

if i could save time in a bottle

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by [imbihesgay](#)

Summary

It takes some time for Shane to notice.

With three kids, they are busy, so it's not surprising when Shane doesn't observe at first. Shane and Ilya are both forty-five years old, and they have such full lives that sometimes time feels like a cruel joke. They're busy, and always on the go, and blindingly happy.

Shane tells himself this is why it takes him so long to realize.

That lately, Ilya's gone quieter during their evening nighttime routine before bed. When they shower and brush their teeth, Shane meticulously flossing between each molar while Ilya sort of haphazardly takes care of his own business, that Ilya doesn't joke or laugh as much as usual. When they shower, he lets Shane get out first every time, and spends a little extra moment to himself. That he doesn't lean in to let Shane card his hands through his hair anymore, and he used to love the feeling of that.

-- or, a study of aging beside the person you love, via hollanov--

Notes

i keep seeing jokes on x about ilya's white boy genes and going bald and shane better watch out and they crack me the fuck up

for some reason my brain took that thought and decided to write a short oneshot about ilya's relationship with aging.

as someone who is most def gonna kick it to Alzheimer's bc of hereditary likeliness, i feel him on his fears.

also fat old man ilya rozanov i love you and you are canon to me

i dont even know what this is

i hope you enjoy tysm xx

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

It takes some time for Shane to notice.

They are busy, so it's not surprising when Shane doesn't observe at first. The brief calmness of retirement from the NHL was quickly replaced with the chaos of children growing in their home. First one, then two, then a third and final. They have school drop-offs and pickups and band concerts and soccer games and art fairs- it all sort of turns time into this whirlwind.

Shane and Ilya are both forty-five years old, and they have such full lives that sometimes *time* feels like a cruel joke.

With three kids, intimacy is stolen in urgent moments late at night, or between pick ups, or on the rare occasion all the kids are out of the house. Shane had always worried, before the kids came along, that this type of time constraint would damage their sexual relationship. As it turns out, the secrecy and urgency only heightens their intensity. Like those old days where they could only love in secret, stolen moments.

Only now, their *love* is loud. Sloppy kisses at the breakfast table that make the kids go *ewwww*. A gentle hand over the other's lower back as they pass by in the cramped laundry room. Smiling faces for the flash of a camera in front of a Christmas tree at a gathering.

No fear, no hiding, no wondering if Shane was ever going to see his curly-haired, burly Russian again. No, only quiet domesticity. Peaceful trust. A busy routine that leaves life and time constantly at war with one another.

Boring, Ilya would say.

Perfect, is what he would mean.

So, they're busy, and always on the go, and blindingly happy. Shane tells himself this is why it takes him so long to notice.

That lately, Ilya's gone quieter during their evening nighttime routine before bed. When they shower and brush their teeth, Shane meticulously flossing between each molar while Ilya sort of haphazardly takes care of his own business, that Ilya doesn't joke or laugh as much as usual. When they shower, he lets Shane get out first every time, and spends a little extra moment to himself. That he doesn't lean in to let Shane card his hands through his hair anymore, and he used to love the feeling of that.

Ilya is not typically a *somber* man. Shane knows, especially after this long, that he carries a lot of pain. He manages his mental health beautifully, making sure he takes things slow and processes when something big happens. He gives himself grace when he still has a hard time. But even when he's struggling, he's always pretty good about still being *himself*. He loves to laugh, and he's so affectionate, and usually Shane can't get the man to shut up.

That is the rambunctious goofball he fell in love with over twenty years ago. Shane worries when he can't find that goofball in Ilya's alarmingly stoic expression.

So, one night, once they're in bed, Shane reaches over to card his hands through Ilya's curls, the way he loves. He hopes it'll settle him down, relax him, and help him open up to discuss whatever it is that's bothering him. If he isn't just bringing it up, it must be something that's really getting to him.

Only, the moment Shane's fingers brush against his hair, Ilya pulls away sharply, like a defensive reflex.

They're left staring at each other in disbelief.

"Sorry," Ilya speaks first, looking a little surprised at his own behavior.

Shane raises his eyebrows. "Ilya. Why did you do that?"

"You just startled me. Is nothing."

Shane stares at him. "I *startled* you? Really? Sitting here in the bed we've shared for twenty years. I startled you."

Ilya's eyes narrow. "Yes, you move like a fucking cat sometimes. Startles me."

"I move like a *cat*?"

"Yes. Sneaky and quick, like a cat."

