

lead me to the floor even though i'm not a dancer

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by [supremecourtpizza](#)

Summary

The cottage faced east, like a church. When the sun set it did not flood the living room like it did in the morning, but peaked through the trees and the back windows to leave irregular shapes of light on the floor, the furniture, and Shane Hollander's thighs. Ilya observed the scene from the kitchen; his boyfriend, his boyfriend, lying naked on the couch, flat on his stomach, eyes closed, half asleep and a little flushed mark between his shoulder blades where Ilya had kissed him so hard it broke tiny blood vessels under his skin.

The evening after Ilya meets Shane's parents for the first time. A little ditty I wrote to satisfy my ravenous need for an episode seven. Title from Hot & Heavy by Lucy Dacus

Notes

aaaah! first fic i'm ever posting aaaahhhh!

The cottage faced east, like a church. When the sun set it did not flood the living room like it did in the morning, but peaked through the trees and the back windows to leave irregular shapes of light on the floor, the furniture, and Shane Hollander's thighs. Ilya observed the scene from the kitchen; his boyfriend, *his boyfriend*, lying naked on the couch, flat on his stomach, eyes closed, half asleep and a little flushed mark between his shoulder blades where Ilya had kissed him so hard it broke tiny blood vessels under his skin.

Ilya had never had a boyfriend before, or been anyone's boyfriend for that matter. He was something to Svetlana, of course, the little boy she had kisses on a dare at ten, and she was the reason he had not gone insane with loneliness in Boston at nineteen. But for as much as he loved her, he had never loved anyone like he did Shane.

Hours earlier, Yuna and David had come over for dinner, bringing chicken and salad stuff and beer from the store in town, while Shane had set the table with the buzzing anxiety he dragged with him to every situation where he could neither control nor anticipate the exact outcome. Ilya, on the other hand, could scarcely remember a meal he enjoyed more than the dry cutlets of chicken and the salad dressed in some terrible orange-colored sauce. He thought to himself that he must have looked like an idiot to Shane's parents, unable to keep a grin off his face as they chatted idly between bites and gossiped about neighbors and speculated about what the weather would be like this summer. After dinner, as Shane and David debated over the best way to load the dishwasher, Ilya sat at the kitchen island and realized not only was he resting his chin in his palm like a lovesick puppy dog, but he was also swinging his feet.

The motion surprised him; this light, carefree kick he had not even noticed himself starting. He had been thinking about his mother, dinners when he was a little boy, and how he would sometimes allow himself to linger in the kitchen and help her clean up after a meal. His father would slap young Ilya's hands if he caught him doing woman's work, but it was worth it just to be with her a little longer. She had been devoted to her husband and loved her older boy, of course, but it was only with Ilya that she would sing the quiet little folk songs that her own mother had taught her.

David and Yuna's visit was not all boring American food and glimpses of their perfect, boring life. It seemed the Hollanders had formulated a plan to divide and conquer in the time since the boys had left their house. Yuna was first to corner Ilya on his own. He could see so much of Shane in her, the way she set her brow and steadied her voice when speaking seriously, as if a Hollander needed anything other than dark sweet eyes to make him agree to whatever they were proposing. He was more than familiar the kind of legally binding paperwork that made one keep their mouth shut about who would be on the cover of this year's MHL video game or which celebrities he fucked after New York games. But there would be no NDA from Yuna; it was gauche and left a paper trail. She wanted Ilya's word. She looked squarely at him with a face full of features she shared with her son, features that meant something in a sport where they were so rarely seen, and asked him to understand what was at stake for a young man who looked like Shane did. He nodded at her words, the league was full of deep-voiced, dumb-eyed Russian boys, and Rozanov could be swapped out for any of them any day now, but Shane Hollander was something else entirely.

He was about to promise something out loud to her if he could only find the right English words. He had picked the wrong word yesterday. *Lovers*. And then gotten better at it. *Boyfriend*. But there was still something he was trying to translate. His teammates had shown him this stupid American movie one Christmas about a wretched green creature who did not like the holidays, and that this was why everyone called Ilya a Grinch when he would roll his eyes at mistletoe and carols and even the Coca-Cola having Santa on it's can. And maybe he was like the Grinch, not because his big house felt it's most empty on Christmas, but because since he had meet Shane his heart had grown three sizes. That was what it felt like to love Shane Hollander, like a new organ in Ilya's chest beating hard and pumping life all the way to his fingertips and the blood vessels behind his eyes.

