

my honeymoon, my honeyman

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by [kryptic_girl](#)

Summary

Shane and Ilya's honeymoon in Ibiza was supposed to be simple: first-class flights, Michelin-starred restaurants, and a luxury hotel where they could finally be openly, unapologetically in love. And it is -- until a case of mistaken identity at a nightclub spirals into their first real fight as a married couple.

A post-TLG story about two idiots in love learning that "happily ever after" still requires showing up for the hard conversations.

TW: recreational drug use and references to abuse/depression

Notes

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

June 2022

In the ten years Ilya had been a professional hockey player, he'd been in airports more times than he could count. Most times, when travelling for games, his entire itinerary was planned down to the minute. Pickups from his hotel were sorted, the team assistant ready with a coffee in hand, and charter planes making it impossible to miss a flight.

This time, not so much.

Shane slapped down his and Ilya's passports at the desk agent, radiating anxiety. She eyed the move with disdain before reaching to grab them. Shane knew they looked like idiots. Who shows up to the airport for a flight twenty minutes before the plane leaves? Boarding had already started. Their idiocy was even more visible since Ilya had somehow convinced Shane to wear matching floral print shirts and shorts. "We'll be on theme," Ilya had said coyly. Shane was regretting that now. They looked like the twins from *The Shining* had been slapped with some tacky resort wallpaper.

Ilya could be very convincing. So convincing, in fact, that he was the very reason they were late. They'd been moments away from ordering their Uber when Ilya suggested that Shane blow him one last time on Canadian soil before they started their honeymoon. Shane had reacted with a laugh before he realized Ilya was serious, his pupils blown with desire as he eyed Shane and palmed his half-hard cock with a shrug and a sly grin. What started as a blowjob had devolved into fucking Shane hard into the mattress as Shane got lost in his own desire, and their cushy hour-and-a-half arrival before boarding had quickly trickled down to twenty measly minutes. Ilya called this version of him "Vacation Shane," which he insisted Shane should bring around more often. In other words, Ilya was telling him to chill the fuck out.

Shane chewed the inside of his cheek as the front desk agent slowly – so fucking slowly – entered their details into her computer. The agent smacked her gum as she waited for her ancient computer to load. She eyed Shane as he bounced on his heels, twirling his wedding ring with his right hand and hiding behind his black sunglasses. Ilya gave her a tight-lipped smile as she lazily handed them back their passports and newly-printed boarding passes, calling the next couple wearing matching Mickey Mouse ears (which made him feel a little less clownish for his own outfit choice, albeit only slightly).

They now had seventeen minutes to get through check-in, security, and get to their gate. Shane stuffed their passports into his fanny pack ("What? It's for easy access!"). Ilya grabbed Shane's hand as they bolted for the fast-lane at security. It was, luckily, unaffected by the traffic jam of people stuck in the 'poor people line', as Ilya liked to call it.

Shane heaved his carry-on into a bin and carefully undid his laces, stripping his shoes off.

"Do you think the X-ray will show the plug that's up your ass?" Ilya whispered jokingly, trying to bring his husband back down from whatever cloud of anxiety was raining down on him. The joke landed flatly as Shane glared back at him.

“Can you just hurry up? I will not be late to our flight to our honeymoon,” Shane said tersely.

“Relax, *moya lyubov*,” Ilya said, rolling his eyes as he yanked his sneakers off. “We will not be late.”

Nine minutes left. Shane blew out a breath as they finally got their things in order, Ilya trailing him closely. They got stopped once for a photo, which Ilya happily agreed to on behalf of both of them, earning yet another glare from Shane. Ilya innocently responded to that viperous look with a cheeky “What? Mr. Rolex can’t take a picture with an adoring fan?” Not only would they be even more delayed in getting to their gate, their horrible outfits would certainly be posted online in minutes, immortalized on the internet for all to see.

Shane nearly dragged Ilya across the airport to their gate as last calls for their flight were being announced. He breathed a sigh of relief as they made it to the gate agent, handing over their boarding passes and passports. The gate door shut unceremoniously behind them.

They made their way to the front of the plane, Ilya grabbing Shane’s carry-on and putting it in the overhead. Shane’s eyes wandered to where Ilya’s shirt rose up, revealing the happy trail that adorned his sculpted body, as he stretched his arms overhead to place his own bag right next to Shane’s. Shane looked away with a blush as Ilya adjusted his shirt back into place.

They’d booked first class. Shane had groaned at the idea, never one for frivolous spending, but Ilya had convinced him. They each had their own pod, and at some point the flight attendants would come around and turn their seats into makeshift beds. Given the eight-hour transatlantic flight, Shane was only minorly grateful for the fact that he might get at least a little sleep before landing in Madrid for their connection. It was already almost midnight. He always struggled to sleep on planes, but Ilya had become an expert at it. The man could sleep anywhere.

Ilya gave him a sweet kiss before plopping down into his own pod next to Shane’s. Shane took a moment to inspect his own pod, rifling through the amenity kit, fluffing his pillow, looking at the movies on the tiny TV – one of which was a new Rose Landry feature that he’d been to the premiere for.

It took only a few minutes for the pilot’s disembodied voice to come over the loud speaker announcing their departure and expected arrival time.

“Champagne and caviar, sir?” A flight attendant offered. She displayed a tray in front of him with a glass filled with bubbles and little black dots on a blini with whipped cream.

“Um, sure,” Shane replied, grasping the stem. He looked over at Ilya as he did the same. Ilya raised his glass to Shane and took a sip. Shane watched Ilya’s throat gulp down the liquid, transfixed by the movement.

“This is crazy, yes?” Ilya whispered from across the row.

“I was just thinking the same,” Shane lied.

“They pay us too much money,” Ilya laughed.

“Tell me about it,” Shane replied. He cleared his throat, trying *not* to think of the way Ilya’s Adam’s apple bobbed as he swallowed.

“You know, this is my first time flying with Canadian passport,” Ilya reflected. He’d only gotten his official citizenship the year prior. The paperwork for his passport had fallen down their list of priorities, given the camp and the hockey season taking up the better part of the past twelve months. They’d spent every moment off the ice negotiating brand deals, doing interviews, and flying across the country for various TV appearances. Shane was particularly proud of their cover of *Vanity Fair*, where they’d been dressed in impeccably tailored suit jackets, shirtless, Ilya’s arm wrapped confidently over Shane’s shoulder, staring down the camera with feverish intensity as Shane gazed sideways at him. The cover bore the words *Breaking the Ice with Hockey’s Hottest Couple*, which, yes, was extremely corny but it also felt surreal. Shane wasn’t a particularly pious man, but he felt like some deity was responsible for how well things were going for them. Ilya had bought every copy he’d seen and Shane had to stop him from gifting them to everyone they knew.

One day, Shane returned to his office to find that cover framed and hanging right above his computer screen. It was almost his favourite picture of Ilya – second only to the failed attempts at Ilya’s passport picture. The poor girl at the photo studio took picture after picture, but Ilya couldn’t stop laughing and smiling and saying “I’m a fucking Canadian!” Shane had asked the girl if she would print out one of the failed attempts, where Ilya’s cheeks were split so wide that his eyes became thin slits, completely elated.

“I’m glad it came in time,” Shane replied.

Ilya smiled sweetly at him. “Me too.”

The lights in the cabin dimmed, a signal for passengers to start gearing for sleep. Shane stood and went to the bathroom, changing into the first-class navy pyjamas from his amenity kit and brushing his teeth. He splashed his face with cold water, looking at himself in the mirror. *You will not jerk off on a plane*. Just the look of Ilya’s swallowing turned him on. He had a problem. Shane tried to remove the image from his brain with little success.

Shane had thought that being public about their relationship would put some sort of lid on the hot flame that burned in him whenever he looked at Ilya, but he was wrong. The flames were fanned harder. Now that he could be open about his relationship, now that they could hold hands in public, *kiss* in public, his desire to be touched by his husband had risen exponentially. He wanted to touch Ilya all the time. He never wanted to *stop* touching him. He wondered if there was a summit to his craving, or if he would just continue climbing forever.

Shane returned to his pod to find his seat had been converted into a bed. Ilya rose upon Shane’s return, his own pyjamas in hand. They slid past each other in the tight aisle, Ilya’s hand brushing Shane’s lower back as he manoeuvred around him. Shane let out an embarrassing sigh at the feeling. Ilya’s eyes snapped to Shane’s as he grew red in the face at the noise that had just come out of him.