"Why don't you want me to touch your hair?" Shane demands, reaching a hand out again to try and brush his fingers against Ilya's hair.

The other man jolts, and shuffles out of bed before Shane can make contact. He stands with his hands on his hips, jaw set, hazel eyes burning. Shane can sense immediately that something is *wrong*.

"Ilya." Shane gets to his feet, meeting his husband's shifty eyes. "What the hell is going on?"

Ilya looks frozen, like he's trying to solve an equation in his brain. His mouth moves, but it's soundless. He fumbles for a moment, but is saved by the sound of a small voice in their bedroom doorway.

"Daddy?" Yuliya sniffs, and Shane turns to look at her. She's so tiny, their five-year old, standing there with her favorite stuffy hugged to her chest and big fat tears in her glimmering brown eyes.

"What's wrong, baby?" Shane moves toward her, Ilya on his heels as he bends down to scoop her up with a grimace. His back protests the bending severely, and his knees crack with the movement. He still keeps up his exercise regimen to the best of his abilities, but lately he's been forced to accept that his age and free time do not allot for such intensity in his routine.

Ilya accepted this more easily than he had. He's been letting himself get softer, gentler over the years. He's got a plush, squishy belly now instead of rock hard abs, and thick strong arms instead of toned muscles. His *dad bod* is the sexiest thing Shane's ever seen.

And, if he's being honest, Ilya's visible signs of aging make Shane feel a bit better about the beginnings of soft gray in his own hair or the lines deepening around his eyes. Time refuses to slow down, but at least they're facing it together.

"My tummy hurts," Yulia snuffles, hugging her teddy bear tighter against her chest and resting her chin on its soft head.

"Oh, *malyshka*," Ilya reaches out and brushes his thumb over her pink little cheek. "What kind of hurt?"

She shrugs, wiping at her eyes. "Just hurts, Papa."

"Did you try going to the bathroom?" Shane asks.

"Uh-huh."

"And did you go?"

"Nuh-uh."

"Do you feel like *blegh*?" Ilya mimes someone obnoxiously throwing up.

Yuliya giggles a bit. "Kinda."

Shane brushes a hand through her curly hair. "Do you want to lay with Daddy and Papa for a little while and see if that helps your belly feel better?"

She nods in a way that makes Shane think her stomach ache is probably more of a *bedtime* ache. Still, the three of them head back for the bed, Yuliya nestled between Shane and Ilya. She rests her head on Ilya's soft chest, and he kisses her forehead, while Shane leans over to rub small circles on her squishy little belly. Ilya clicks off their bedside lamp, plunging the room into moonlit darkness.

Shane can't stop looking at Ilya even as his eyes begin to droop closed, and his loud snoring fills the room.

He was saved by the bell tonight, but they're going to talk about this.

Whatever *this* is.

Luckily, it's a Saturday morning the next day, so everyone gets some grace to sleep in. Sunlight beams through their sheer curtains, and Shane's eyes flutter open to find a tiny foot smushed against his cheek.

He exhales a soft sigh, slowly untangling himself from the sheets, where Yuliya and Ilya are both twisted up like a couple of sleeping gnomes. She favors him in so many ways, sometimes it's like looking down at a tiny, female version of his husband.

Shane smiles fondly at them, but decides to let them get some more sleep. He stretches his muscles, wincing at the tightness in his lower back and shoulders. He's getting too fucking old to be cramped up in bed like that all night, but he'd rather deal with the joint pain than send their little one off when she needs him.

Shane heads out the door and makes for the staircase, surprised to hear voices downstairs already. He hasn't checked the time yet, but he must've really slept in if their other kids are already awake.

In the kitchen, he finds their ten-year old son Gabriel wrestling with their fifteen-year old daughter Vera over a box of frozen waffles.

"What is going on here?" Shane demands, stepping between them immediately to remove the now dented box of waffles from their grubby little hands.

"Vera had some yesterday!" Gabe insists. "That means I get the last two!"

"You had some yesterday too!" Vera snaps back. "And I have a soccer game later!"

"Oh you have a soccer game, of course. Why don't you just eat everything in the house then?" Gabe snaps back.

Shane resists the urge to sigh.

"Stop it," he says to them, "no one gets waffles if you're going to fight over it. These are full of preservatives anyway. How about an omelette?"

Both kids stare blankly at him. Then at each other, as if to say: *is he serious?*

Ah, yes, a common enemy. Very important.