He was standing there quiet, thinking it was hard to say in English that lately it felt like the reason for him to have a body was so that there was somewhere to put all the love he had for Shane, when Yuna's arms unfolded from their position in front of her chest and wrapped around Ilya. *A hug*. In the hallway behind the kitchen when she had asked him to come help her get something she called tupperware, Ilya felt himself melt into a mother's hug.

David was next to pull him away from Shane's side. He had said something about the gutters outside and wanting a second set of eyes on them, as if Ilya could help, as if he had been good at anything in his adult life that wasn't playing hockey or being his family's personal piggybank. Ilya did his best to feign an understanding of roof drainage and snowy winters, but both men gave up the ruse within minutes of stepping through the sliding doors.

"Since before rookie season, huh?"

"Yes."

"The game against Boston, when Shane got his concussion..."

"Marleau did not mean to hurt him."

"You stayed on the ice."

"Yes. I was scared." Ilya said, still facing the cottage's roofline but looking sideways at David
"I had not told him."

Had not told Shane what? That he loved him? That it scared him? That his mother had looked almost peaceful in the seconds before young Ilya had realized the stillness of her chest and felt like his own lungs were collapsing? That part of him had never left that marble room in Russia and if Shane didn't take a heaving breath then what was left of Ilya would surely perish there on the ice.

David raised a hand and Ilya nearly flinched as the elder Hollander clapped him on the shoulder in a gesture that was surely meant to be reassuring. American men were always doing this to each other, their hands tools for something other than hard work or physical discipline. It was a kind of warmth that Ilya was still learning to accept after too many years raised in the cold.

If Yuna's concerns were how the world perceived her son, David's were about how the young man perceived the world. It came as no shock to Ilya as he explained that Shane had been something of an unconventional child. He was an athletic prodigy of course, laser focused and such a good honest boy that his eyes had welled up with tears the first time he had tried to tell a lie. But he had always had a way about him that had worried David. He was distant from his peer, too sensitive, too particular about things he could not communicate, too rigid and inside himself in ways odd children so often were. It seemed part of Shane was not made for this world, and the father had never quite known how to protect his boy.

He didn't know why he was telling Ilya all of this. He was nervous, maybe, unprepared to ask a young man to take care of someone precious to him. He had friends with daughters who had had to pull boyfriends aside and give them man-to-man talks, and David had thought he had avoided this fate when he had a son. There was of course the possibility that Shane would prove him wrong, he had never shown much interest in girls and David considered that it might one day be another man that made his son's heart flutter, but he had not imagined that man would be Ilya Rozanov of all people.

Ilya smiled at this. He had not imagined it either, or at the very least he had spent many years stopping himself when his mind would wander to such thoughts. The first time he had kissed Shane in that dimly lit hotel room it had been all nerves, Shane's on his sleeve and Ilya's carefully hidden, and now so many years later he was standing in the late afternoon sun, their relationship far from public but at least known, at least this. He could see Shane inside the house, turned away from his mother with that look on his face that made him look like a sour kitten who had fallen into his dish of milk. Just catching sight of him made Ilya's heart swell and a big stupid smile spread across his face. David did not have to worry. When Shane had neatly folded his clothes and set them on the dresser while stripping for that very first time Ilya had known that the boy was a stranger in a strange land, and he had grinned so widely and felt his little Grinch heart twitch for the first time that he was hardly the same man when he walked out of that hotel room. Shane Hollander was his, and Ilya would not have him any other way.

Shane stirred on the couch, waking up from the blissful fucked-out half-sleep he had fallen into. He stretched and sighed and rubbed his face against his bicep, the skin still smelling like his own sweat mixed with Ilya's. The house was quiet now, the conversation and clinking forks of dinner subsided. He had rolled his eyes when he realized his mom had used Russian dressing on the salad instead of her usual honey dijon vinaigrette, but it had admittedly been a sweet gesture. Less sweet was later when his mother had asked him point blank if he and Ilya were using condoms. Shane had wanted to crawl in on himself in embarrassment. Instead he had looked out through the wide glass panes that he had paid an architect to arrange, and which framed Ilya perfectly. He had looked like a painting or a sculpture in a museum, standing in the yard with his weight shifted on one hip and his broad shoulders tilted to counter balance the posture. Ilya had caught him looking, and flashed him such a giddy, toothy grin that it took all of Shane's self control not to dash outside and kiss every inch of his beautiful face.

