All Things Turn Grey

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All Things Turn Grey

by BetwixtTheBramble

Summary

Ilya had never wanted to become a priest, and he was still wondering how he had managed to be one for over ten years now without causing a scandal. Four years ago they had been looking for someone with decent English skills to take over a congregation in Ottawa after the former priest died. Ilya jumped at the possibility of fleeing from his family's watchful eye to another continent where nobody knew him.

He kept his masses short, his bed warm with women and a few men that were willing to overlook the eternal damnation that was promised them for fucking with a priest, and his spirits up with a seasonal ticket for the Ottawa Centaurs.

Everything changed when one late evening the doors to the church opened and a stranger walked in.

Notes

Title Song: All Things Turn Grey by Haunt Me

Thank you toofadedtofight for beta reading 🖤🖤🖤 all remaining mistakes are my own

For Ilya, the twenty-fifth of December was a day like any other. Except that Ottawa looked like a Christmas Bomb exploded over the city decking everything in tinsel, mistletoe and shades of red and green. He was certain Taffy Lane alone needed more electricity than a fucking cannabis plantation. He never understood the need for a house to look like Father Christmas sicked up all over it.

Christmas in Russia was different. For one they celebrated in January, so he spent this random Thursday in December going for a walk, and checking the supply cupboard of his church.

He had never wanted to become a priest, and he was still wondering how he had managed to be one for over ten years now without causing a scandal. Four years ago they had been looking for someone with decent English skills to take over a congregation in Ottawa after the former priest died. Ilya jumped at the possibility of fleeing from his family's watchful eye to another continent where nobody knew him. He kept his masses short, his bed warm with women and a few men that were willing to overlook the eternal damnation that was promised them for fucking with a priest, and his spirits up with a seasonal ticket for the Ottawa Centaurs.

He hummed along to the music coming from his phone, dark and moody, the polar opposite of the Christmas songs on the radio. Outside snow was falling and inside it wasn't much warmer than outside. Ilya was used to the cold. The black woolen sweater he had thrown over his clerical collar tried its best to keep the chills away. But it did nothing to chase away the icy cold in his chest. Lately, Ilya had gotten sick of it all, the meaningless encounters, the *yes M'am with this donation you can ensure your stay in heaven*, the Centaurs losing every fucking game.

And in its time all things turn to grey
The earth spins and life withers away
The sun burns out and light turns grey

The thud of the heavy oak door slamming shut echoed through the whole church. Ilya looked up from where he was perched on a pew, listlessly thumbing through a hymnal while dreaming about a vacation in Florida or Mexico. Somewhere warm. Somewhere the blood in his veins could thaw. Maybe he should ask the Centaurs if he could accompany them on their road trip to Tampa in January. Get a peak at the four Ps: Private Plane, buff hockey Players, and Poker – if the rumors were true.

In the entrance stood a man, his face hidden in the shadow of the gallery. Ilya hadn't bothered to switch on the overhead lighting, just the few around the altar. He had always found solace in a dark church; loved the calm without the feeling of being watched from every angel.

The man didn't move, and neither did Ilya.

“I'm sorry,” the man said eventually and turned around.

“Stay,” Ilya replied, his accent heavy.

“No, I didn't–”

“You came here for reason.” Ilya stood up and slowly descended the stairs.

“*Ouais*, but–”

“Tell me reason.”

“It's stupid,” the man stammered.

“Is church,” Ilya explained. “No stupid reason to come in. You cold? We have blanket. You hungry? We have food. You sad? We have music and good listening ear. You lonely? We have good cock.”

It didn't draw the expected chuckle from the stranger's lips. “Are you allowed to–”

Ilya huffed.

“Laughing is allowed at church. Was joke.”

The man was about his own age. Half of his face was hidden behind a scarf and he had an Ottawa Centaurs beanie pulled low over his head.

“Is good team,” Ilya pointed to the logo. “Only allergic to winning.”

“Fuck you!” the man scoffed before adding “Sorry, Father.”

“Don't worry, Son, we all get emotional occasionally. No, that is weird. You are not much younger than I am. How old are you?”