"So what'll it be?" Shane asks, glancing between them. "One waffle each, or Dad makes you both an organic, high-fiber, spinach omelette?"

Vera breaks first, scowling. "Fine, Gabe can have the waffles."

"Score!" he singongs, and takes the box from Shane, racing toward the toaster.

"Would you like me to make you something?" Shane asks her.

"I'll just have the cereal, thank you." Vera waves a hand dismissively and heads for the pantry.

Shane chuckles as he begins prepping his own coffee. The sound of his kids chattering in the background while the coffee machine whirs is a soothing familiarity.

He putters around the kitchen, throwing in casual conversation while they talk and all start their morning. He's so preoccupied with his coffee and starting his morning smoothie, he only half notices when Ilya and Yuliya come shuffling in. He's holding her in one arm, resting his cheek on her hair sleepily.

“Good morning,” Shane greets them, squeezing Ilya’s arm. “Coffee?”

“Mm, da, extra sugar please.” Ilya rubs his eyes with the back of his hand.

“How’s the patient?” Shane ruffles Yuliya’s hair, earning a quiet groan from her muffled lips. She buries her face further into Ilya’s neck and grumbles something incoherent.

“The patient is still half asleep,” Ilya replies with a chuckle. He turns to greet Gabe and Vera, who are both shoveling down their breakfasts at the kitchen table. “Good morning spawn.”

“Good morning Papa,” Vera replies with a smile. “Are you excited for my game today?”

“Vera, I am most excited. I am going to hold up big sign that says *VERA’S PAPA LOVES HER*. How does that sound?”

“Uhhhh.”

“He’s kidding,” Shane says, passing Ilya his mug with a stern look of reprimand.

“Daddy is no fun,” Ilya murmurs, taking a sip from his coffee with a sigh of contentment.

“What’s wrong with Yuliya?” Gabe asks, gesturing to his sleeping sister, slumped over Ilya’s shoulder.

“She has a case of the sleepies,” Ilya answers easily. “She pretended to be sick so she could bunk with daddies last night.”

“When I had to share the tent with her when we went camping she kept kicking me in the face,” Gabe says mournfully.

“I got my fair share of that this morning,” Shane says with a laugh.

“Camping is terrible anyway,” Ilya responds, pressing a protective hand over Yuliya’s back. “My back hurt for two weeks from sleeping on the ground.”

“That’s cause you’re old,” Vera replies nonchalantly.

Shane chuckles. She isn’t wrong.

“I am not *old*,” Ilya responds, forehead creasing with what looks like actual offense. “I am young and sharp.”

“Didn’t you forget your keys in the bathroom before we left for school yesterday?” Gabe asks in a dubious tone.

Shane laughs again. That had really only been because Yuliya had called for Ilya’s help in the potty right as he was trying to leave with keys in hand to take the older two to school.

Shane’s done shit like that all the time.

When he glances at Ilya's face, the other man's expression is deadly serious. His mouth is a flat line, jaw flexed, eyes darkened with an uneasy solemnness. Clearly he did not find the jab funny.

"Why don't you guys go and start getting ready for the day?" Shane suggests. "We have some errands to run before the game."

The older two deposit their dishes in the dishwasher and make for the stairs to shower and get ready. Ilya has managed to pry Yuliya off his shoulder and plopped her down at the kitchen island.

"Breakfast, *malyshka*," he tells her sternly.

"*Nyet Papa*," she mumbles, "m'tired."

"A good breakfast will perk you right up." Ilya moves for the fridge to begin preparing her favorite dinosaur oatmeal.

Meanwhile, Shane sits beside her and rubs her back. She doesn't feel warm, and she doesn't sound stuffy or congested. "Did you not sleep well, baby girl?"

"I had bad dreams," she mumbles, looking up at Shane with her big doe-eyes. "I had a dream you and Papa died."

Ilya snaps the fridge shut, turning to face her sharply. "What?"

"Honey," Shane says gently, "Papa and I are just fine. Where did you even get an idea like that in your head?"

"In my dream you guys got in a crash." She wrinkles her nose. "It was scary."

"Oh." Shane's voice softens. "Like what happened in the movie we watched this week? Where the main character's mom and dad passed away?"

She nods. Shane is relieved that at least they can trace the source of this dream. They'd watched a sad Disney movie this week where the parents died in a car crash before the start of the movie. He should have figured some of that heavy imagery would land with their sensitive little one, even though the movie was otherwise pretty lighthearted.

Ilya doesn't look any more relaxed.