He wondered if he had been too obvious shooing his parents out of his cottage after dinner. His mom had made an offer of chocolate chip ice cream back at theirs, but Ilya had said something about a new off-season diet he was doing, which Shane figured must've been a lie since Ilya had tasted like sour candy and nicotine gum on the drive to the cottage, and eaten so much spaghetti at the Hollander house that it had given him a firm little belly for a few hours after. He had taken the time to kiss the carb-bloated convex of Ilya's stomach as he was going down on him in the shower later that night. Often times Shane's mind would go calm and blank when they were touching, but last night he had imagined a life after hockey, where he and Ilya would have more than just two weeks a year together and they would let themselves get fat and they would travel to European cities to eat cheese and pastries and fancy wine, and not care if it broke the rules Shane had made for himself. And he would drink Ilya's good vodka too and not make a face when it burned his throat and Ilya would give him that look and touch the back of Shane's neck like he always did when he was being so good for him.

It was a white lie that Ilya was not eating ice cream in the off season, but it had saved Shane for having to be the one who decline, and from another instance of that nagging feeling that he was somehow being ungrateful every time he felt suffocated by his parents' undying devotion to doting on their only child. He didn't mean to be like this, but Shane felt sometimes like he was held together by rubber bands. As he maneuvered through each little interaction of life it would twist up one of the elastics, until there came a point where every articulating joint was being pulled so tightly he could feel it like a pain in his body. It was why he had gotten into yoga, and meditation, and cold plunges, and acupuncture, and even paid a strange-smelling blonde woman with dreadlocks for a reiki session once. And yet none of them came close to the way Ilya made him feel.

The taillights of his parent's car had barely disappeared beyond the trees before Ilya was closing the distance between he and Shane. Still in the entryway, he came up behind him. For a moment it was just electricity between them, the not-yet-touching feeling that made goosebumps rise on Shane's skin and a hot feeling stir in his gut. Then it was broad hands splayed over his shoulders, tracing down his arms, onto his belly and up under the hem of of his shirt to map the lean muscles of his torso. Hungry lips kissed the back of his neck and around to the side, parting and making a sound that was some mix of relief and desire. The rubber bands in Shane's body went slack. He let his mind drift into the place only Ilya could take him, safe and warm and simple. When fingers dug into his hips and chest words had already left him, so a whimpering cry came out instead. Ilya rolled his hips and pushed firmly into Shane's backside, half-hard already and muttering something vulgar in Russian, a huff of hot breath and a low rough sound escaping from somewhere deep in his throat. He had wanted him all evening, and the waiting had driven him to the half madness of a wild animal.

They made it as far as the kitchen before Ilya dropped to his knees. So often he would have Shane flat on his back for this, but now he was pinned against the refrigerator. One hand gripped at his chest while the other pressed divots into his thigh; Shane held Ilya's head by his soft, loose curls, and used the other hand to steady himself against the appliance and keep his knees from buckling. It was a wonder he could stand at all. The tension and worry and wound-up feeling had all slipped from his body, all that was left was his own hitching breath and the warm, wet feeling of Ilya's mouth. He tilted his head back and felt the back of Ilya's hand give him a little smack on his belly.

“Look at me, Hollander.” he said, half out of breath himself

Shane did his best to do as he was told, but he could barely keep his eyes open and the sight of Ilya’s lips glistening with spit and pre-cum would surely be his undoing.

“Can’t-” he managed to say between breaths “Fuck, Ilya, I’m gonna-”

“Ah, no. Not yet.” Ilya pulled back, his tone almost teasing

It felt like agony to part from him, but he was already on his feet, holding Shane by the jaw and opening his mouth with his own. Ilya’s other hand pushed his shorts down around his thighs, freeing himself and then guiding them together as he stroked slowly. Shane felt like he might black out.

“Please.” he whined

“Mm, so pretty when you ask nice.”

Shane rolled his eyes and gave Ilya a little push on the chest. He kissed him hard in return.

“Please fuck me.”

A big, stupid grin spread across Ilya’s face and he walked Shane not up the steps to the bedroom but down to the living room and onto the couch. In the days they had spent together at the cottage Shane had quickly realized that his small stock of supplies could not be confined to his bedside table. Just the other night a game of table tennis in the downstairs game room had gotten so competitive that a winning Ilya requested that Shane lie on one of the neatly made guest beds and fuck himself with his biggest dildo while he watched. Since then Shane had been keeping lube in most rooms of the cottage.