Shane avoided further eye contact as he plopped down into his bed, shutting the door to his pod. Maybe he *should* have jerked off in the bathroom. He felt like an out-of-control teenager, his semi pressing against the cotton of his boxers. Shane pulled out his noise-cancelling headphones and tried playing a movie to empty his mind.

He must have fallen asleep at some point. He startled at the sound of his door being opened, Ilya shushing him.

“What are you doing?” Shane whispered, still drowsy and half asleep.

“Shh,” Ilya instructed. “I can’t sleep.”

“What?” Shane mumbled.

He felt Ilya crawl into his bed beside him. He wiggled into the wall by his bed, making space in the tiny compartment. Shane reached for his phone to check the time, the bright line blinding him momentarily. 3:46am.

“Hard to sleep without you next to me,” Ilya murmured, nuzzling into Shane’s neck. Ilya’s leg swooped over Shane’s thighs, cradling him against the wall of his pod. Shane loosed a breath, inhaling Ilya’s familiar spiced amber scent. Shane fixed the blanket over both of them and moved a hand to Ilya’s hair, twirling his blonde curls between his fingers, closing his eyes. Ilya released a satisfied sound, wriggling his hips closer to Shane’s body.

And, oh. There it was. Shane sobered at the feeling of Ilya’s rigid length against him.

“Is that the only reason you can’t sleep?” Shane asked, wide awake now.

“No.” Shane felt Ilya smile against his shoulder as he nipped at his collarbone.

“Ilya,” Shane said seriously.

“What?” He responded innocently.

“We *can*’t.”

“It’s your fault,” Ilya pouted. “You made noise before.”

“I...” Shane swallowed. “We can’t.”

“*Why*?” Ilya responded petulantly.

“Because!” Shane whispered. “Someone could see us.”

“No, everyone is sleeping,” Ilya responded, kissing a path along Shane’s shoulder up to that sweet spot below his ear. He was rewarded with a shudder. “We can be quiet. Well, *I* can be quiet. You, maybe no. Maybe Vacation Shane can be quiet.”

Shane pulled back from Ilya, sitting up on his elbows. His eyes adjusted to the darkness. Ilya’s light blue eyes were nearly black as his pupils filled his irises. Ilya trailed a finger with

a feather-light touch along the inside of Shane's thighs.

"I've been half-hard for almost four hours," Ilya whispered. "Is torture."

Shane felt his cheeks flush. "Really?"

"Mmhm," Ilya hummed, his finger dangerously close to Shane's cock. "Because of you."

Shane released a shuttered breath as Ilya placed his palm over Shane's crotch. He felt his own cock betray him as Ilya palmed Shane under the blanket.

"Fuck," Shane whispered, letting his head fall back against the pillow. Ilya slid his hand under the waistband of Shane's pyjama pants, stroking him slowly. Ilya marveled at how Shane felt in his hand, how quickly he could bring him from soft to full mast.

Ilya swept his thumb over Shane's slit, relishing in the wetness he found there. He looked up at Shane's face, his eyes closed and mouth pressed into a thin line as he attempted to stifle his moans.

Ilya quickened his pace, smirking as Shane's breathing hitched. Shane's knuckles were turning paper-white as he gripped the blanket. Ilya knew it was taking all Shane's focus to be quiet. Ilya peppered quiet kisses along Shane's neck as he drew a particularly satisfying groan from him. Ilya spat in his other hand, slicking his fingers with saliva as he pulled Shane's hip up and pressed a digit against Shane's hole. The effect was instant.

"Fuck, I'm gonna—" Ilya pressed his mouth to Shane's to muffle his moan as his release hit him. Shane whimpered against Ilya's lips as he came all over his hand. Ilya kept his hands pressed against both sides of Shane, stroking slowly, tormenting Shane as he tried to recover his composure.

Once Shane's breathing had settled, Ilya pulled his hand out from Shane's crotch, giving him one last squeeze on his ass before pulling that one out too. Shane watched in a daze as Ilya brought his cum covered fingers to his mouth and sucked on them. Even in the near dark, Shane could see how Ilya's eyes closed as he lapped at Shane's release.

Shane shivered at the sight.

"Fuck," Shane breathed.

Ilya made a noise of approval.

Shane let his eyes close for a moment, feeling the waves of release wash over him. It didn't last long, as he quickly became aware of the wetness in his pants turning cold.

"Now my underwear is full of cum," He whispered with a laugh.

Ilya snorted. There was a pause, and Shane opened his eyes to find Ilya looking at him intensely, eyes flickering over Shane's face. Ilya bit his lip.

“Come,” Shane said, whipping the blanket off them and sitting up, nearly making Ilya fall off the bed.

“What?”

“Get up,” Shane said boldly. Ilya obeyed, confused, and Shane could see Ilya’s pants straining against him.

Shane followed suit and opened the door to his pod. He peered outside his pod to ensure the coast was clear. He bolted for the bathroom, Ilya’s hand in his. Shane locked the door behind them. He turned to face Ilya.

The bathroom was so small, they were basically chest to chest. Shane looked up at Ilya through his dark eyelashes. He wrapped a hand around the back of Ilya’s neck and dragged him down to kiss him – messy and feverish and full of want.

Ilya sighed against Shane’s mouth, tonguing at his lips. Shane’s hands moved to feel Ilya’s chest, then moved south, lingering on his hips, toying with his waistband as he dragged his mouth along the curve of Ilya’s neck. He mumbled something unintelligible against Ilya’s skin.

“What was that?” Ilya asked.

“Want you to fuck my throat,” Shane said sheepishly. God, this man was going to wreck Ilya. How could such dirty words come out of such a sweet mouth?

“Get on your knees,” Ilya ordered.

Shane sank to his knees as Ilya’s back pressed into the wall. There was something digging into his shoulder blade but he could barely feel it, could barely feel anything except for Shane. Shane looped a finger to pull Ilya’s pants down.

Shane made quick work of pulling Ilya into his mouth. He swirled his tongue around the tip, moaning against the feeling of the weight, his left hand reaching up to cup Ilya’s chest, the other grabbing his hip and digging his fingers into the soft flesh.

“Shh, *moya zayka*,” Ilya warned. Of course Shane was louder *giving* than he was *receiving*.

Shane stilled, embarrassed, and looked up at Ilya. Ilya brought a hand to Shane’s ear and toyed with the cartilage, slowly moving his hips forward as Shane swallowed him down. Ilya felt the tip of his dick against the back of Shane’s throat and tried to pull back but Shane grabbed Ilya’s hips and forced him to go deeper. Shane’s eyes began to tear up as he pulled Ilya deeper, deeper, until almost the entirety of his cock was in his throat, his hand making up the rest of the length. And *god* just this sight alone could make Ilya finish on the spot. Shane staring up at him through feathery lashes and red-cheeked, tears brimming.

Ilya brought a hand to the back of Shane’s head and Shane hummed in approval. Ilya’s hips moved back and forth until they found a rhythm, whispering *good boy* and *just like that* until he was spilling into Shane’s mouth, teeth gritted to keep from being too loud.

Shane kissed sloppy wet kisses along the inside of Ilya's thighs until his breathing evened. Shane sat back on his heels as he looked up at Ilya, lips puffy and chin shining with spit. He wiped it away with the back of his hand and a satisfied smile split his face in half.

"We are now members, yes?" Ilya said, still catching his breath.

"Members?"

"Mile high club, correct?" Ilya grinned.

"Shut the fuck up," Shane replied, but the smile didn't leave his face. "Okay, get out. I actually do need to change out of this underwear."

Their layover in Madrid was only a few hours, so they stuck to the airport, wandering largely uninterrupted. A group of American tourists recognized them and asked for selfies. Ilya's hand found Shane's lower back, possessive and grounding. Ilya signed some autographs for them with an easy charm, but Shane noticed as his hand shook slightly when he held the pen.

They walked through gift shops and duty-free stores to pass the time. Ilya was immediately distracted by the kitschy souvenirs. Shane laughed as his husband feverishly looked through every single name-sake keychain in search of his own name – a small ritual from childhood, Ilya had once told him, from back when having his name on something felt like proof he existed.