"That was just a movie, sweetheart. Papa and I are fine, okay?" He rubs her back again softly. "You don't have to worry about us. We aren't going anywhere. I promise."

The loud *thud* of the oatmeal box hitting the counter startles them both. Ilya looks distraught. Shane understands why this subject matter might be more than a little triggering for him, even after so many years in therapy.

"Hey," Shane says quietly, voice measured. "Are you alright, Papa? Do you need a brain break right now?"

“I- no.” Ilya clears his throat before picking the oatmeal back up. “I am fine. Breakfast time, *dochenka*. Dinosaur oatmeal, okay?”

“Okay Papa,” Yuliya nods in agreement, offering him a small, gummy smile.

Ilya smiles back at her, but it’s a little haunted.

Vera’s team wins their soccer game, which is no surprise since they’re currently dominating their season. Ilya and Shane hoot and holler from the sidelines with Gabe and Yuliya enthusiastically joining in. They’ve tried very hard to foster a sense of support and good sportsmanship with all of their children. Vera and Yuliya are both on sports teams, though Yuliya’s is very kiddie and silly. Gabe is currently sweeping his way through a series of elaborate chess competitions and is also a gifted guitarist. The entire family is always present at everyone’s events. It takes a lot of effort and coordination and cooperation, but it’s absolutely worth it.

Afterward they take everyone out for dinner at their favorite Italian place to celebrate. Vera, being the guest of honor, gets to pick the restaurant and everyone is permitted a ridiculously expensive dessert. They try to let the kids have dessert at least a few times a week, wanting to impress upon them moderation, but not deprivation. Ilya also still has a heartily stocked snack cabinet in the kitchen, where the kids all know they can find a sweet treat fix if it’s needed. *Balance*. It’s been a good lesson for Shane, too.

Shane can tell he’s trying not to let on, but something is clearly still bothering Ilya. He jokes and laughs with the kids, and sweetly helps Yuliya cut her chicken with the patience of a saint. He smiles warmly and brightly, the way he always does at their kids.

But something is just *off*.

The kids are all dispatched to shower and change into pajamas when they get home after dinner. Shane and Ilya take the opportunity to do the same, an activity that would normally lead to a passionate, urgent quickie before they have to meet the kids back downstairs for movie night.

“You can have first shower,” Ilya suggests as he shuts the bedroom door behind him.

Shane arches an eyebrow. “Is it suddenly not big enough for two?”

Ilya pauses, hesitating slightly. “I just feel kind of gross. Long day. Would like to shower by myself.”

“Ilya.” Shane turns to him seriously, teeth grinding together. “What is going on?”

“We do not have to shower together every time, Shane.” Ilya waves a dismissive hand in his direction, like he’s being ridiculous.

Shane scoffs. “*You* not wanting to shower together is about as big of a red flag as me not caring about the score of a hockey game. Something is up, why won’t you talk to me about

it?”

“There is nothing to talk about, *solnyschko*.” Ilya shakes his head, but his demeanor is tense and his eyes are frantic. He’s lying, which is pretty unlike him. It sets Shane’s teeth on edge with anxiety.

“I know you aren’t leaving me,” Shane says, a little embarrassed at the slight tremor in his voice. “Not now, not after all this time. Our kids...you *aren’t* leaving me, are you?”

“Shane,” Ilya breathes, like the word’s been punched out of his lungs. He moves closer until their noses nearly brush, inhaling the proximity. Shane’s nerves bloom with electricity at the closeness, Ilya’s familiar warmth pressing against him.

“You are my everything,” Ilya whispers reverently, “never in my life have I thought about leaving your side.”

“Then what’s going on?” Shane looks up at him. “You’re being weird, Ilya, and it’s scaring me.”

Ilya’s throat bobs with a thick, reluctant swallow. His jaw stays tense and flexed as he meets Shane’s eyes. Shane looks at the features of this familiar, beautiful face, a mapping of sharp edges and silhouettes he knows by memory alone. Stunning. His Ilya.

“I did not want to get my hair wet in front of you,” Ilya says roughly, averting his gaze.

“Why?” Shane demands.

With a heavy exhale, Ilya takes a step back, and begins scraping his fingers through his curly hair. It looks like he’s trying to pry something off. Shane watches with bewildered confusion for a few moments, until he realizes what Ilya is doing.

Slowly, Ilya removes the hair piece from his head. A perfect match to his shimmering auburn curls, thick and wavy. He holds the piece of artificial hair in his hands, and Shane looks up at the small hairless circle on the top of his head. It’s not even that bad, but it’s definitely a bald spot. A noticeable one.