The sofa was a new spot for them, which was almost surprising given that they had already fucked on every other soft surface of the house. Ilya stripped off the rest of his clothes and tossed his shirt on the couch cushions before easing Shane down on top of it. It was only after he had cum into the soft cotton fabric did Shane realize it was one of Ilya’s Boston Raiders shirts, and that he had finished directly onto his rival team’s logo. He choked out a laugh between heavy breaths.

“You like this?”

Ilya leaned down to say in his ear and cover his neck and shoulders with sloppy, hungry kisses. Words had largely left Shane at this point, his body feeling warm and soft and fluid, but he mustered out half a response.

“Ya-”

“What was that? I didn’t hear you.”

“Yes.”

He spoke more clearly, and Ilya was laughing now too, giving him a playful nip on the back of the neck. Shane batted at him, only pretending to be opposed to the pinch of teeth on his skin, and Ilya caught him by the wrist and pinned his hand against the couch cushion.

There had been some discussion online after Shane's concussion last season, and the way Ilya had stood so frozen that the cameras lingered on him instead of the fistcuffs that Hayden and Marleau were getting into. Rivals on and off the ice, the broadcaster had said, but a mutual respect between the two. No one had any idea what else there was between them. *Love*. Belly against back, thighs against thighs. Ilya repositioned, straightening up to splay his hands across his boyfriend's hips, but Shane whined in protest when the weight of Ilya's body left his.

"So needy," he teased, but happily obliged

"Yes."

He came back down to kiss along Shane's spine and drag his lips to taste his sweat. *Love*. Shane thought, saying the words to himself in the same rhythm of Ilya's hips, *love, love, love*. He felt a long, greedy kiss between his shoulder blades and knew Ilya was sucking a hickey onto his back.

Ilya had left one on the skin just above his hipbone the other day, and Shane had been running his fingers over the ruddy little mark ever since. It felt like a brand, if only for a little while. The flush would fade back into his veins before their time at the cottage was over, and Shane would go back to his sponsorship commercials with his winning smile and his handsome unblemished skin. There would be no trace of Ilya on his body because Ilya was a secret. He would have to be for quite some time. But now, here in the cottage with broad hands gripping his chest and greedy lips on his back, Shane's easily commodified body did not belong to Reebok or Rolex or any other faceless corporation. He was Ilya's, to mark and bruise and brand however he liked. *Love. Love. Love. I'm all yours, I love you.*

Ilya would rather drink from the sewers of Moscow than admit it, but Shane was onto something with the cottage's private well. He had stood in front of the sink and downed a full glass of the crisp and clear water before refilling his cup and getting a second one for Shane. He muttered a sleepy 'thank you' as Ilya brought it over to where he was still lying on the couch, curling on his side to sip down the much needed hydration. Ilya sat on the floor beside him, leaning his head against Shane's leg and running his fingers along the thin white stretch marks that striped his hips and buttocks. They would move on from this soon, redress and take plates from the dishwasher to put into the cabinets and talk about if there was still enough daylight to start a bonfire, but for now Shane was still under the spell that always came over him when he had been fucked good and hard. Ilya moved to kiss Shane on his side just between his ribs, where he was ticklish and a soft kiss would make him squirm. He could do anything to Shane when he was in this state, his eyes glassy and relaxed, so wholly Ilya's that neither man knew entirely what to do with it. If Ilya thought about it too much he would be reduced to tears.

Once, years ago, he had imagined Shane as some gentle prey animal. The young hockey prospect had sat frozen like a deer on the bench in the locker room, all dark eyes and freckles

and a lower lip just barely trembling. And Ilya had wondered what that made him, heart still beating hard and pumping adrenaline from what he had wordlessly proposed in the showers. *A wolf? A bear? Some stalking wildcat?* Maybe cat was right. He had wanted to pounce on Shane, bat him around like a mouse between his paws, and yet he would not know what to do with him if he caught him.

Ilya moved again to kiss Shane's shoulder. He hummed a soft, appreciative sound in the back of his throat and in turn Ilya pressed his teeth into the meat of Shane's bicep, just hard enough to make him suck in a lungful of air.