Shane separated from him, walking around a nearby jewelry store with no intention to buy. Most of this stuff was ridiculously overpriced. Shane admired a row of expensive watches before drifting off to the rings and earrings. He studied a row of wedding bands. Their own rings had been simple, practical.

When they reunited, Ilya had somehow bought five garish fridge magnets with varying versions of "Bienvenido a Madrid!" on them. Shane fought the urge to tell him that they actually hadn't stepped foot in the city, so these magnets were a false representation of their travel itinerary. He bought a pair of annoyingly flashy Gucci sunglasses. He'd also somehow found a teddy bear wearing a red flamenco dress.

He presented the teddy bear to Shane with excitement and Shane laughed at how adorable he looked. "For our hotel room. She needs a name."

"She's ridiculous," Shane laughed. "You're ridiculous."

"You love it," Ilya teased. "I think Marina."

"Marina the Spanish bear," Shane mused.

Ilya kissed him then, short and sweet. When they pulled apart, the sunglasses had fallen askew on Ilya's head, and Shane reached up to straighten them.

"These actually look really good on you," Shane admitted reticently.

"I know," Ilya beamed. "Is why I buy them."

Ilya glanced at the departure boards, checking and rechecking their gate number.

"You okay?" Shane asked quietly.

"*Da, da,*" Ilya said, too quickly. "Just want to make sure we don't miss flight."

Shane wanted to point out that Ilya had been the one making them late for their first flight, but something in Ilya's expression stopped him.

Their flight to Ibiza was only an hour and a half and wasn't nearly as luxurious as their first class tickets had been. They sat near the back, the plane cramped and tiny. As they began their descent, Ilya reached out and held Shane's hand tightly, releasing a breath he didn't realise he had been holding.

Without the flourishes of first class, Ilya could admit that he was not a good flyer anymore. Despite the fact that he'd been on hundreds of planes since *that* one, he'd never really gotten over the fear of flying that had been instilled in him. It filled him with a viscous anxiety that was almost impossible to wade through without a copious amount of beta blockers.

"You okay?" Shane asked again, squeezing Ilya's hand. Shane realized, with a pang of guilt, that he'd missed it—Ilya had been hiding his fear behind impulse purchases the whole time.

"*Da,*" Ilya said, eyes closed. He muttered a prayer in Russian as the plane's wheels landed onto the tarmac, toying with his necklace. He blinked his eyes open, turning to look at Shane's worried expression. "I'm okay."

Ilya removed his hand from Shane's grasp, wiping the sweat off it against his linen pants.

Shane didn't really know what to expect when the taxi lurched to a stop in front of their hotel. Ilya had been very secretive about the reservation, so when they pulled up to the lobby, he was awestruck.

The hotel was expansive, with a large open concept and twenty-foot ceilings. The floor-to-ceiling windows were open and the light breeze made the cream curtains sway in the wind beautifully. The furniture adorning the lobby was clearly expensive and Shane wondered just how much money they'd spent on this. As they checked in, a bellboy grabbed their bags from them to leave them unencumbered by their luggage.

The receptionist handed them their key cards. She instructed them that although their room was ready, they could wander around the grounds for as long as they wanted. Ilya wrapped his arm around Shane's shoulders, kissing the crown of his head as they explored the lobby. Shane found himself drawn to the patio, the warm breeze grazing his skin, inhaling the scent of salty ocean air.

"This is insane," Shane said, looking at the cliff-side ocean view in front of him. It looked straight out of a movie. The colours alone were amazing, with the lushness of the island in full swing for early June. Shane felt the rhythm of the ocean, the sound of waves crashing against the shore.

"We only get one honeymoon, *moya lyubov*," Ilya answered.

"How much was this place?"

"Ah," Ilya shrugged. "Doesn't matter. I make more money than you anyway, let me spoil you."

"Fuck off," Shane pushed Ilya jokingly.

It wasn't entirely untrue, albeit marginally. Shane had taken quite the pay-cut when he joined the Centaurs. Plus, Ilya had just signed a major deal with Gucci, on top of a very lucrative partnership in a niche vodka brand. Even though Shane had made a lot more money than Ilya in sponsorships in his years as a Voyageur, and still did the occasional commercial for CCM and Rolex, he was definitely no longer the main breadwinner in their marriage. Ilya couldn't help but remind him, which was both endearing and annoying, because they share a bank account.

Shane settled into Ilya's arms as Ilya rested his chin on the top of Shane's head. They were silent, taking in the breathtaking view in front of them. Ilya thought that, if he could have proposed to Shane anywhere, this probably wouldn't have been a bad place to do it.

"Come, let's change into our swimsuits and run into the ocean," Ilya said, nibbling at Shane's ear.

Shane grinned, then a yawn broke his smile. It was only four in the afternoon, but they'd just spent the better part of two days travelling with little sleep.

"Tired already?" Ilya frowned.

"No, I'm—" another yawn interrupted Shane, "-- not."

"Liar," Ilya replied, rolling the R for emphasis in his Russian lilt. "Is okay. Me too. We nap then run into ocean, yes?"

Shane hummed in agreement. They made their way to the elevators. Ilya scanned his keycard against the elevator access pad and pressed the *P* button. Shane cocked an eyebrow at him. Ilya shrugged, a soft smile on his face.

Shane's jaw dropped as he stepped off the elevator and into their room. The presidential suite was adorned with what could only be described as a florist's wet dream. Hibiscus, bougainvillea, and lilies covered almost every surface. An orange tree framed the wall-length window. The scent alone was incredible.

Ilya nudged Shane out of his stupor, grinning at him.

"Did you...?"

"Of course," Ilya huffed proudly. "I am mushy inside for you."

Shane knew he wore the sappiest expression on his face, but he couldn't help it. This was the most romantic thing anyone had ever done for him. He was pretty sure this was the most romantic thing anyone had done for anyone.

Ilya swaggered into the room where a tray with two wine glasses sat. He handed one to Shane, who sipped at it, still mystified that anyone could love him this much.

"Fuck, Ilya. *Ya tebya lyublyu*. So much."

Ilya's heart skipped. He knew Shane had only said *I love you* in Russian because, at this moment, he wanted Ilya to know just how deeply his love ran. He wanted no language barrier to hide behind. Ilya pressed an amorous kiss to Shane, letting Shane's tongue find his.

He broke away and held Shane's face in his hands. His thumb ran gently along Shane's cheek as he looked into his onyx eyes, taking in a deep breath through his nose.

"You need to shower. You stink like airport."

Shane laughed. "Way to ruin the moment."

Ilya chuckled, his thumb still drawing circles on Shane's jaw. He planted another kiss on him. "Shower, nap, fuck, romantic ocean running. That is plan."

"Mmm, I take issue with that order," Shane sighed lovingly against him. They never did get around to that last task.

They had been in Ibiza for three days already and had scarcely left their room. They really only left to go for jogs in the morning or lounge by the pool for a few minutes before Ilya would drag Shane back to bed. The room service was amazing, you could get anything – *anything*– and they'd just leave it out for you. Despite the fact that Ilya would have been more than content to stay in their hotel for the remainder of their trip, he figured they should at least *try* to see what all this talk about the Ibizan nightlife was about.

“We should go out tonight,” Ilya said, a toothbrush in his mouth as he peered out of the bathroom to look at Shane. Shane was laying on the bed in the luxe robe the hotel had provided, a book in his lap and his glasses low on the bridge of his nose.

“Okay,” Shane agreed. “Apparently the hotel restaurant has a Michelin star. A girl at the pool yesterday was telling me the paella here is amazing.”

“Ugh, *nyet*, you are so boring, Hollander. I meant a *club*. Not a restaurant.”

“Oh.” Shane frowned. “You know I’m not really into all that stuff.”

“We are in Ibiza! We have to go one time. It is Friday night,” Ilya retorted. “Plus, I want to have my hands all over you in a club. We have never done that.”

Shane sat up, looking pensive for a moment. He supposed it was true. They’d been married for a year, and public for just a bit longer than that, but they were still getting used to actually being able to be free together. Clubbing had never really been Shane’s thing, though, and with the hockey season Shane just didn’t see the appeal in getting drunk enough to actually be able to dance.

Shane *could* see the appeal in having Ilya’s hands all over him in a club, though. Especially here, in Europe, where their fanbase was largely nonexistent and their risk of being posted online feeling each other up was near zero.