“It isn’t *that* bald. They shave the top, when they give you these,” Ilya says quietly, shame soaking his words. “But, it was bad enough that I needed this. I did not want you to know.”

“What- when-” Shane stammers, utterly dumbfounded and at a complete loss for words.

“I decided to get this a few weeks ago.” Ilya clears his throat. “Lucky you are shorter than me and do not see the top of my head very often, but it is only going to get worse. The hair loss. I did not want you to notice.”

Shane stares at him in disbelief.

“It happened to my father, too,” Ilya explains in his subdued tone. “And his father, and my mother’s father. I never stood a chance. It was inevitable, I guess. I tried special shampoos and stuff but...there is no antidote for time.”

Shane manages a small, choked, “why?”

He isn’t even sure what he’s asking. Why did Ilya feel the need to hide this from him? Why did he think he needed to get a hair piece instead of just letting himself embrace his hair loss? Why did he...why did he ever think Shane shouldn’t know about this?

“Why?” Ilya cocks an eyebrow. “I don’t know, Shane. Bad genetics, I think.”

“No- that’s not what I meant.” He shakes his head rapidly. “Why would you not tell me? We tell each other everything. I told you about my fucking colonoscopy.”

Ilya scoffs, shaking his head as he wrings his hands around the artificial curls. “Look at yourself, Shane. How could I possibly tell you about this?”

Look at himself?

“I don’t understand,” Shane insists. His gaze darts almost involuntarily sideways at the hanging mirror beside their bed.

He sees himself, the face he’s known for forty-five years, older and different, but still him. Wrinkles around his eyes, salt and pepper flecks in his black hair, age lines underneath his freckles, muscle mass missing from his biceps.

A middle aged man. Nothing particularly exciting to look at. Just a guy getting old.

“You are perfection,” Ilya says, and it’s so fucking genuine, so awed. “How could I...how could I expect you to still find me attractive, like this?”

At that, Shane’s head snaps back, distraught. “What? You thought I wouldn’t be attracted to you? Seriously?”

Ilya laughs dryly, the sound without humor. “Shane, I am not an idiot, okay? I know I am getting fat. And I know I have wrinkles on my forehead, and my knees make these creaky sounds, and my chest hair is starting to get gray. None of it really bothered me until...” He reaches up to touch the hairless patch on his skull. “I knew eventually it would come, but I thought I had more time. I do not even want to look at myself.”

Shane’s chest does an odd thing, like it’s cracking. The pain ricochets through his ribcage at the sound of Ilya’s self-deprecating words. He can’t bear to hear the man he loves talk this way about himself. It’s untenable.

“I am getting old,” Ilya continues, thick emotion weighing down the words. “This happened to my dad too. He lost his hair and then he lost his mind. I am already leaving things and forgetting things and now I-” he falters, blinking tears out of his beautiful eyes. “Now I am wondering, if the *me* I know will be gone someday soon, and I won’t even have enough sense left to say goodbye to him.”

Jesus.

“Ilya,” Shane starts.

“I do not want to do this to our children,” Ilya interjects, shaking his head furiously. “I do not want to frighten them and then leave them with memories of me...not being who I was. I don’t want this to happen. I want to stop time, Shane. I know I can’t fucking do that but...the stupid fake hair was...I guess, me trying to. However I could.”

The silence settles between them, so heavy it feels like Shane can’t even move.

“So, this is why I have been acting weird.” Ilya clears his throat, as if he’s embarrassed to have let all of that slip. “It is not that I want to leave you, only that I was afraid *you* might want to leave *me*.”

His words land abruptly in Shane’s chest, like being struck by a brick. It leaves him breathless for a beat, while he tries to get his own thoughts in order.

“Ilya,” he says again, voice tender as he closes the distance between them and reaches up to cup the other man’s cheek. Ilya shudders slightly at the contact, leaning closer with his lashes fluttering.

Shane reaches down and grabs the hair piece from his hands, tossing it on the bed. He takes Ilya’s face in his hands and tilts his chin up until their eyes meet.

“I am so in love with you,” Shane tells him. “I have loved you from the moment I first saw you, smoking a cigarette outside in the freezing cold. I have loved you through every moment of the past twenty years, and I intend to love you until I take my last breath.”

Ilya exhales a small sound, something like relief, Shane hopes.

