah?”

“Yes. Completely obsessed. ‘Down bad,’ Marlow says. About my *Jane*. About my *boyfriend*.” His face lights up, so clearly proud to call him that. He pulls him even closer, taking his lips in a kiss, tongue searching, determined. Shane moans into his mouth, gasping in surprise as Ilya flips him onto his stomach.

“I have another question. Shane. Baby. ‘What do you love most about yourself’? Because I want to tell you my answer. Do you want to hear? What I love about you?”

Shane buries his face into the sheets, embarrassed. Ilya’s direct attention is so much. Almost unbearable. Like the full concentrated power of the sun. He still nods shyly, hips tilting into the bed.

Ilya smacks a loud kiss on the back of his neck triumphantly, wiggling down the bed until he’s hovering over Shane’s ass. “Love your ass.” Ilya makes a noise of faux-outrage when Shane giggles helplessly. “It’s true! So…mmm. Full and round and—” He bends forward, swiping his tongue through the mess of lube and sweat around Shane’s hole. “Love your marks.” He grips his ass, placing soft kisses against the stretch marks standing stark against his skin.

“Ilya, please.” Shane begs, hips tilting towards back into him.

Ilya drags a tongue up from his hole to the divots in the bottom of his spine. Shane groans into his pillow, hands grasping the sheets. Ilya rears back and spits, watching his drool trickle down from his back dimples, down the crack of his ass, until it pools near his stretched out hole. He swirls a fingertip around the mess, breath heavy and humid against him. “Love how

well you take me. So perfect. Like it was made just for my cock." He pushes in the tips of three fingers, staring in awe at the way Shane opens up for him.

"Fuck," Shane whines into the mattress, hips leaning into Ilya's touch. "What…what else?"

Ilya kisses a trail up Shane's spine, sucking a wet bruise into the back of his neck. "Love your body. How strong you are. *Gospodi*, so sexy, Shane. Can't believe I get to see you like this."

Shane arches deeper into the mattress, turning his head to the side so he can look at Ilya from beneath heavy lashes. Ilya grips him by the back of the hair, pulling him into a heated kiss. He gently pushes Shane until he's lying on his back, eyes wide and sparkling.

He moves down and sucks Shane's nipple into his mouth, leaving it stiff and puffy before moving on to the other. He groans into Shane's chest, biting one pec right over his heart and reaching up to grab and squeeze the other. "Love your gorgeous tits. How sensitive they are. I can't keep my hands off them."

"Oh my god," Shane cries out, head thrown back against the pillows. His chest feels like it's on fire, Ilya's fingers twisting his already abused nipples while he sucks a faint mark onto Shane's pec. His chest and neck already show previous signs from the past two weeks. They had been eager to leave more permanent marks on one another for the first time. Most had already faded, or would by the time Shane started training for the pre-season. Ilya presses both pecs together against his face and leaves a loud smacking kiss on his sternum between them.

"Fuck, what else?" Ilya asks rhetorically, grinding down against him. "Your hair, your hands. Love your lips. Fuck, so sexy." He drags himself up for a kiss, Shane belatedly opening his mouth wider for Ilya. He feels drunk, feels like his limbs are too heavy. He can't even kiss back, or reach up to run his fingers through Ilya's hair. All he can do is lay there and squirm under Ilya's attention. "Your mouth, Shane…" Ilya shoves his fingers into his mouth, cursing lowly when Shane takes it without complaint. "Fuck, your mouth. So hot around me. So, mmm. *Talented*. Swallows me so well."

Ilya slowly removes his fingers and taps his bottom lip, Shane obediently lolling his tongue out for him. Ilya spits into his mouth, jolting forward to slide his own tongue between Shane's lips like he can't control himself.

"Mmm," Ilya sighs into his mouth. "And your freckles. Fuck, so beautiful." He traces his thumb across Shane's cheeks, smiling. "They're darker now, from the sun. *Krasivyy*. Like stars in the sky. I love them the most."

Shane moans weakly, mind gone foggy like it sometimes does when Ilya focuses his unwavering attention on him in this way. He lets Ilya move his limbs like a doll, pushing his legs up over his shoulders as he re-enters Shane with one smooth thrust. "Fuck, Shane." He pets Shane's hair away from his face, grabbing him by the jaw and taking his lips in a hungry kiss. "Love all of you. You're so beautiful. Moy krasivyy mal'chik. How did I get so lucky? What did I do to deserve this perfect hole to fuck, hmm? Just for me. Mine."

"Ilya!"