“Okay, sure, why not,” Shane shrugged.

“Yes!” Ilya exclaimed, flattening himself against Shane on the bed. “I thought I would have to be much more convincing. I brought you nice clothes for clubbing.”

“What’s wrong with my clothes?” Shane glared. Ilya looked at him with a deadpan, incredulous look.

“They are *boring*, like you, *moya zayka*. A white t-shirt and black jeans? Groundbreaking.”

Shane threw his book off to the side and grabbed Ilya’s face in his hands, smushing his cheeks against his palms. “You wound me, Rozanov.”

Ilya made a kissy face, his lips puckering like a fish as Shane smushed his cheeks harder.

A few hours later, Shane found himself staring in the bathroom mirror in their hotel room. Ilya had put him in some loose black slacks and a sheer black top that fell just below his belly button, his nipples visible through the shirt (if you could even call it that). A wide strip of his skin was visible above his waistband. He was struck by how...*gay* he looked. He couldn’t help but feel out of his comfort zone, but he knew he looked good. Plus, he kind of liked being Ilya’s little doll.

Ilya stood next to him in white linen pants and a black velvet button up, with only the bottom three buttons in use. He kind of looked like a European porn-star. His chain dangled seductively onto his chest. Ilya slapped some aftershave onto his jaw, the alcohol mixing with his smoky-spiced cologne, and affixed his hair with some pomade. He sipped his rocks glass

filled with vodka. Even though Ilya's outfit was similar in style, he made it look undeniably masculine. Shane could picture Ilya posing for a magazine cover in this outfit, probably leaning on an antique couch with his legs spread wide and a tiger next to him.

Shane sipped at the cocktail Ilya had ordered up to the room for them to soothe his nerves. He figured he would need five more of these before he could even attempt being on a dance floor. He reminded himself that there was no morning practice, no interviews, no *real* reason why he should be anything but hedonistic tonight.

They quickly made their way to the lobby and then into a taxi. Ilya gave the driver the address for the club, and Shane swallowed back any nerves he was feeling. Tonight was to have fun.

As they exited the taxi, Ilya shoved some euros to the driver. The night air was humid and thick, and Shane could hear the bass thumping from the venue they stood outside of. Despite the fact that it was already one in the morning, the night seemed far from over. It dawned on him as he looked at the line of men dressed in similar outfits where Ilya had taken them.

"Is this a gay club?" Shane asked, feeling stupid as the question left his mouth, too late to shove it back down his throat.

Ilya flashed his teeth coyly. "*Da*. Ibiza has a big queer scene. Scott Hunter told me."

Ilya flashed a hundred euro bill at the bouncer to skip the line, and the bass Shane had heard from outside morphed into a relentless techno beat. The club had almost no lighting, save for a pink and purple light that flashed across the room in tune with the beat. Ilya dragged Shane to the bar, pushing past the crowd of people, where the shirtless bartender greeted them with a smile.

"Four shots of vodka!" Ilya yelled above the ruthless noise. The bartender nodded. "Not the cheap shit! *Spasiba!*"

Four tiny glasses were placed on the bar in front of them. Ilya handed Shane one, which he swung back, grimacing as it burned his throat. Ilya looked at him adoringly, taking his own shot.

"You're supposed to wait for me to take it with you!" Ilya said, his breath hot against Shane's neck as he leaned over to instruct him on proper shot etiquette. Shane felt his cheeks turn red.

He handed Shane the next one with his index finger held up, instructing him to wait while Ilya grabbed his own. Ilya held his shot glass up to Shane's, clinking them together, then linked their arms and nodded at him. Shane watched as Ilya held the glass up to his lips, winking, and shot it back in tandem. This one burned a little less, but Shane grimaced at the taste nonetheless.

Ilya pulled Shane to him. He placed his mouth against him, his lips pursed, and Shane was surprised at the feeling of cool liquid switching from Ilya's mouth to his. Shane swallowed the vodka from Ilya's mouth with some shock. He looked at Ilya with his lips parted, a breath escaping him.

“I’m gonna be tripping over myself,” Shane muttered, but he couldn’t help feeling a warm trickle float down his chest at the exchange.

“Let’s dance!” Ilya shouted over the music. Ilya grabbed Shane’s arm and pulled him into the middle of the dancefloor. Shane could already feel the alcohol working through him. It didn’t help that he’d already had a cocktail and a glass of wine at the hotel. He tried to mimic what other people were doing, with little result, his arms hanging languidly by his sides.

Ilya seemed so natural in this environment – abrasive and chaotic and seductive, just like him. Shane supposed that Ilya had spent a considerable amount of time in nightclubs just like this. Before Shane could even really get in his own head about what to do with his hands, Ilya spun him around and pushed himself against his back side. Ilya hadn’t exaggerated his intentions – his hands were all over him. Shane relaxed into him and let him lead. He ground his hips back, bodies around him sweaty but free and pulsing and alive.

Ilya watched, mesmerized, as Shane let himself get lost in the music. The shots they had just taken were clearly taking effect, and Ilya couldn’t remember the last time he’d seen Shane so unrestricted. He was beautiful like this, glowing under fluorescent lighting without a care in the world.

“I have a surprise for you,” Ilya said breathily into Shane’s ear after they’d been dancing for a few songs, turning him around to face him.

“Oh, do you now?” Shane said with a questioning arch of his brow.

Ilya pulled out two tiny bottles with the words *Super Rush!* on the label. Shane grabbed a bottle curiously.

“What is this?”

“Is this your first day being gay?” Ilya laughed. “They’re poppers. But you don’t have to if you don’t want to.”

Shane inspected the bottle curiously. “We get drug tested.”

Ilya shrugged. “They don’t test for this. Also, season only starts in four months, so plenty of time to get out of your system.”

“What does it...do?” Shane asked.

“Makes you feel good,” Ilya replied. “Makes your muscles relaxed. Give you a little high. Only lasts a few minutes. But if you don’t want to, Shane, we won’t.”

“What’s the point, then?”

Ilya smiled at his stupid, lovely husband. “Take it and find out.”

Shane opened the lid and brought it to his lips before Ilya stopped him.

“No no, you sniff,” Ilya said. He made a show of taking the bottle and bringing it up to his nose, inhaling deeply. He breathed a sigh as the inhalant took effect. Ilya passed the bottle back to Shane.

Shane looked at the bottle, then at Ilya, who had a goofy smile on his face. *Fuck it. Vacation Shane*, he thought as he brought the bottle up to his nose. He shook his head at the scent, a horrible blend of acetone and ripe banana.

At first, he felt nothing. Then the head rush hit him. A sudden light-headed, floaty feeling. The next thing he felt was a looseness as his muscles relaxed entirely. He felt a slight euphoria as the sensation washed over him, his heartbeat thumping in his chest. He felt warm and bright, and worse, giggly.

Ilya grabbed the bottle back and screwed the lid on tightly. Ilya pulled Shane in and kissed him unabashedly on the dance floor. Shane giggled against Ilya’s mouth, wrapping his arms around Ilya’s shoulders, his body more relaxed than it had been in two decades. He felt so loose that he wondered if Ilya would even need to prep him, if they fucked right now, here, on the dancefloor. They stayed like that for a while, foreheads pressed together as they moved to the music. Two songs passed before Shane felt himself come back to a regular, purely drunken state.

“Fuck,” Shane laughed. “That was nice.”

“Mm,” Ilya hummed in agreement. “You want something else to drink?”

“Sure,” Shane replied. Ilya unwrapped himself, and suddenly Shane missed the warmth that he had provided. Shane quickly lost sight of Ilya as he parted the crowd on his way to the bar.

Shane realized, with some stupor, that he felt *good*, and maybe a little drunk. He had never been around so many queer people. The music was perfect. The energy was palpable. He was so happy he could cry. Shane danced alone, letting the music wash over him. He was by no means a good dancer, especially without Ilya’s guiding hands, but for the first time in his life, he didn’t feel like he looked completely ridiculous.

Ilya came back up behind him, his hands planted on Shane’s hips and Shane ground hard against him. He let the music do the talking as he danced with Ilya’s hands on him, eyes shut. He didn’t know how long they danced like that, lost entirely in the relentless and unerring beat.

Except, no, that wasn’t Ilya, because Ilya was in front of him, two highball glasses in hand and mouth agape. Shane spun around, trying to verify if he was so drunk that he was seeing double, and saw a stranger (an undeniably hot stranger, but still).