“Twenty-nine, father.” He was handsome. Ilya could judge that from the three inches of face that were visible: rosy, freckled cheeks and mahogany eyes. And also kinda familiar. But Ilya couldn't put his finger on it.

“No ‘father’ crap, call me Ilya.”

“Only if you call me Shane.”

“HOLLANDER?” Ilya yelled. “Like player?”

“The one and only,” Shane lifted his arms in an awkward shrug.

“Shouldn't you be celebrating Christmas with family?” Ilya asked. He knew that Shane had family in the area. He had seen an interview a few months ago after he had been traded here from Montreal about him being so glad to be in his hometown and how his parents were coming to every game. Ilya could only imagine what it was like to have a family he would voluntarily spend time with. The little of his own family that was left didn't care about Ilya. His father – the driving force behind him becoming a priest instead of a police officer like his father and older brother – had died last year and his brother had his wife and daughter and the gaggle of mistresses he kept rotating. They had long ago stopped giving a fuck about Ilya –

about the same time Andrei had found him kissing the Major's son behind the Christmas tree in the yard. He had shoved Ilya against the shed and beaten the crap out of him. The Major's son – Ilya had forgotten his name – had never even looked at him again, and Andrei had tattled on him as soon as they closed the door to their house that evening. Ilya had gotten the second lacing, a broken rib from falling down the stairs and the choice between homelessness and joining priesthood.

“I should, yeah,” Shane said, oblivious to Ilya's trip down memory lane.

“But you're here and they are not.”

“They're not, no,” Shane sighed. “They're stuck in fucking New York City because they decided to stay a few days after our game to do some Christmas shopping and return on the twenty-fourth. And then the snow came, and the ice, the storm, and there's no planes working and the roads are too dangerous. So now they're spending Christmas in Scott fucking Hunter's bar with half the team and I am here on my own.”

“You don't like your teammates?” Ilya asked.

“I like them, but I'm the new one, and I don't want to impose.”

“You're an idiot."

“Are you allowed to say stuff like that, Father?”

“Ilya.”

“Ilya, okay, I'm sorry, I'm not very religious.”

“Neither am I.”

“But you're a priest!”

“Cosmic joke. Do not want to talk about. Tell me about hockey, about team. Your roommate from Montreal, with the five hundred kids, what's his name–”

“Hayden Pike.”

“Yes Pike, why are you not with him? Too loud?”

“Too far away for these weather conditions. Have you been outside lately?”

“Not since morning, but is just snow. In Russia everyone is driving in snow. Bet you have – how do you say *okay for weather*?

“Reasonable? Appropriate?”

“Reasonable, yes, you have reasonable car.”

“I have a truck.”

“See?” Ilya grinned. “Perfect car for driving in snow. Boring car rest of year.”

“It's too late now anyway.”

Ilya rejoiced at the chance to question a real NHL player. “Come with me. I have frozen pizza, European beer and Russian vodka. But no wine, except altar wine and don’t drink that.”

“And you would share with me?”

“Of course, I told you I have food for lonely and dick for hungry or something like that.”

This time Shane laughed.

Ilya led him through the dark church and up to the altar like a father led the bride, then off to the side through the registry and into his personal quarters. He simply dragged Shane Hollander behind him like a naughty child. He didn't bother switching on the light as they ascended the stairs onto the first floor and into the tiny apartment he shared with a couple of goldfish.

“Go sit, Hollander,” Ilya urged and pointed to the ratty old couch his predecessor had probably picked up from bulk waste. He probably imagined the gasp coming from behind him when he bent down to grab two pizzas from the freezer's bottom shelf. He knew he had a great ass, but he loved knowing it was appreciated. He shoved them into the oven and sent a prayer to the sky that it would work. Last time it had just lightened the pizza for thirty minutes like it was on a beach vacation, the rickety old thing. “I have water, coke, ginger ale, imported beer and vodka. What do you want?”

“Oh, uhm–” Hollander stuttered. “Ginger Ale would be great?”

Ilya grabs a can and a coke for himself, and opens them.

“Thank you.”

“You're welcome.” Ilya sits down across from him onto an equally outdated armchair whose springs poked him in the butt.

“You’re a fan then?” Shane asked, pointing to the Centaurs flag on the wall.

“No, but it is good cover up for black mold,” Ilya teased.

