

I know every sound when you sleep

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I know every sound when you sleep

by [CallmeG](#)

Summary

The bliss and secrecy of the romantic cottage getaway is set aside when Ilya develops a fever.

Shane doesn't know what else to do.

Notes

Hiiiiiii there! Long time no see!

Long story short, my parents separated (after 25 years) and then I flunked my final unit of my degree

Anyway, it's all sorted now, my parents are still separated and I'm graduating come July.

If you follow me on Tumblr - you knew this was coming.

If you don't follow me on Tumblr - hi, you didn't know this was coming. An old friend of mine used to read my blog as "crinkled-onions" instead of crinkled-emotions

Dedicated to this person - we've been mutuals almost 3 years I want to say at this point, we've laughed, we've cried, we've laughed and cried, we've barked at fictional characters. So glad I get to finally have something to show for all our fuckery lmao.

I wouldn't necessarily say I specialise solely in sickfics anymore, but I do enjoy using them as a comforting piece to warm up to a fandom.

Any and all comments are of course appreciated, they are my fuel and I love a good chat!

Please keep the negativity to a minimum, I might delete the comment but it stays in my soul.

Also, if you haven't read a fic from me before, I am Australian. For the most part, it stays out of my fics, but if there's something there that doesn't seem quite in character - yeah, no, not sorry.

Anyway, please have my first fic after *checks calendar* EIGHT MONTHS - no, that tracks.

OH, also - Scott Hunter is my favourite character I swear. No, I swear, it's just- he's right there! It's so easy to [author is carried away in a sack]

-

Reaching for Ilya's plate, Shane offered him a soft smile.

"Did you want anything else? I could grab--"

"-no, I'm okay, thank you."

Shane took everything inside, starting to clean the plates off so he could load the dishwasher. He felt Ilya approach him from behind, wrapping his arms around his waist. Shane instinctively relaxed into his touch, leaning back into his chest.

"You are good cook," Ilya whispered in his ear, "your mom teach you?"

"No, actually," Shane replied. He rinsed off their plates, leaving them on the sink. He'd have to bend over to load them into the dishwasher and he didn't want Ilya to let go. He didn't want to let *Ilya* go, either.

"Your *dad* taught you to cook?"

The surprise was evident in Ilya's tone. Shane smiled to himself, shaking his head.

"My mom is a good cook too but it was my dad who did most of it when I was growing up. My dad has this recipe for garlic chicken parmesan pasta..."

Ilya huffed a laugh into Shane's neck, his curls tickling his skin. Shane rolled his eyes.

"Go sit down, I'll finish here and we can go for a walk or... whatever."

Ilya begrudgingly let go, rounding the counter to hoist himself on to one of the bar stools.

"My father could not cook," Ilya admitted quietly, "he married my stepmother so fast after my mother's death that he never learned."

Shane's stomach fell. He dried his hands then went to hug Ilya, pressing a kiss to his temple.

"I'll teach you," he offered, "if you want. Maybe- maybe something from Russia?"

Ilya nodded after a moment. Shane softly, carefully ran a hand through his curls, dropping a kiss on the top of his head before returning to the dishes. As he wiped off the counter Ilya wandered over to the sofa they may or may not have defiled earlier, lying back and placing his arm over his face. Shane took him in, frowning.

"Are you okay?"

"I have a headache," Ilya murmured, "is not end of world. As you know."

Shane rolled his eyes. Kicking off his shoes he climbed on to the sofa with Ilya, resting his head on his chest. Ilya, in a manner Shane was familiar with for other activities, cupped the

back of his neck. When he tilted his chin up for a kiss Ilya was there, thinking the same thing.

“This is how you relax, Hollander,” Ilya said between kisses. Shane pulled back, cheeks flushed.

“This doesn’t feel like relaxing- wait, how long have you had a headache?”

“Since I got off plane- is not a big deal, Shane- no, come back-“

Shane ducked into the bathroom, locating the Advil. When he got back Ilya was sitting up to grab the bottle of water he’d left on the coffee table earlier. He accepted the pills, knocking them back and then pulling Shane back on top of him.