"You're being rough." he said, still in a low, dreamy voice.

"Ah, you love it."

"Mmm." he agreed, his fingers lazily brushing through Ilya's golden curls

He was up off the floor now, half on the sofa and guiding Shane's body into the position he wanted him in, nipping at his collarbone and the tender skin of his throat. Ilya felt Shane arch up under him, and could feel how close he was to getting a whimper out of him before the quiet was punctuated by the sound of the dishwasher beeping from the kitchen.

"Is okay to leave them."

"No it's not." Shane furrowed his brow, as if this was the first time anyone had ever suggested differently "The glasses get spots."

Ilya sat back on his knees, letting Shane out from under him and then slouching back against the cushions. They had switched clothes at some point, Ilya have gotten the glasses of water in pair of light cotton drawstring shorts that barely contained the thickness of his thighs, and Shane being left to pull on a well-worn pair of Ilya's black gym shorts to unload the dishwasher.

"You need help, Shane?" he called over the bookshelf that divided living room from kitchen

"No. I have a system."

Ilya nodded, because of course he did. He had once been jealous of how perfect Shane was, he had actually been jealous many times over many years. But now as he watched perfect, boring Shane Hollander hold each of his kitchen glasses up to the light and polish them with a dry cloth he wondered if it had always been longing. Maybe he had known from the beginning, in that cold parking lot in Saskatchewan as he smoked a cigarette that would not light until moment he laid eyes on those beautiful freckles, that Shane was full in the same places that Ilya felt empty. It had only taken him the better part of a decade to realize that their opposing pieces were meant to fit together.

Shane finished with the dishes and came back to where Ilya was motioning for him to come cuddle up against his chest. This was one of his favorite parts of the cottage, the unhurried stretches of sweetness they could have on the couch in the pink light of a setting sun. He had wanted this for longer that he could even admit to himself, as every time after they had the

kind of fervent, wanton sex that left Shane sucking spit back into his mouth lest he start drooling, Ilya had felt such an intense need to be sweet and gentle to him that it almost scared him. His first attempt had gone about as poorly as it could. In hindsight he realized it had perhaps been too much all at once, his desire to feed Shane and put him in his clothes and stroke his hair and watch tv with him all making Ilya so blissed out he had called his long time professional rival by his first name. It would be funny to look back on one day, but for now the cold fear of losing the man he loved was too recent to dwell on.

Ilya could tell Shane's eyes were closed as he settled against the firmness of his chest, his breath was slow and his fingers had needed to map over Ilya's skin to find the orthodox cross that hung from his thin gold chain. They had never talked about religion, and the 'personal life' section of Shane's wikipedia page was shockingly sparse for a star athlete. Then again what would Ilya have to say about his own relationship with religion. Much of what he had been taught sounded like unbelievable fantasies of men who cared more about power than science, but at the same time he hoped there was some place where his mother was now, and that she could see him and hear him when he talked to her at night. He hoped that somehow she knew who Shane was.

"Was nice, meeting your parents." Ilya said after a little while

"Yeah, sorry they can be a little intense."

"I don't mind." he shook his head "And, is good...they know you more now."

"You mean like, that I'm gay?"

"Mm, and in love with best hockey player in league."

Shane looked up at him and smiled "You're an asshole."

Ilya put a knuckle under Shane's chin and tilted his face up to kiss him. He thought for a moment that he could spend the rest of his life kissing Shane, here in this Canadian cottage with its unnerving wolf-birds and lake that was still cold in the middle of summer, and Yuna and David's own cottage on the neighboring lake.

"Will they be sad about grandchildren?"

"What do you mean?"

"You need woman, to have children...and you are gay."

Shane sat up now, half turning to face Ilya on the couch "There's other ways to have children other than, you know."

"Yes, I know, but..."

"There's surrogacy, and adoption...a lot of kids are adopted from Russia, right?"

Ilya raised his eyebrows "You want your children to be Russian?"

“Only if they’re yours.”

Fuck, Hollander.

Ilya’s eyes were suddenly wet, and he could not turn away quick enough to hide it. Only Shane could unravel him like this. Shane with his shiny dark eyes that were always teeming with emotion and a heart that lived on his sleeve. All their years playing cat and mouse, afraid of what would happen if he ever caught him, resigning himself to the thrill of the chase and whatever scraps of affection he would allow himself, and now. Now that he had him, Shane wanted to give Ilya everything he had ever wanted.