“What the fuck?” Shane sputtered.

The stranger, undeterred, leaned in to kiss Shane. His lips felt impossibly different to Ilya’s. Shane stood totally still, frozen for a moment with his eyes wide, before pushing the guy off him roughly.

Shane spun back around to find that Ilya had vanished. Shane scanned the crowd quickly, his eyes darting methodically around before his eyes landed on Ilya exiting the club. Shane pushed through the crowd, suddenly feeling a lot more sober than he actually was, brimming with panic.

He swung the door open and bumped into some younger men, scantily clad, who bitched at him for knocking into them. Shane muttered a weak apology as he looked left and right, no sign of Ilya in sight. Shane felt his heart in his throat as he called out. "Ilya!"

He rounded the corner of the street to find Ilya angrily and unsuccessfully flicking his lighter over and over, a Malboro between his teeth.

"Ilya," Shane exclaimed.

"Shane, *don't*," Ilya growled, his grip on his lighter tightening.

"Please, I can explain."

"I need you to leave me alone right now," Ilya replied coldly, the cigarette held between his teeth.

"No, I'm not—" Shane started.

"Shane, I *need* you to leave me alone. I cannot look at you right now." Ilya successfully got a flame going and inhaled a deep breath, his lips pursed around the cigarette.

"Ilya, I thought he was *you*!"

Ilya barked a sinister laugh. "You *saw me* and then you kissed him."

"No, *he* kissed *me*," Shane's voice was filled with anguish.

"Oh, you want to be fucking... what's fucking English word," Ilya gritted out. "Fucking *semantic*? *Yerunda*." *Bullshit*, Shane knew that one.

"Okay, I'm astounded that you know that word right now. But no – no, that's not what... I just... he kissed *me*, okay? And I fucking – I fucking *froze* because, like, what the fuck, right?"

Ilya glared at Shane. He took a long, aggressive puff of the dart. Shane could tell he didn't believe him. Didn't want to believe him. Ilya was so clouded with jealousy, he *knew* what he saw, he wasn't a fucking idiot. Whatever Shane said right now, whatever excuses he had, Ilya didn't want to hear it. It didn't help that the stranger happened to be beautiful. Maybe in other circumstances, Ilya could feel pride that *his* man had been propositioned by some beautiful Spaniard. Maybe they'd even have invited him up to their hotel room and let him watch. But Ilya was faced with the real possibility that this person could probably give Shane everything he wanted without all this fucking baggage – without the dead parents, the addict brother, the years of hiding.

Ilya laughed, devoid of all humour. “You froze? You were bouncing your ass against him for a full fucking song, Shane. I watched it. You were giving him signals. You *wanted* him, yes? You wanted him to take you back to *our* hotel room and fuck you.” He said it just to be mean. He was seething. He felt both totally out of his body and painfully on fire.

“No!” Shane exclaimed. “Ilya, I really... I thought he was you. I don’t want anybody else. I *never* want anybody else except for you.”

Ilya stayed silent as he pulled another agonizing puff off his cig. He put the cigarette out against the wall and put the butt in his pocket.

“I don’t want to talk to you right now,” Ilya said, dangerously quiet. He knew he was being cruel, and that some part of him knew that Shane might actually be telling the truth, but he didn’t want to hear it. Ilya knew if they kept talking, he’d start sobbing. He swallowed hard. “I’m going back to the hotel.”

Ilya brushed past Shane.

“No,” Shane said defiantly. He put on a brave face. He grabbed Ilya’s wrist as he walked away.

“No?” Ilya laughed.

“*No*. You’re going to fucking listen to me. I didn’t... I would *never* do that. I really thought he was you. I didn’t even turn around until I saw you standing there, and then that guy just fucking planting one on me, and I didn’t even have time to react. I love you so much, more than I’ve ever loved anything,” Shane said. His voice cracked as he said, “Please don’t go. Please don’t leave.”

Ilya watched as Shane’s tears welled, threatening to spill over.

Ilya’s anger tempered. He felt his own eyes get wet and scrubbed at his face. Ilya, the man who hadn’t even cried at his father’s funeral, reduced to burgeoning tears out of cold rage and insecurity and jealousy. “I don’t know what to say.”

“Just please believe me. Just say you believe me. Please,” Shane begged, a few tears making good on their promise and spilling over onto Shane’s cheeks.

Ilya suddenly felt very cold, like all the air around him had turned into an arctic breeze. He felt his lips go numb. The only warmth he felt was from Shane’s hand, still grasping his wrist.

“Please,” Shane repeated. “*Ya tebya lyublyu.*”

Ilya realized, staring at Shane’s tear-streaked face, that he was wildly wrong. In a world of cheaters and thieves and liars, Shane was probably the only person he really trusted. Ilya let a strangled noise escape him as he grabbed Shane by the shoulders and pulled him in. Shane melted against him, tiny and precious like a pearl. They both let out a few deep breaths as

Ilya held him. Ilya gnawed at Shane's lip, kissing his wet cheeks. Shane let out an animalistic whimper, letting his entire body weight be carried by Ilya.

"I'm sorry, I believe you," He whispered, resting his chin against Shane's head, a few silent tears falling off his jaw and into Shane's hair. "I believe you."

Shane's breathing shuttered. "I would *never*—"

"I know," Ilya cut him off, "I know, *zaychik*, I know. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry."

They stayed like that for a long time, holding each other. Ilya pulled back first, swiping a thumb across Shane's face to clear the tears away.

"Do you want to go back in the club?" Shane asked, looking up at him with tears hanging from his lashes, not a hint of desire to do so in his voice. But Ilya knew Shane would, if it was what he had wanted.

Ilya shook his head slowly. "No," he said, shaking his head more aggressively. "I want to go home."

They rounded the corner, faced again with the crowd of stragglers from outside the club. The line had somehow gotten longer, even though it was well past 2:30am. Shane had heard that European nightlife started later – this was proof of it. There were groups of smokers huddled in little cliques. The world around them had kept moving, even when Shane thought it stood still.

They got into a taxi that had just dropped off a group of girls piling out of it like a clown car, laughing amongst themselves. Ilya helped Shane into the cab, climbing in behind him.

The ride back was deafeningly quiet compared to the loud club environment they'd just been in. Ilya rubbed circles on the back of Shane's hand with his thumb, staring out the car window. He had never felt such unadulterated rage before – at least, not about Shane. It scared him, if he was honest, that he was capable of it. He felt guilty that he had even gone to that dark place inside himself. He'd faced verbal abuse all throughout his childhood – his father, obviously, but also his coaches, his friends. He wondered if part of that was written into his DNA.

When Ilya looked back on the moment, he saw Shane's surprise at his apparition in front of him, and then saw Shane stiffen as the faceless man took advantage of Shane's shock. He was so blinded by his anger that he couldn't see that Shane needed him. What if that guy had tried to do something else to Shane? Something more nefarious? Ilya wouldn't have been there to protect him. He felt like he had failed as a partner for not being there. For being so caught up in his own head that he couldn't see what was happening right in front of him. He saw it so *clearly* in his memory, now unclouded by ego and green jealousy, that he couldn't tell whether to pity himself or bang his head into a wall.

It felt grossly insecure. Ilya had never felt anything like it.

They got out of the taxi, Shane paying the driver too much money, and wordlessly got into the elevator.

“Hey,” Shane said softly as they entered the penthouse. Ilya turned to look at him. “Please don’t shut me out. And I’m sorry, again.”

Ilya gave him an exhausted smile. “I know. You don’t have to be sorry. I... was lost in moment.”

Shane pressed a light kiss to Ilya’s lips. Shane felt Ilya’s fatigue and began unbuttoning his shirt for him, helping him undo his laces and pulling off his shoes. He undressed him fully and helped him climb into bed.

Shane quietly shut the bathroom door behind him. Ilya heard the shower start as Shane cleaned the sweat off himself. Ilya stared up at the ornate ceiling of their hotel room. He felt like there was a thousand pounds pressing onto his chest. He thought of his mother then. About whether this is the type of man she would have wanted him to be – if he was too much like his father, if she’d hate this version of him that he’d grown up to be. Maybe Ilya wasn’t physically abusive – he would never lay a hand on another person off the ice – but had he tormented Shane? Had he punished him for something he wasn’t capable of controlling?