“I am going to introduce you to something,” he said.

“What’s that?”

“A nap, Hollander.”

-

Reaching for Shane’s hand, Ilya turned his face further into his shorts. He was crying, he knew he was crying. He missed his mom, thought about her all the time... but being with Shane made it hurt a little less. She would have been so proud of him, taking the leap and coming to the cottage. A part of Ilya envied Shane, and the easy way he shared stories from his childhood. He seemed to understand that it was hard for Ilya to talk about his own childhood in the same way and he’d gone quiet after a couple minutes, instead letting Ilya stew in his own thoughts.

Shane’s thumb reached down, gently wiping his tears.

“Let’s go inside,” he said softly, “you’re probably tired.”

Ilya sniffed, turning on to his other side so he could hide his face in Shane’s jacket. If he could stop crying, he could get him off, or maybe he could fuck him-

“Ilya,” Shane whispered softly, “it’s getting cold; I don’t want you to get sick.”

He was so thoughtful, and kind. Ilya heard whispers sometimes from his teammates, sometimes other players, that Shane was determined, focused solely on the game and occasionally cold when approached. Something told Ilya it was more about who was approaching Shane, not Shane’s attitude toward them. He let Shane help him upright, tried to reach out to kiss him, but Shane placed his hands on Ilya’s shoulders and shook his head.

“Not tonight,” he soothed, “you need to sleep.”

Ilya sniffed, nodding eventually. Shane hoisted him up and they walked back into the cottage together. While Shane made sure the fire was completely extinguished outside, Ilya took the

opportunity to strip to his underwear and slide under the covers. He had no idea where his phone was; not that it was particularly important, the person he wanted to talk to the most was with him.

“I feel safe with him,” Scott Hunter had said when Ilya saw him after the MLH awards, *“I know that I can tell him anything and he has my back.”*

Was that what being in love was?

Because it felt a little nauseating.

“Do you need another Advil?” Shane asked, “how is your headache from earlier?”

Ilya shrugged.

“Is okay. Come here.”

Shane peeled off his jacket, going into the walk in wardrobe. When he reappeared he was shirtless and down to athletic shorts instead of the smarter shorts he’d been wearing earlier. Ilya reached for him, the anxiety in his system dissipating when his fingers made contact with Shane’s skin.

“Good night, Ilya.”

“Good night... Shane.”

They shared one last kiss, then Shane scooted on to his side. Ilya followed him, sliding his arm over Shane’s midsection. He pressed a kiss to his shoulder, the same side his collarbone had snapped on. Ilya remembered the sound of his head hitting the ice, clenching his fist against his lover’s stomach to subdue the memory.

“You’re warm,” Shane whispered, muffled by his pillow, “I can turn up the AC if you want-“

“-go to sleep,” Ilya whispered, “I am okay.”

“Hm, okay...”

Ilya lay there, feeling Shane slowly drift off in his arms. He pressed his forehead against his back, and before he knew it he was out.

-

Shane woke slowly, completely disoriented. He had no idea where he was, what time it was.

“Mm-“

Ilya began uttering in what Shane assumed to be Russian, gasping and panting between words. Shane glanced over his shoulder.

“Ilya?”

When he didn't get a response he carefully extracted himself from Ilya's embrace, sitting up to turn on the lamp by his bedside. Ilya still didn't stir, still muttering to himself. If Shane didn't know him, he would have assumed he was just talking in his sleep.

Ilya Rozanov didn't talk in his sleep.

He slept like he was dead, didn't move from the position he fell asleep in. Shane had only shared a bed with him a couple times, but he knew that much. Dragging his hand down his own face, Shane reached for his phone to check the time.

2:04am blinked back at him. They'd barely been asleep for two hours.

“Ilya. Hey, Rozanov. Rozy.”

Shane reached over, brushing a thumb over his partner's cheek. Feeling the heat radiating, he pressed his palm to Ilya's forehead.