“Oh.”

“That was joke, Hollander. You are way too serious. It is Christmas, relax.”

“I am relaxed.”

“You’re relaxed as a bow string. I can hear you clenching your teeth. How do you relax after a hockey game?”

“I watch tv, or play on my phone, I guess,” Shane stammered.

“Boring,” Ilya sighed. “Have you tried masturbating? It always helps me relax, to, you know–” he moved his hand in a descriptive way.

“No?” Shane looked at him exasperated.

“You're blushing, Hollander.”

“Call me Shane please,” Shane tried to change the topic.

“Then you must call me Ilya.” He accompanied his words with a lewd wink.

“Not father?”

“Only if you want to confess something.”

“Give me one of your glorified vodkas and I might start to.”

“Uuuuh so all it takes is one drink?”

“Maybe? I don't know, I usually don't drink.”

“But you're drinking tonight?”

“I usually also don't eat pizza.”

Ilya scoffed. “That must be a horrible life.”

“The prize a pro athlete has to pay.”

Ilya rolled his eyes. “Do you have to be so boring? Live a little.”

“I'm living, and it's not as if you're living *la vida loca*.”

“Mister Fancy is speaking Spanish now,” Ilya taunted. “Do you have any other hidden talents?"

“I don't know, you tell me.”

“Is that an invitation?” Ilya leaned forwards, resting his forearms on his knees.

“No– I–” Shane spluttered. He swallowed audibly, his eyes darting to the timer of the oven. “I think the pizzas are done.”

Ilya huffed a laugh. “Nice try, Hollander.” But he stood up nonetheless and retrieved the pizzas. They talked about hockey while they ate, Ilya sharing stories about playing as a teen in Russia but having to stop eventually due to an injury – deliberatingly concealing the fact

that it wasn't a hockey accident, but one of the many reasons he was glad to be out of his father's vicinity. And Shane shared how fed up he was with losing.

“You're captain," Ilya stated. “You need to motivate them. Try it. Give me a speech.”

“No.”

“Not no, yes!”

“I can't, Ilya.”

“Then you shouldn’t be captain.”

“Like fuck I shouldn't” Shane shouted. “I'm a great captain.”

“Captain of a losing team. Come on, Shane.”

“Fucking fine–” Shane took a deep breath. “Okay, so– Aren’t we all sick of losing? We need to do better, be better–”

Ilya pretended to fall asleep and snore.

“Fuck you!”

“We can do that afterwards,” Ilya drawled. Then he stood up, shook out his arms and cracked his neck. He placed one foot on the coffee table and looked Shane intently into the eyes. “Listen up, buddy.

Shane gave a nervous laugh.

“Aren't you fed up with losing too? Aren't you tired of leaving the ice as losers game after game? That doesn’t have to be. We have a fantastic goalie, great defense men and the cleverest offensive players. We need to stay out of sin bin and bring everything we have to the goal. If the opponent insults your mother, ignore it. A punch in the face doesn't hurt as much as being wiped from the ice. Transform your aggression into goals, Utilize it. If you want to deck them, do it after the game. Or better, show their mother a good time, and become their new daddy, but don't let a chirp make you lose focus! You're better than that. Let's go!”

“Wow.”

“The Russians are great speakers,” Ilya said sarcastically.

“I should go now,” Shane said, standing up. “Thank you for your hospitality.”

“You're welcome any time, Shane and if you want me to give speech for you, you know where to find me,” Ilya offered with a wink and a lopsided smile that had Shane blushing – again.

“Again, thank you. Maybe we'll see each other at a game?”

“I will be there and cheer you on once you start winning.” Ilya stood up too. “I’ll walk you out.”

Russians were born to be melancholical, look at all the literature. Some said it came from the constant cold, others alleged that it just was what it was. But nothing prepared Ilya for the strange tugging pain in his chest when he followed Shane down the stairs. The light from the streetlamps shining in through the coloured glass was drawing patterns on the stone floor of the church. The little warmth Ilya had experienced over the past hour threatened to leave him again.

He deliberately slowed down his steps, trying to seize the moment until he was alone again. But it would be in vain. A few more steps and Shane would leave and take the spark with him, leaving Ilya back in the shell of his life. He should take the advice he had given Shane and live a little himself, instead of playing pretend with an empty shell.