“I’m sorry.” he said weakly, wiping his eyes dry with the back of his hands.

“Don’t be,” Shane kissed where a tear had rolled down Ilya’s cheek “I guess I’m a little intense sometime too, huh?”

“A little.” he chuckled “But...is okay.”

“Do you um...do you want kids one day?”

Ilya looked down, unable to meet Shane’s gaze. His eyes found his own hands, the little spot near his thumbnail that he had bit raw on the plane ride here. Ilya hadn’t been afraid of flying for year, he slept like a baby through most flights nowadays, lulled to sleep by the rumble of the engine. But he had been nervous this time, drawn blood from his own finger with nerves in fact, and had given himself a little scab he had to be careful not to pick at when anxious again.

There was something rotten in his blood. There was no denying it, his mother’s sadness, his father’s decay, even Alexei’s addiction, Ilya could feel them all swimming around in him in. He thought it would be a cruelty to bring another Rozanov into the world. He dragged a hand over his face and tried consider Shane’s question without the pit in his stomach. That was their agreement, that they would spend this time at the cottage honest with each other, about how they really felt.

There had been a fundraiser near the end of last season, because there were always fundraisers where Ilya was paraded around like a prop for donors to pose with. It was the middle aged woman who like him the most, something Marleau called ‘wine moms’ who delighted when Ilya put his well muscled arms around them and posed as if they were on some kind of date. But this one had been mostly children, something about pediatric cardiology. Ilya crouched to pose with most of them, but fifteen minutes into his time standing between a fabric backdrop and a camera, a sullen little girl with long braided hair had been shoved into his arms by some overexcited Raiders fan. She had hung her head in disinterest as her father crowded the official photographer to snap photos with his cellphone. He had never liked events like this either, the kind where there was so much to focus on he found himself focusing on nothing at all. Ilya could not blame the little girl for hiding her face in his shoulder.

“What is your name?” he had asked quietly into her ginger hair, giving her some sound center her listening on that was not the overlapping din of a few hundred people in some hotel

banquette hall.

“Lily.”

Ilya had almost laughed at this “That is my name too.”

“No, it isn’t.” she looked at him with a serious expression on her little face “That’s a girl name.”

“Ah. Hmm, should my name be...Ilya?”

“That sounds like a girl name too.”

“No!” he gasped, as if this was some great indignity “Ilya is boy name!”

Little Lily giggle at the way he contorted his face with the exaggerated expression, and behind the camera the photographer silently thanked him for making the girl smile long enough for a handful of good pictures. He posed with the girl a few moments longer as her father filled up his phone’s storage with one hundred picture of Boston’s star center. Her braid had fallen onto Ilya’s arm as he held her, neatly plaited with a pattern different than a normal braid. He did not know enough about hair to know how someone had been able to make the twisted together strands sit differently, but he imagined little Lily must have had to sit very patient and very well behaved when having her hair styled that morning.

Later, when he was home in his big, quiet house, he had found himself walking slowly through each room. Parts of it, the living room and the kitchen and the primary bedroom, were usually sprawling for a place in the centuries old city. But this was at the cost of the secondary bedrooms, both of which were small and rarely used, with on-suites so compact they had stand up showers instead of bathtubs. He had not bought this house to start a family in. The realtor had mentioned the schools while touring him through the house years ago, but Ilya had simply shook his head, unable to allow himself to imagine yellow buses and first days of kindergarten.

Shane had sounded like something of a real estate agent himself when they had first gotten to the cottage, offering a tour of the place and then giving one a few hours later. He could have had a promising career convincing people of the merits of geothermal heating and tiles made from local stone if hockey had not worked out. There was one bathroom shared by the downstairs bedrooms, with a steam shower and a separate tub. Ilya’s eyes lingered on the vanity for a moment, it’s stone counter extending along the length of the room to become spot with a mirror and a stool tucked beneath it. The kind of counter where a little girl with her father’s dark hair could sit patiently and well behaved while her other father taught himself how to plait it into a long silky braid, humming the quiet little tune of a folk song as he went. It would be complicated, citizenship and surrogacy and the publicness of the MHL’s star athletes being parents together. It was all so much it made Ilya want to bury the feeling and any happiness it might cause him, but he had promised that he would try to be honest with his feeling.

“Maybe.” he said to Shane, kissing him softly “Probably, yes.”

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