“Oh no, no no no no.”

He scrambled out of bed, yanking the covers off. Ilya groaned in complaint, finally opening his eyes.

“Hollander?” He uttered, voice hoarse. He glanced toward the blankets, now on the floor, his brows knitting together.

“What time is it?”

Shane paused his frantic scrambling, slowly meeting Ilya's gaze.

“*What time is it?* Are you fucking for real right now?”

Ilya watched Shane walk to the ensuite, listening to the sink running for a moment. When he returned he handed Ilya a damp cloth, which Ilya stared at blankly.

“What am I doing with this?” He asked, confusion written on his face. Shane took it from him, gently pressing it to his forehead.

“Like this. For your fever.”

“Fever- oh. That is... nice.”

Shane bit his lip, eyes darting over Ilya's form. He ran a hand down his chest, coming back up to cup the back of his neck.

“Sorry,” he whispered, “I was worried you were going to overheat, and-“

Ilya reached up, fingers softly curling around Shane's wrist.

"Lie down," he soothed, "try and go back to sleep."

Shane climbed over him, pulling Ilya into his chest when he was settled. It wasn't comfortable, the contrast between Ilya's heated skin and the damp cloth, but he would do it if it meant he knew Ilya was okay.

"S'just a fever," Ilya yawned, "I'm okay."

His long eyelashes fluttered against Shane's skin. The next time Shane glanced down at him he was asleep, snoring softly. Shane sucked in a breath, reaching for his phone. He wasn't going back to sleep any time soon. Maybe he could catch some uploaded replays on YouTube.

-

Ilya's fever got worse over the next hour or so. A part of Shane expected it, knew he should have tried harder to get meds into him the first time. He'd turned the TV on and was quietly flicking through late-night channels, stopping on a Criminal Minds rerun he'd seen a hundred times. Ilya was shaking, body on fire as he mumbled nonsense against Shane's chest. Shane had never taken care of someone when they were sick – his mom flew to wherever he was the moment he mentioned feeling like he was coming down with something – so it was uncharted territory. Shane reached up to scrub at his face. It was nearing 4am but he wanted a shower, the sweat on his skin was starting to make things sticky.

"Shane..."

Shane startled from his thoughts, pushing his fingers through Ilya's curls.

"How are you feeling?"

Ilya groaned. He pushed the only sheet Shane had allowed him off them, hefting himself to the end of the bed. Shane propped himself up on his side, rubbing Ilya's back.

"Ilya?" He prompted softly. Ilya glanced over his shoulder, discomfort etched into the lines of his face.

"Going to bathroom," he whispered softly, "go to *sleep*."

Shane didn't know that he believed him but he let Ilya's hand go, lying back against the pillows. At least he wasn't overheating now, the fabric cool against his skin. He watched Ilya leave the bedroom and frowned. Shane had an ensuite, he could have- maybe he needed water too? Or maybe he needed space. Ilya had proved to be rather clingy in their time at the cottage (something Shane was so in love with) but it made sense that he'd ask for space if he wasn't feeling well.

He lay there for a moment. Closed his eyes and tried to make himself go back to sleep. When that didn't work, he reached for his phone and got out of bed. Ilya could want space, but Shane had to be sure that was why he'd disappeared. Knocking softly on the bathroom door, he tried the handle.

"Ilya, I'm coming- in! I'm coming in."

Coughing.

Then, "bet that's the first time you've said that."

Shane rolled his eyes, opening the bathroom door.

"Oh... fuck."

-

His dad answered his mom's phone, because of course he did. Shane should have known the one time he needed to speak to his mom she had left her phone on his dad's nightstand.

"Shane? What time is it- are you having one of your headaches?"

"Dad, is mom there?"

Shane's gaze darted between the tiled bathroom wall and Ilya, currently on his knees over the toilet. He couldn't see what he was doing, thankfully, just the way his body shook. Shane reached over with his free hand while he listened to his parents' hushed conversation, running his hand over Ilya's back.