Shane reappeared moments later, Ilya’s toothbrush in one hand and a wet washcloth in the other. Shane handed Ilya the toothbrush as he began to gently clean Ilya’s face, moving down his neck and onto his chest. Ilya looked away from Shane, unable to stomach being loved like this. Sure, Ilya was more showy in his love, with flashy and grand gestures, but Shane loved him quietly. Maybe that was real love – love that could be felt in every silence. Ilya felt the pressure in his chest double.

“*Ya tebya lyublyu*,” Shane said quietly. Shane was definitely not the most perceptive person, but the discomfort radiating off Ilya was palpable. Shane knew that this row would not just be solved with one conversation. A conversation neither of them wanted to have right then. There was something fighting inside Ilya that Shane wasn’t sure was entirely related to this fight. Maybe part of it was, but not entirely. Shane’s inability to read people was always something he was working against, but he felt like an expert in Ilya at this point. A part of Shane wished that this sadness was actually from this fight alone, even if Shane was responsible. That way, he’d at least be able to do *something* to drag the charming and empathetic boy out of the shell he’d hidden in.

“*Ya tebya lyublyu*,” Ilya replied, his voice raw. “We should never go clubbing again,” Ilya half-heartedly attempted a joke, his mouth moving clumsily around his toothbrush. Shane smiled.

“No. We should,” Shane placed a tender kiss on his chest. “I was having fun, up until that fucking guy ruined it.”

With only two days left of their trip, Shane figured they should visit at least one restaurant. Even the hotel one would do. They couldn't just live off of the room service menu and the mini bar, which Ilya had stuck one of his new Madrid magnets on as soon as they had unpacked. Even though Shane loved being taken by Ilya at all hours, he wondered if they shouldn't entirely waste their trip by staying locked away in their hotel room.

"You know what I realized?" Shane said, looking over his sunglasses at Ilya, who was basking in the morning sunlight.

"What did you realize?" Ilya smiled, eyes still closed as he tanned on a chaise longue on their balcony.

"We haven't even been down to the beach yet," Shane said, sipping at his cortado.

Ilya sat up, his sunglasses falling off the chair from where they'd been resting on his chest. "Impossible."

Shane smiled into his espresso cup. "Possible."

"Shane! We have to fix that right now," Ilya said, standing up. He stretched his arms above his head. Shane's eyes lingered on Ilya's broad chest, looking particularly more golden than it had earlier this week. Shane pushed away any nagging about sunscreen use.

"Right now?" Shane asked, brazenly eyeing Ilya's arms and broad shoulders as he came over and gathered their used plates off the table, remnants of eggs benedict and oranges from their tree from breakfast. Which, normally Shane would have scrunched his nose at, favouring a blander, less calorie dense breakfast, but Ilya kept insisting that "it's okay to be a bit fat on your honeymoon." Shane had eaten every morsel off the plate – Ilya had licked his clean.

"Right now, pervert," Ilya said, pressing a kiss to Shane's crown and pulling his shirt on.

Ilya quickly packed a beach bag for them with towels, snacks, water, and the mickey of vodka he'd taken out of the mini fridge. He snuck in his cigarettes too. Shane tossed Ilya the sunscreen that he had conveniently forgotten to pack.

They made their way down, walking through the lobby to reach the secluded section of the beach reserved for guests of the hotel.

Ilya made a show of standing with his hands squarely on his hips, chest puffed out, staring into the ocean. He looked like a dad on holiday, with his cream shorts and floral shirt. "This looks just like Russia."

Shane snorted. He began unpacking the bag, setting out the extra-large beach towel so they could lay down. Ilya felt something hit his back and turned to look at Shane scowling at him. Ilya glanced down and saw what had hit him – his pack of Malboros. Ilya smiled sheepishly.

"Can I use Vacation Ilya as excuse?"

“Not if you smoke them when you’re not on vacation,” Shane huffed.

“Bring back Vacation Shane, I miss him,” Ilya said as he laid down beside Shane on the towel. Shane pulled his tank top off and tossed the sunscreen to Ilya, a wordless instruction to apply it to his back. Shane rejoiced at the feeling of Ilya rubbing the cream in, paying special attention to the knots in his shoulder blades. He set an alarm on his phone to remind him to reapply in ninety minutes.

“Your turn,” Shane said, instructing Ilya to take his shirt off. Ilya groaned, pulling the button up off his head instead of undoing the buttons and dropping it in a bunch into the sand. Shane grimaced at it.

Shane squirted some of the lotion straight onto Ilya’s back, earning an unsatisfied gasp as the cold cream splattered onto him. Shane started in the center of Ilya’s back, slowly massaging it in until he reached Ilya’s shoulders, where Shane massaged his upper traps. Ilya moaned loudly at the feeling of his muscles being treated.

Shane’s hands stilled on Ilya’s shoulders. He’d been trying to gather the nerve to start this conversation for the past forty-eight hours, but unlike Ilya, who can sense a shift in Shane in seconds, it takes him a little longer to figure out how he’s feeling, and even longer to figure out how to verbalize it. A forty-eight hour turn around is actually kind of a spectacular feat for him.

“Ilya?” Shane asked softly.

“Mm?” Ilya responded, his eyes lidded as he faced the ocean.

“Are you okay?”

Ilya’s shoulders tensed under Shane’s palms. He looked straight at the vast ocean before him. He felt a little trapped in that moment, like an animal, like he should start gnawing at his leg to free himself from the snare. “What do you mean?” He asked back, knowing fully well what Shane meant. They’d had conversations like this before, when Ilya was first diagnosed with depression, and then for a while it felt like the *only* conversation they had. He knew Shane meant well, but sometimes he couldn’t handle it. He dug his feet into the warm sand.

“I know that I’m responsible for what happened the other night—”

“No, you’re not,” Ilya interrupted.

“Okay, maybe not fully, but partially at least – hey, don’t give me that face – but it sort of felt like,” Shane rubbed at the back of his neck, swallowing his bubbling anxiety. “Sort of felt a little bigger than just that moment.”

Ilya didn’t feel particularly prepared to have this conversation with Shane right now. He knew it needed to be had, but he figured if he didn’t bring it up, it would fizzle away and he just could just deal with his insecurities on his own. Or talk to his therapist about it without burdening Shane. Ilya rubbed at his face, releasing a heavy sigh.

“I just...” Ilya started. He trailed off, looking into the horizon. Suddenly the warm sun that he normally basked in was suffocating and the sand on his feet was scorching. Ilya looked up at the sky, and it was the same colour as the ocean, which was disorienting. He blinked quickly. “I feel like I failed you.”

“What do you mean?” Shane asked, his brows furrowed.

“I know you are capable of handling yourself, yes? But I brought you to a nightclub. I gave you alcohol. I gave you drugs. And then I left you when you could have gotten...” Ilya’s throat tightened. “When that situation could have gotten worse, you understand? I didn’t protect you. I walked out like a bitch. I was so angry and sad that I walked away and then I was so *mean* to you.” Ilya’s throat constricted around the words like they were punishing him for being spoken. His fingers twitched in want of his cigarettes. “I feel very ashamed and guilty.”

“Ilya...”

“And I was so jealous. I don’t know what came over me. And I thought...” *I thought that I was like my father. That all the years I spent in therapy undoing his damage was worthless. Because I wanted to be cruel.* “I thought maybe I was not good for you. That you deserve better.”

“Ilya,” Shane said seriously. That last sentence dropped like a bomb. Ilya couldn’t meet his gaze, his stomach weighing like he’d eaten a pound of lead. “Don’t fucking do that. You are not allowed to talk about yourself that way.”

Shane reached over to grab Ilya’s hands from where they were pressing on his face – Ilya hadn’t even realized he’d been hiding behind them. Shane’s grip was firm, grounding. “Look at me. Please.”

Ilya, with reluctance, met his gaze.

Shane pulled Ilya’s hands into his lap. “The thing that scared me wasn’t that guy. It was seeing you walk away. It was thinking that you didn’t believe me. That’s what terrified me.” His voice cracked. “I’ve spent so much of my life afraid. Afraid of who I am, what people think, afraid of losing hockey – losing everything. But then you came into my life and I wasn’t afraid anymore.