Shane turned towards Ilya, his whole body was embedded in colourful lights. Ilya wanted to trace it with his fingers, with his mouth–

His back hit one of the fake marmor pillars that were just painted wood as strong arms shoved him against it. Shane's lips found his and then they were kissing. Ilya snuck his hands under Shane's coat and grabbed his hip, pulling him closer while opening his mouth for Shane's tongue. He loved the way Shane tugged on his hair as if he wanted to make sure Ilya couldn't leave. It was the best Ilya felt in a long time – at least until Shane pulled back.

“I never do stuff like this,” Shane whispered.

“What? Kiss?” Ilya chuckled. “I told you to live a little.”

“Fuck, you're a priest, I shouldn't have done that. What if you end up in hell because of me? Does it work like this?”

“I'm not afraid of the devil, and Jesus loved whores.” Ilya shrugged his shoulders. “It was just a kiss, it's not like you bent me over the altar or rode me in the confession booth.”

“It's not the first time you thought about that.” Shane surprised Ilya with that astute observation. It was one of his favourite past times, imagining in what situations the congregation could find him in and getting progressively worse with everyone.

Ilya lifted his arms. “What if? You're gonna tell my boss?”

“God?”

Ilya snorted. “I meant the bishop, but God works as well.”

“I won't if you tell me one more of those fantasies of yours.”

“Do you think you can take it?”

Shane nodded eagerly.

“You're lucky tonight. One of those involves a hot hockey player sucking me off right here,” Ilya walked backwards to position himself where the light hit him from three different directions, “in the middle of the aisle so everyone who comes in immediately sees me. Do you think there's a possibility of it coming true tonight?”

Shane had followed him like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Obediently he sank to his knees.

“Get my cock out.”

Shane let his trembling fingers trace over the hem of Ilya's dark jeans. He popped the button and tantalizingly slowly dragged down the zipper. His breath was cold against the wet patch of his pants as he leaned in. Ilya's pulse hammered in his ears. Shane pulled the hem of the y-fronts down and tugged them behind his balls. For the blink of an eye Ilya felt the rush of being exposed in church. The next moment Shane had sucked him down, his tongue pressed flat against the underside of his cock and Ilya was ready to combust.

Shane made up for the lack of finesse with eagerness. For someone who wasn't openly queer, Shane was pretty good at ignoring his gag reflex while it contracted around the tip of Ilya's cock. He was beautiful like this, head thrown back and eyes wet and tears clinging to his ridiculously long, dark eyelashes.

Ilya’s balls tightened and he just managed to grunt a warning before he was shooting down Shane's throat.

“Have you ever been fucked?” Ilya mumbled against Shane's temple. They were sitting next to each other on a pew.

“I have… a thing.”

“Oh, a thing, a butt plug you mean?”

“No, the *other* thing.”

“A cucumber?”

“No, idiot, a *dildo*.” The last word was barely audible.

“What colour?”

“Huh?”

“What colour is your dildo? I want to imagine it right.”

“Uhm– Gold?”

That man would be the death of him. He would never be able to watch Shane at a game again without imagining him fuckking himself on a golden dildo, the suction cup firm against the

floor of the shower – Shane simply striked him as someone who tried to avoid a mess as best as possible.

Instead of a response, Ilya palmed Shane's cock through his jeans and found it flaccid. “Didn't you like it?” Ilya questioned immediately.

“I liked it too much.”

“What does that– *ooooh*. The puck isn't the only thing you shoot fast.”

“Ha ha.” Shane rolled his eyes.

“Don't worry, is hot. I like eager guys.”

“I should go now, I need a shower. Thank you for… *everything*.”

“Not for this, it has been a pleasure.”

“I'll see you soon?”

“At the game on Tuesday. Remember your speech and start winning.”

Ilya opened the heavy oak door for Shane and watched him descend onto the lonely, icy, dark road. Shane stopped at the bottom, turned around and gave Ilya an awkward half wave Ilya replied to by blowing him a kiss.

The door closed with a heavy clunk and Ilya was alone again, but feeling a thousand kilos lighter.

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