He quickens his pace immediately, mouth dropped open in awe at the feeling of fucking into his boyfriend bare. That was something they both were getting used to–the feeling of Ilya's hot and heavy cock pounding into him with no barrier between them. They both had come embarrassingly quickly the first time, when Shane had tentatively requested they forgo condoms now that they had promised to be together for real.

Ilya would like to draw things out even longer, though they had been going since well before sundown. Something in him just wanted to edge out Shane's pleasure forever, to delay the inevitable for as long as he could, and keep Shane teetering on the brink until he had to walk out the front door and head back to his life in Boston.

"Oh God, Shane." Ilya groans, fingertips digging bruises into Shane's thighs. "Fuck, I'm already close. Are you close, my love? Does it feel good? You feel so perfect around me. Want you to come on my cock. Be a good boy for me and come first, hm?"

Shane buries his head into his arms, biting the edge of his bicep to hold back the scream he can feel building. "Please, Ilya. I want to come, make me come." He gasps sharply when a change in angle drives Ilya's cock directly into his prostate, pounding into him relentlessly. "God, you fuck me so good. I love it. I love you. I'm gonna come for you."

Ilya closes the space between them, elbows holding himself up as he hovers just over Shane. "Good boy, moya lyubov. Come for me. There you go, you're so good. You're so beautiful. Come for me, Shane."

Shane's mouth drops open, breaths stuttering as he comes. He feels like he's being ripped in half, moaning brokenly into Ilya's mouth. Ilya keeps thrusting into him, the oversensitivity making him even louder. "Ilya, *fuck*."

"Oh beautiful boy, so good for me. Can feel you squeezing me. Going to come inside, get you all wet and messy for me. You want that, hm?"

Shane nods wildly, nails digging into the back of Ilya's neck and anywhere else he can reach as he hangs on for dear life. "I want it. Please." God, he's somehow still hard.

Ilya swears in Russian, speeding up his thrusts until he feels that tension in his pelvis snap and he's coming into the warm welcome of Shane's body. They lay there panting before Ilya sits up, pulling out carefully, watching the mess of his come slowly leak out of Shane's hole. He slowly lowers Shane's legs, massaging out the tension in his thighs from holding himself up for so long.

He collapses next to Shane holding him in his arms for a few moments, letting both of their heartrates return to normal. When Ilya's sure that Shane won't mind, he stands, leaning down to place a soft kiss on Shane's forehead before moving to the en-suite. He returns with a damp rag, taking the time to lovingly clean Shane's body, lingering over the same places he had trailed his mouth, the same places he had spent their evening worshipping.

Ilya flops to the bed, heavily. He lets out a contented sigh, wrapping Shane in his arms. He knows they'll have to get up in a moment to change the sheets, knows that they'll have to shower soon. But for now, they can have this.

“What’s your biggest fear?” Ilya whispers, hesitatingly.

Shane hums softly, burying his nose in Ilya’s chest. “Losing hockey. Losing everything I’ve worked for. It’s why getting to this point,” he gestures between the two of them, “has been so hard. If I wasn’t worried about that, I don’t think there would have been anything stopping me from wanting to be with you.”

Ilya absorbs that, his only response the steady inhale/exhale under Shane’s ear.

“What’s yours?”

It takes a moment for him to respond, like he’s working himself up to it. “That I am like my father. Or my brother. That whatever is inside them is inside of me, too. That everything they’ve called me is true. That I…” He takes a deep breath, “that I will hurt the people who love me like they did.”

Shane lets out a tiny sound of hurt, reaching a hand to cup Ilya’s face. “Ilya. Sweetheart. You…you’re nothing like that.” Ilya’s mouth opens, like he’s about to deny that. “No, listen to me. You’re so good, baby. You try so hard. I can see it. Everyone can see it. You’re not lazy, or selfish, or whatever else bullshit they’ve fed you. You’re so…Ilya, you’re so brave. You’re kind. You’re so good to me. I don’t think I could face all this without you.”

He inhales shakily, burying his nose in Shane’s hair. Shane gives him a moment to compose himself before he moves, sitting up so Ilya is the one wrapped in his arms, nose pressed to his chest so that he can hear his heartbeat, steady and present.

They lay together like that a moment, Shane murmuring hushed words of encouragement and love. He’s so happy that he can be here to comfort Ilya like this. That he can be the one to fight those deep-seated fears and self doubts that someone drilled into him years ago. He’ll spend his entire life convincing Ilya how amazing he is if he needs to. Gladly.