“You said you thought you weren’t good for me? That I deserve better? You are the best thing that has ever happened to me. If it weren’t for you, I’d probably be in some loveless marriage with a woman because I was too afraid to be myself. I’d be miserable and pretending and dying inside.” Shane’s voice dropped to a whisper. “You didn’t fail. Besides, I probably would’ve reacted a hundred times worse if I had seen some guy trying to stick his tongue down your throat.”

“Mm, yes, you would’ve,” Ilya said, half-joking. He looked pensive, finally looking up at Shane. “But still. I feel guilty.”

“Well, don’t,” Shane replied with an air of finality.

Ilya leaned over to place his head on Shane's shoulder. He was met with the oily feeling of freshly applied sunscreen. "I don't know what I would do if something bad happened to you," He admitted, quietly.

"Right," Shane replied. He understood where Ilya was coming from. "But I need you to know that I'm not useless. I'm not, like, some damsel or whatever who needs protecting all the time. I know you want to take care of me, and I love that about you. But I can handle myself. I've been handling myself my entire life."

Ilya felt something break open in his chest. "I know," He was silent for a beat. Ilya sat up straighter, looking at Shane again. He cracked a wry smile. "But you are still my princess."

"Shut up," Shane said, feigning annoyance. Shane continued, his voice steadier. "I need you to know that I can save myself too. I need you to trust that. Can you do that?"

Ilya nodded. He didn't trust his voice.

"And I need you to talk to me," Shane said. "When you're feeling like this – jealous or scared or whatever– I need you to tell me instead of shutting down. Because *that's* what scared me. Not the anger. That I can understand. What I can't get behind is the walking away."

"I know," Ilya managed, his voice rough. "I'm sorry."

"Sometimes, I look at you and all I can think about is where you go. When you're stuck in your head like that."

Ilya paused a beat, wondering if his next admission would break him in half. "I was just... I was in my head, you know? Thinking about my father. Thinking about being like him."

Shane's expression softened. "You're nothing like him. You know that, right?"

"Sometimes I don't know," Ilya admitted quietly. "That rage... I've never felt anything like it before."

"That wasn't rage like your father's," Shane said firmly. "That was fear. You were scared of losing me. That's different. Your father was cruel for the sake of cruelty. It's not the same."

"It felt the same," Ilya said quietly.

"But it's not." Shane moved so their knees were touching. "You came back. You apologized. You listened to me. You believed me. Your father never would have done any of those things."

Ilya felt a pang in his chest. He closed his eyes. He wanted to believe Shane, but he wasn't sure he was there yet.

"Can I tell you something?"

"*Da*. Sharing circle." Ilya smiled weakly.

“I get jealous too,” Shane admitted. “You’re so good at being yourself. You don’t second guess everything like I do. You just... exist, and people love you for it. And I know that it’s stupid, but there’s this small, ugly part of me that wants that. Attention like that. Being loved without feeling like I need to prove why all the time.” Shane looked down at their joined hands. “So I get it. The jealousy. It makes you feel crazy.”

“Shane,” Ilya said fiercely. “This attention— it means nothing without you.”

“I know that now,” Shane said. “But feelings aren’t always logical, are they?”

“*Nyet*,” Ilya agreed. A small smile tugged at his lips despite the heaviness of the conversation. Shane traced his thumb over Ilya’s knuckles as the sound of waves filled the space between them.

“What do you need from me?” Shane asked. “To feel secure, I mean.”

Ilya thought about it. “I don’t know if it’s about you,” he said slowly. “I think it’s about me. Trusting this is real. That you won’t wake up one day and realize you can have someone easier. Without all my...” he gestured vaguely, “baggage.”

“I don’t want someone easier,” Shane said. “I want you. All of you. Baggage included.” He paused. “But I need something from you, too.”

“What do you need?”

“I need you to actually talk to your therapist about this,” Shane replied. “About how you’re feeling. The jealousy, your dad, feeling like you failed me. Because I can try to reassure you, but we both know I’m kind of shit at that.”

Ilya laughed.

“There’s something going on in here —” Shane tapped Ilya’s forehead gently, “-- that I can’t fix alone.”

Ilya wanted to argue, say he had it under control, but he knew Shane was right. “Okay,” he said quietly. “I will.”

“Promise?”

“Promise.”

Shane studied his face for a moment. “Okay. Good.”

Another pause. A seagull cried overhead.

“I love you because you are the most caring man I have ever known,” Shane said, echoing his words from two nights ago, but with more weight behind them now. “Because you look out for everyone around you, and you make me laugh, and you challenge me, and you’re so stupidly good at hockey that it makes me want to tear all my clothes off. How can I deserve better when I’ve got the best?”

Ilya cracked a weak smile at the sheer corniness of Shane's reassurance. "Like Katy Perry."

"What? What does she have to do with this?"

Ilya hummed along to *Thinking of You*. "How do I get better once I've had the best," He sang softly, entirely off pitch because he was so far from a music career that it was almost laughable.

Shane looked at Ilya for a beat, a deep crease forming between his brows, trying to figure out if Ilya was fucking with him. He let out a snort.

"What? Is a good song," Ilya shrugged, and the moment felt a little lighter somehow, the tension breaking. "You said it, not me."

"No, you definitely said it. I was speaking from the heart."

"The heart of a smash hit, maybe."

"How do you... what the hell is wrong with you," Shane laughed. Ilya reached out and pulled Shane into his lap, wrapping his arms around him. Shane settled against his chest, both men facing the ocean now.

"And what do you need?" Ilya murmured into Shane's hair. "You never said."

Shane thought about it. "I need you to talk to me instead of shutting down. I'm not... good, at seeing when things are off. And I need you to not walk away. Even when you're angry, or scared, or whatever."

"I can do that." Ilya's voice was thick with emotion. "I will do that."

"And I'll work on being less in my head," Shane offered. Ilya chuckled against Shane's head, nuzzling his nose into his hair.

"We're so fucked up," Ilya laughed, pressing a kiss to Shane's temple.

"Yeah," Shane agreed, lacing their fingers together. "But we're fucked up together. That's what matters."

They sat like that for a long time, watching the ocean pulse in its eternal rhythm, feeling each other breathe, skin warm and sticky as the sun shone down on them.

Shane could tell Ilya was done with the seriousness of their conversation. It wasn't over – these types of conversations had to be ongoing – but he didn't want to completely berate Ilya with questions. Shane stirred and palmed at his pocket, feeling like the moment was right. "I got you something."

Ilya looked at him, eyebrows raised. "You did?"

Shane's mouth twisted up as he pulled out a tiny drawstring bag and handed it to Ilya. Ilya looked at it curiously, opening it carefully. He emptied the bag into his palm and a gold ring

brimmed with six tiny different coloured stones fell out. He inspected it.

“You got me a pride ring?” Ilya joked, but his voice was soft.

“No, idiot. Shut up,” Shane said, but there was no heat in it. “I know I’m a little early, but it’s our anniversary, and I thought it would be perfect. Six years.”

“Shane, we’ve been together for twelve.”

Shane huffed. “Not officially. Six years since we said ‘I love you.’”

Ilya looked down at the ring, the stones catching the sunlight. Six years since Shane had brought him to his cottage and changed everything. Six years of learning how to love someone – how to be loved– and how to fuck it up and fix it and fuck it up again.

“Maybe you are more mushy than me,” Ilya said, his voice cracking.

“Impossible.”

“Yes, impossible,” Ilya agreed. He slipped the ring snugly above his wedding ring and admired how it looked. “I love it. Thank you.”

He pulled Shane back in for a kiss, slow and sweet and full of promise. When they pulled apart, Shane rested his forehead against Ilya’s. They weren’t perfect. They were messy and complicated and still learning how to do this. But they were doing it together.

“Come on,” Ilya said eventually. “Let’s get in the water before I burn like lobster.”

They spent the rest of the day in and out of the water. Ilya made the mistake of tossing a potato chip to a seagull and they spent a good ten minutes surrounded by a screeching horde of them. When a cute British girl invited them to a pick-up volleyball game, they joined and played on opposite teams. Ilya’s natural athleticism and height advantage won his team the game, and Shane scowled for thirty minutes about it. Even he could admit, though, that it felt kind of good to play against each other again. He definitely loved playing hockey alongside Ilya, but sometimes he missed how electric it felt to pry a win out of the other's hands.