“You are beautiful,” Shane murmurs. “You were beautiful when we were twenty-five and had rock hard abs and lean muscles and so much hair that we were too busy stuffing into helmets to notice. And you are beautiful now, with your wrinkles and your extra weight and your bald spot. You are the most beautiful man I’ve ever laid eyes on. You are the father of my children, the man I love more than anything in the world. I love your face, your body, and your beautiful brain.”

Shane moves forward, pressing their lips together. Ilya’s are salty with tears, but he gives in easily to the touch, sighing softly against Shane’s mouth. Shane feels a stab of guilt for not realizing sooner, how badly his husband probably needed to hear all of this.

“My brain might be mush, someday,” Ilya mutters. “There is nothing we can do about that.”

“It won’t be, Ilya. Just because your dad was sick doesn’t mean you will be too. We did the tests already, and they don’t think-”

“They don’t *know*.”

“*I* know,” Shane says firmly, gripping Ilya’s face a bit harder. “I know that no matter what happens, no matter what we go through, I will always look into your eyes and see *my Ilya*. You will never go away. I know you’re afraid of that, but I promise you, I will never, ever let you leave.”

Ilya lets out a small sob, overcome and unable to suppress it any longer. Shane pulls him close, burying his face in the crook of his neck and feeling the wet, warm liquid press into his hair.

“I got you, baby,” he whispers, “it’s okay. I’m here. I’m here. Always.”

He lets Ilya cry it out, small weeping sounds that hiccup from his chest, muffled slightly by his position buried in Shane’s hair. There are a few suspended moments of time where nothing exists outside the two of them, alone in their sanctuary, safe to feel whatever it is they need to feel.

“I love you,” Shane says, “I love you, Ilya. *Ya tebya lyublyu.*”

“I love you too.” The taller man snuffles and pulls back, wiping at his eyes with a barking laugh. “Look at me now, fat bald and crying. What a fucking sight, eh?”

“Hey.” Shane shakes his head. “Don’t say that about my husband. Please. He’s everything to me.”

At that, Ilya’s eyes soften a bit. He reaches in and brushes his thumb across the spray of freckles on Shane’s weathered cheek. Shane looks up at him through his eyelashes, still just as enamored with him today as he was twenty years ago.

To some, time may be a thief. But standing here, looking at the face of the man he’s loved since he was eighteen, Shane thinks that time is a very generous lover.

Time has turned the burly, brash Russian boy who smelled like cigarettes and was afraid to say what he felt, into this beautiful, healthy, kind man standing in front of him today. Time has turned their fear into a future, and it is a beautiful one. Time has transcended their frightened youth into gentleness measured in all that they overcame. With so much of it wasted all those years before they confessed their love for one another, Shane does not intend to throw away another minute on something as useless as mere vanity.

“Don’t put that hair piece back on,” he says, “if you would feel better about it, we can shave it all off.”

Ilya sniffs, wiping at his eyes with a surprised look on his face. “Really? I don’t mind wearing it. It looks better than shaved, no?”

Shane shakes his head. “We spent too fucking long caring about how things *looked* to other people. All I want to see is my husband. Happy and healthy.”

At that, Ilya’s expression crumples into a warm, relieved smile. “Fuck, Hollander.”

Shane smirks. “Still sweeping you off your feet even twenty years later, huh Rozanov?”

Ilya manages a shaky laugh, rolling his eyes as he pushes away with a good-natured scoff. “Nevermind, I should not have told you. You are so obnoxious.”

“Mm, who do you think I fuckin’ learned it from?” Shane grabs his wrist and pulls him back in again, smashing their lips together in a sloppy, elated kiss.

It feels somewhat odd, and it takes him a moment to realize it’s because they’re both smiling into the kiss.

“Alright, well, if you are going to help me shave my head we’d better get started.” Ilya exhales shakily and runs his hands over his head. “The kids will be waiting though, we should hurry.”

“There’s no rush, we’ll do it together and we’ll do a good job.” Shane kisses him again, looking up at him lovingly, taking one more beat to appreciate the wonderful man he calls his husband.

Ilya Rozanov is a lot of things. He is sarcastic, and snippy. He is complex, perceptive, introspective, sometimes a bit too hard on himself. He is funny and kind and selfless and an amazing dad.

He is beautiful and he is timeless to Shane.

“Are you sure?” Ilya asks, accepting Shane’s hand as he leads them toward the bathroom.

“I’m sure,” Shane says with a smile. “We’ve got plenty of time.”

End Notes

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