A few more moments of quiet and Ilya stirs in his arms, rising enough to sit next to Shane, rather than laying against him. “Ugh, enough.” Ilya wipes a thumb across his eyes, blotting away the few tears that had fallen. He leans his head against Shane’s, petting his thumb across the top of Shane’s hand in his. “Give me something else now. A fun one. What is… What is a secret you’ve never told another person?”

“Besides the obvious?” Ilya rolls his eyes, groaning dramatically until Shane breaks into quiet laughter.

He thinks for a moment.

“Okay, but this can’t leave this room.” Shane furrows his brows, feigning sincerity. “It would be a nightmare for me. Public relations disaster, there’d be no coming back from it.”

Ilya’s eyes widen, head nodding seriously. Shane has never had a harder time keeping a straight face.

“The night we first hooked up. After the commercial shoot? You remember? The showers, then my hotel room.”

Ilya nods, squeezing his neck in an attempt to soothe him. God, he was so perfect. Shane almost felt bad.

“I was sitting around the room for hours waiting. And I was nervous. And excited. I wanted to impress you. So.”

Shane takes a deep breath like he’s working through something difficult. Ilya makes a soft noise in the back of his throat, leaning forward to kiss him once. “Hey. It’s okay. You don’t have to—”

“No,” Shane looks him in the eye, faux-determined. “You need to know this. You should hear this. It might…change how you feel about me.”

“Shane—”

“I put on a suit. When I was getting dressed and waiting for you. My first instinct was to put on my game day suit. To impress you.”

Shane watches as the open concern on Ilya’s face morphs from confusion to understanding to absolute glee. “Shane! You did not!”

“I did,” Shane smiles, head knocking to the side as Ilya buries his face in Shane’s chest, laughing openly.

“Bozhe moy. What the hell are you, Shane Hollander?”

“Yup.” He was embarrassed, but it was for the best. Ilya was smiling and giggling brokenly, their earlier conversation forgotten in the wake of Shane’s humiliation. Shane would do anything to bring that smile back to his face. Even hand his boyfriend perfect blackmail material on a silver platter.

Ilya groans, wiping tears from his eyes—the good kind. “I love you so much. I thought you were about to confess to murder or something. And I was going to have to sit here and tell you it was no big deal. Which I would have. I would have gotten in the car right now to bury a body if you asked me to.”

“That’s worrying.”

Ilya sits up, leaning against the headboard. “‘Worrying’ he says. While he gives me a heart attack.”

“I told you it would be devastating.”

“Oh, I don’t know about that. Embarrassing, maybe. But, sweet. You’re such a sweet boy. Putting on your game day suit for your first time with a man.” Ilya pinches his heated cheeks, his smile wide and dopey. “Wanted to make a good impression. Like job interview.”

“Alright,” Shane stands, leaning down to slide his boxers back on. “Come on, let’s go make dinner.” He pulls Ilya from the bed and into his arms, Ilya’s soft giggles blowing puffs of air next to his ear.

“Will you wear a suit the next time we fuck?”

“Ilya.”

“Do you still have the same suit?”

“Rozanov.”

“We could do more roleplay. Like bellboy and hotel guest. Could be hockey star Shane Hollander arriving to the arena in his game day outfit, and I am the sexy maintenance man who has to fix the showers.”

“Why would I be wearing a suit in the showers?”

“You take the suit off before the shower, obviously.”

“But why would I take a shower if I’ve just arrived at the arena?”

“Okay, fine. No roleplay. Just you in the suit. Normal you.”

“Ilya…”

Ilya whines, burying his face in Shane’s neck. “*Fine*.”

Shane hums, body settling into the firm planes of Ilya’s body. “If you beat us in the first game of the season, I’ll do it.”

Ilya wiggles against him, happily. He kisses Shane’s neck, the tender spot underneath his ear. Shane shivers into the touch, breath hitching, body melting into his.

Ilya knows him so well.

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End Notes

feel free to come at me for any of my headcanon decisions i'll defend them with my life :3

shout out to my beautiful wife who was the inspiration for a lot of shane's characterization bc she is also a shy baby that pulled a hottie by being weird and autistic. also the premise of this fic is based on a game we would play when we were first dating where we would take turns asking different buzzfeed quiz type questions like 'what kind of bird are you' or 'if you had to pick one breakfast food for the rest of your life what would it be'. and now we're married!!! falling in love is fun.

thanks for reading! leave a comment if you enjoyed and you can follow me on twitter @needytopilya 🥰

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