Packing up their beach gear, Shane rubbed at his forearms, his muscles sore from the effort he’d expended. Even though they’d been going for runs in the morning, the fitness facilities had left much to desire, so they hadn’t been doing any kind of regular weight training or stretching (outside of the various, sometimes uncomfortable positions Ilya had put him in). He felt the lactic acid built up in his thighs the most.

Later, after *finally* paying a visit to the Michelin-star hotel restaurant, they found themselves back in their room, unwinding from their most active day on vacation yet. Ilya tossed his hotel key on the bedside table, undressing as he moved towards the bathroom. Shane picked up every discarded item, placing them into his designated travel laundry bag, trailing closely behind him.

Ilya wordlessly turned on the shower and got under the stream, Shane following suit. Ilya squeezed an absurd amount of the orange-scented hotel body wash and roughly scrubbed the

sand off his sticky, golden skin.

He motioned for Shane to turn around and did the same for him, spending time delicately massaging Shane's shoulders. Shane let out a moan at the pressure on a particularly tender knot. He moved his hands down to Shane's ass, gripping the thick muscle with intention.

Shane turned and grabbed at Ilya, pressing a needy kiss to his mouth. He moved deftly to Ilya's jaw, scattering a trail down his chest until he sank to his knees, running his hands over Ilya's solid body. He gripped Ilya's hips where his tan lines were most prominent. He pressed a kiss to the tip of Ilya's hardening cock, earning himself a breathy moan in response. Shane kneaded at Ilya's ass, moving a tentative finger to Ilya's hole. Ilya didn't always want to be touched there, but on especially emotional days, Shane thought it helped Ilya to get out of his head.

"You want?" Shane asked. Ilya looked down at him and gave him a nod of approval.

Ilya felt the finger circle lightly outside his entrance, a gentle pressure building in his abdomen. He felt Shane rotate his hips and turned around willingly. Facing the shower wall, Ilya felt Shane's mouth kiss at his ass cheeks. He stabilised himself with his hands on the cool tile. It felt indulgent to stand there while Shane made him feel wonderful. He sucked in a breath as he felt the warm, wet brush of Shane's tongue fluttering against his rim.

"Fuck, Shane," Ilya groaned, resting his forehead against the tile as a shudder crawled up his spine. Shane spread Ilya's cheeks to get deeper access. It sent sparks to Ilya's cock as he ached for more. He felt the increased pressure of Shane's tongue against him in long, confident strokes as the running water drowned out his desperate moans. It felt fucking fantastic. After a few minutes, Ilya was trembling.

He reached a hand down to stroke himself. He normally had the stamina of a stallion, but he'd felt undone by the day.

"Mm, don't cum yet," Shane said, pulling back. Ilya rutted his hips backwards to regain the warmth of Shane's mouth. He laughed. "You still have to fuck me."

"Fuck," Ilya said. "Get up here."

Ilya pulled Shane up to kiss him, reaching over blindly to shut the water off. They pulled apart as Shane reached for two towels. He'd never seen Ilya dry himself off with such speed.

Ilya sprawled himself out on the mattress, stroking his cock in slow movements as Shane climbed on top of him. Shane tried to ignore the fact that Ilya's wet hair was on *his* pillow. Ilya pulled Shane into a hungry kiss, pushing his tongue into Shane's mouth, their noses contorting as they molded against each other. He moved his hand from his own cock to Shane's – he was already teetering on the edge.

Shane's muscles still felt sore from their active day. He felt his thighs burn as he grinded against Ilya. He pulled back. "Do you still have that bottle?"

Ilya looked confused. They already had the lube out. "Bottle?"

Shane blushed, already feeling embarrassed at the suggestion. “The poppers.”

“Really?” Ilya exclaimed, shocked.

“Vacation Shane,” He shrugged with a lazy smile. “Don’t get used to it.”

Ilya answered with a little too much haste. “In my blue bag, the small pocket.”

Shane moved off him, finding the drug. Shane sat back on Ilya’s lap, twisting the cap open and taking a deep breath in through his nostrils. “You want some?”

“No, no,” Ilya said. “If I have some I’ll finish before you even get on top of me.”

The high, unimpeded by alcohol, felt totally different. His thighs trembled as his muscles relaxed completely, a warmth spreading over him. Ilya moved for the bottle of lube that Shane had thrown next to him, slicking two fingers. He circled them around Shane’s entrance and Shane threw his head back, letting out a delirious moan. There was barely any resistance as Ilya’s fingers pulsed into him.

“Fuck, that feels so good,” Shane said, his jaw slack. Ilya spent considerably less time than usual working Shane open. Shane started riding his fingers, Ilya’s other hand stroking Shane. “Feels fucking amazing.”

Ilya removed his fingers and gripped Shane’s thighs, flipping them and kneeling Shane’s legs apart. “If I don’t fuck you right now, I will die.”

Shane looked up at him in understanding. He flipped onto his stomach as Ilya hauled his hips up off the bed. Ilya lined himself up and drove into Shane in one smooth thrust, releasing a long list of Russian expletives. “Is okay?”

“Jesus Christ,” Shane gasped. That was all the answer Ilya needed as he started pounding into him in a steady, ruthless rhythm that had Shane’s knuckles turning white as he clawed at the bed sheets.

“*Moya malen'kaya shlyukha*,” Ilya panted. *My little slut*. Ilya pushed Shane’s shoulders down so his face was pressed against the pillow. “So perfect for me.”

“Ah,” Shane groaned. “Fuck, right there. Don’t stop.” He wrapped a hand around his dick and stroked it feverishly.

Ilya jackhammered into Shane. He gripped his hips so tightly Ilya was mildly worried they’d be bruised. “You love it?” Ilya asked, his voice shaky and strained.

“I love it, I love it, don’t stop,” Shane breathed, gripping himself with a quickening pace.

“Show me how much you love it,” Ilya commanded.

“Fuck. *Fuck*. Ilya, I’m—”

Ilya felt Shane clench around his cock. Ilya stopped trying to fight his own orgasm, his body rocking as he moaned and cursed, then finally stilled, spilling into him. Their panting was the only sound filling the room, a perfect duet of sweet release.

For a long moment, neither man said anything. Ilya swallowed hard, catching his breath, as he pulled out of Shane gently. Shane rolled onto his back, spreading his arms into a T-shape, smiling lazily as he looked up at Ilya with a dazed and blissful look on his face.

Shane grabbed a tissue and cleaned his hand. Ilya crashed down onto him.

“That was fucking hot,” Ilya sighed. Shane murmured in agreement, spreading his fingers on Ilya’s scalp and tugging at his curls.

“I think we scandalized Marina,” Shane joked, nodding at the teddy bear Ilya had bought at the airport on their dresser.

Ilya kissed Shane's jawline. “She’s seen me do much, much worse to you.”

Shane turned his face towards Ilya and kissed him deeply. “I love you so much.”

“I love you, too,” Ilya said. “I can’t believe we get to be married.”

Shane couldn’t really believe it either, even though they’d spent the past year wearing wedding rings. Somehow, this trip made it feel like they were *really* married. After they’d spent the year doing countless other things, spending intentional time away from others had reified it.

“Tomorrow is our last day here,” Shane whispered.

“Mmm, yes. But then day after is first day of rest of our lives.”

“Oh my god, that’s so fucking corny. I can’t believe people think you’re cooler than me.”

Ilya’s laugh rumbled through his chest, and Shane felt it everywhere their bodies touched. He couldn’t remember the last time he felt this light. Tomorrow, they’d pack up their souvenirs, fold away the matching outfits they’d never wear again, and start the journey back to real life. To practice schedules and interviews and the weight of being public and watched.

Maybe this was what the past six days had been about: not the honeymoon they’d planned, but the one they’d needed. He thought about all the versions of himself he’d tried on this week – matching outfits, dancing in a club full of strangers, Ilya’s fingers covered in his cum at thirty thousand feet, standing on a street corner in the middle of the night and asking him to stay. Learning that Vacation Shane wasn’t some costume he put on and took off, but just Shane – a version that existed when he stopped white-knuckling his way through life and let himself be messy and wanting and human. “I love you,” he repeated quietly, because sometimes the corniest things were also the truest. And Ilya, predictably, said it back.

End Notes

do NOT!!!! tell me what the process for getting citizenship is I am not looking that shit up
LOL

hope you liked it! pls let me know if you did :D

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