"Shane, honey, what's wrong?" Yuna asked, sounding every bit the perfectly in control mother she was.

"Mom," Shane started, "I need your help. He's- he's sick and I don't know what to do, he's throwing up and dizzy and he's hot-"

"-Shane, slow down. Who are you talking about?"

"*Ilya*, mom!" Shane blurted, "Ilya is sick, I don't- I don't know what I'm doing."

Silence.

"We're coming. Can you get dressed? We should take you to the hospital, your neurologist will need to know about the hallucinations-"

Shane suddenly realised what he'd done. Not only had he broken the promise of secrecy, he'd outed Ilya at the worst possible moment. Outed both of them, actually.

And his mom thought he was hallucinating. When he was better, Ilya would have a field day with that.

"I'm- it wasn't a silent retreat, mom. Ilya's here, we've- we're... I don't know. I need help."

"Hold on, Shane. We'll be there in twenty minutes. Just be there for him, honey, that's all you can really do for now."

Shane glanced over when he felt Ilya retch, trying to resist the urge to grimace. He hated the sound, it was grating and unsettling.

But he couldn't just *leave* Ilya like that. No chance in hell was he going to walk away.

-

Taking the steps two at a time, Yuna let herself into her son's cottage and headed for the master bedroom. She could hear the soft lull of quiet conversation, back and forth between two men.

One was obviously her son. Her motherly instincts gave her the ability to locate her son even in the biggest crowds.

The other-

"Ilya Rozanov?"

David bumped into her from behind when she stopped short in the doorway, carrying a bag of stomach flu essentials they'd gathered before leaving their place. The sun wasn't quite up yet, still too early for the light to come filtering into the room.

"Mom," Shane called, jolting her from her thoughts, "sorry I woke you up."

"It's okay," David reassured. He walked around Yuna, touching her arm to place the bag of items by the end of the bed. Yuna knelt by where Rozanov - Ilya - lay curled up in bed, Shane sitting next to him holding his hand.

"Ilya, I'm Yuna. Shane called us. He said you weren't feeling too well."

Ilya groaned in response, turning on to his other side and burying his face against Shane's thigh. Shane swallowed, his hand shaking as he rubbed Ilya's back.

"Mom, dad, um-"

"-we can talk about it later," David soothed, "when Ilya's feeling better. What do you two need?"

"Uh- I don't-"

He stopped short, eyes darting around the room dimly lit by the lamp on his nightstand. Yuna shared a knowing look with her husband, David going to the other side of the bed to get Shane's attention.

"Shane? Are *you* feeling okay?"

Shane turned to his dad, nodding slowly.

"I'm- I'm not sick."

"Good."

Yuna handed the bottle of Gatorade from her collection of holy grails in her bag to Shane, gesturing for him to pass it to Ilya. Ilya took it from him before Shane could even pop the lid for him, cradling it to his chest.

"Don't drink it all at once," Yuna cautioned instinctively, "not worth it."

"Mom. Dad, I- I'm *sorry*."

Shane was her son. Her beautiful boy who had (thankfully) grown into a kind, gentle young man (when he wasn't menacing Scott Hunter, apparently). And he was apologising...

For what, she wasn't sure of.

"Shane," David started softly, "you don't have anything to be sorry about."

All three of them were disrupted by Ilya sitting up and darting out of bed, the door to the ensuite closing behind him. Yuna couldn't help herself; she reached for Shane and pressed a kiss to his forehead, then got on eye level with him.

"Go and rub his back."

Shane scrambled, chasing after Ilya. David leaned close to Yuna, squeezing her hand.

"You owe me twenty bucks."

"Yuna!"

-

By the time the sun was starting to come up, Ilya had been sick twice more. Somewhere along the way Shane had curled up on the corner seat of the sofa and Ilya had joined him; they were both tangled together, knocked out for the foreseeable future. Yuna sat at the island counter, watching David move between their breakfast cooking and the soup he was hoping to get into Ilya at some point.

“Do you think this is... new?” He asked. Yuna cradled the freshly brewed cup of coffee, her second in the time they’d been at the cottage, glancing over at the way her son was stretched over the sofa. She smiled, shaking her head.

“No,” she said, “something tells me this has been brewing a while.”

“Since the all-star game?”

“Maybe longer.”

“Explains why Shane was so hooked to the TV when he saw Scott Hunter kiss his boyfriend.”

David plated up their breakfast, the pair of them looking toward the sofa when they heard someone snore. When it didn’t result in anything dramatic they sat at the island together, eating in comfortable silence.

“I’m worried. About Shane,” Yuna confessed. David nodded.

“He’s worked up, for sure. I don’t know if us being here is helping or making it worse for him.”

Yuna and David shared a look; they’d been Shane’s parents for 25 years, they knew him well. Knew his quirks, his triggers. When to push and when to let him come to them.

This, though, was uncharted territory for all three of them.

“I just- I hope he knows he can tell us anything.”

“He does; he will. When he’s ready.”

David reached over, squeezing Yuna’s hand. They finished breakfast in silence, save for the sound of Ilya’s snoring.

“Mom?” Shane called as they got up to start the dishes. Yuna glanced toward him.

“Shane?”

“Can you- uh. I think the fever’s back...”

Yuna swiped the thermometer she’d managed to locate in the main bathroom from the kitchen counter, handing it to Shane. As he tucked it under Ilya’s arm like she’d shown him, Yuna took the more parental approach and pressed the back of her hand to Ilya’s forehead.

“I think you’re getting good at this honey,” she told Shane, “I’ll grab some paracetamol.”

“I tried Advil yesterday, when he had a headache. I think it just made him nauseous.”

“Advil can do that sometimes. Paracetamol is gentler on upset stomachs.”

When Yuna returned to Shane's side, paracetamol and water in hand, he had managed to wake Ilya enough for him to sit upright.

"I know, Ilya, I'm sorry," she whispered, "we just don't want your fever to get worse. How do you feel?"

He shrugged.

"What's the word..."

Ilya looked up to Shane for help, who just frowned at him.

"What am I, a mind reader?"

"That word you used earlier. When you- when you called your mom."

"Dizzy? Is the room spinning?" Yuna asked, frowning. Ilya shook his head.

"The other one- the one..."

He squinted, the headache clearly present, then groaned.

"Nauseous?" Shane attempted again. Ilya nodded, then promptly let his head fall back on to Shane's chest. Shane rubbed his back, grimacing.

"Hey- um. You need to- it might be a good idea for you to take some meds. You might feel better if we get your fever down."

Ilya nodded after a moment to process what Shane had said. The thermometer beeped so Yuna took it, glancing at it quickly.

"Ilya, do you think you could keep some water down? Your fever is back."

He muttered something, Shane's eyebrows furrowing.

"Ilya, say that again we didn't hear you."

Yuna watched her son and Ilya talk quietly between themselves. Shane shook his head, whispered something in Ilya's ear. That got a response, one he apparently didn't like.

"Not an option. No way!"

He pressed a kiss to Ilya's forehead, dark eyes darting to find his mother's.

"You're stuck with me now," Shane insisted, "I'm not going anywhere. Can you *please* drink something, it will help."

While Ilya sipped at the water, Yuna couldn't help herself as she checked Shane for a fever too. He didn't comment on it, but he probably knew what she was doing. Shane made a noise of complaint when Ilya used his chest as a launchpad, yanking the repurposed bathroom trash can from where they'd left it on the floor.

Ilya pulled it to his face and waited.

Shane wrinkled his nose.

-

With Ilya in the bathroom, attempting to rinse off the sweat and sick smell, Yuna and David (lovingly) cornered Shane in his kitchen. Watching him work through the dishes from the last couple of days, lips pressed into a thin line, Yuna knew he was one badly timed offer of comfort away from a nervous breakdown.

“How long have you and Ilya been... um. Lovers-”

Shane leaned his elbows on the edge of the counter, taking a deep breath. Both Yuna and David leapt to grab the nearest trashcan but he lifted a hand, holding them at bay.

“I’m okay, I’m just freaking out,” Shane muttered, “I’m okay.”

Yuna reached for the glass of water she’d left earlier, offering it to Shane.

“If you throw up too we could have a category 5 event here,” she said, attempting to lighten the mood. Shane groaned, forcing himself to rest his head on one of his arms.

“Shane,” David soothed, “son, we aren't mad, or- or disappointed in you. It’s clear you love Ilya; clear how much he loves *you*.”

“I can’t breathe,” Shane gasped suddenly. The wave of panic rushed through his system, his heart thumping out of his chest. He was having a panic attack, he knew he was having a panic attack, but it always felt like he was going to die.

The last time it happened, he’d almost passed out.

“Shane? What is wrong?”

Ilya, despite the stomach flu trying to take him out at the knees, dropped the damp towel on the floor (he’d pick it up later) and rushed over, rubbing Shane’s back.

“Are you sick too? Did you-”

“-just freaking out a little,” Shane blurted, “I’m okay, s’just a panic attack.”

“Panic... attack? So you are not... it is not physical sickness?”

Ilya took Shane by the arm, guiding him into a hug.

“You are okay,” he soothed, “your parents are here. Your boyfriend is here.”

On the other side of the kitchen, Yuna's hand darted out to find David's.

"Boyfriend?" Shane whispered, his nose still pressed into Ilya's neck. Ilya nodded, pressing a kiss to his forehead. Forehead kisses weren't contagious, he'd die on that hill.

"I think so, probably. Yes."

Shane hugged Ilya harder, partially to ground himself.

Mostly to keep Ilya upright.

-

Ilya couldn't remember the last time he'd felt that sick. Being able to cuddle Shane was great, sure, and he was grateful Shane's parents had jumped in to help no questions asked, but *fuck*.

His head throbbed in tune with the sound of Shane's heartbeat, a sound Ilya usually found comforting. The irritation dissipated every time Shane ran a hand through his hair, or whispered quietly to his parents, or chuckled.

Mainly because it meant Shane was there. With him.

Well. Considering he was in Shane's cottage, it was more accurate that he was there with Shane.

Semantics.

"Ilya."

Shane's soft tone made Ilya tilt his head up, blinking at his boyfriend.

"Dad made you soup, if you feel up to it."

Ilya took a moment, processing the offer. When he nodded, Shane helped him to sit up.

They both tried to ignore the trash can back in place on the floor by them, recently cleaned out. Ilya would have to apologise a million times over to Shane's parents when this was over, no one should have to clean up after him-

"-here, careful it's warm."

Ilya realised he was sitting between Shane's legs, his back to Shane's chest and his arms holding Ilya steady. He was warm but not overwhelming. Comforting. His accent was familiar, safe as he handed Ilya the spoon his dad had passed over.

"Slow, take it easy," Shane soothed. If Ilya didn't know him so well, didn't reflect on the night in Florida or their first *I love you*, he would have suspected Shane would be bad at comforting people.

Ilya stirred the spoon around in the soup for a moment, watching the clear broth move. Shane pressed a kiss to his temple.

“You need to try.”

“Just going to vomit again.”

“Probably, yeah. Sorry.”

Ilya glanced over his shoulder, eyebrow raised at Shane.

“You are... negative thinker.”

“Pessimist?” Shane offered, an amused expression crossing his features. Ilya nodded, sipping the soup.

“Thank you for the soup, Mr Hollander,” Ilya said when it didn’t immediately revolt. Shane worked his fingers through his curls, cradling the back of his neck.

“You’re welcome, Ilya. Is it warm enough?”

“Yes. Thank you.”

“How come you never thank me?” Shane whispered.

“I thank you plenty.”

Nearby, Mrs Hollander coughed politely. Mr Hollander’s expression turned pained. Shane, still in position behind Ilya, winced and he lifted a hand to cover his face.

“Never change, Ilya.”

Shane’s hand in his hair helped. Being sick sucked, he couldn’t get comfortable and he constantly felt overheated but a part of him didn’t want to separate from Shane. He’d spent too long away from Shane.

“-we’ll come back and check on you two tomorrow morning but it looks like the worst of it is over. You can still call us, just maybe not at 4am.”

Ilya snapped back into the conversation between his boyfriend and Shane’s parents, realising they were gathering items to leave.

“Thank you,” he said quietly, “it was... nice of you to help.”

Mrs Hollander’s face contorted. Oh no, was she going to cry? Ilya didn’t know that he could handle that, Mrs Hollander was kind and her sense of humour reminded Ilya of Shane’s.

Shane was a lot like his mother, actually.

“Honey, you are so welcome. You can call us anytime, okay? David was joking. You’re part of our family now.”

Shane held Ilya against his chest, rubbing his back in soft circles.

“You can’t get rid of them that easy. Trust me.”

Ilya felt when Mrs Hollander leaned over the couch to kiss Shane’s forehead, lifted his head when she patted his head too in goodbye and a reminder to call them if *he* needed anything. Not Shane, not them. *Him*.

Maybe he’d misheard her.

-

“I think you’re my mom’s favourite.”

“Now, Shane?”

Ilya lifted his head from the toilet to glare at Shane, but he was forced to throw himself back over the bowl to retch again. Shane shrugged, rubbing his back.

“My dad doesn’t play favourites, but my mom definitely does. Something tells me you won her over a million times. And just by, like. Existing.”

When Ilya seemed to think he was done he reached up, flushing the toilet. Shane let himself slide down the tiled bathroom wall to sit flat on his ass, extending an arm to Ilya. They sat there for a moment in silence, Shane surprised at the feeling of a damp spot growing on his shirt.

“Did you just *puke* on me- oh, Ilya, hey...are you crying?”

Ilya shook his head... then nodded. Shane frowned.

“Is it about my mom? Ilya, she- she *loves* you already. She wants you to feel safe. *I* want you to feel safe, baby. If they did something to upset you, please-”

“-no no, *no*. They-”

Ilya lifted his face from Shane’s shoulder, eyes filling with tears. Shane panicked, pulling Ilya into his chest and pushing his hair from his face.

“Baby,” Shane whispered. It was the first time Shane had used that term and he... it didn’t feel weird. It didn’t feel distant, or mushy. It felt right for that moment.

“English is hard right now,” Ilya said, body overwhelmed with the sobs escaping. Shane did the only thing he could and softly rocked them, pressing his lips against Ilya’s hair.

“Take your time,” Shane soothed, “you’re doing so well.”

Ilya shuddered, forcing himself to slow down.

“I don’t want to throw up again,” he whispered. Shane nodded.

“Fair enough. Is that- is that... is that why you were crying?”

“No,” Ilya said roughly. Shane frowned, but Ilya held up a hand.

“Your mother and father are...”

His face scrunched up, trying to locate the word he was searching for.

“They did not... question you. Make you feel... small. When you were upset earlier.”

Shane knew they were going to have to talk about Ilya’s childhood more later, when he wasn’t feverish and two seconds away from throwing up at any given moment.

“Never,” he replied softly.

“They- they made me soup. Your mother rubbed my back.”

“Is that... okay?”

“Yes. It is very... okay.”

Shane pushed a stray curl from Ilya’s face, smiling as he kissed his forehead.

“Ready to get off the bathroom floor?”

“Please.”

-

The morning faded into a lazy afternoon, transitioning to a quiet evening where Shane and Ilya ate leftover soup and sipped ginger ale on the sofa. They sat apart so as not to elbow each other but bumped their feet together occasionally to get the other’s attention. Ilya knew he was feeling better because he wasn’t immediately diving for the trash can on the floor between them, or taking deep breaths between mouthfuls to quell the nausea. His head wasn’t hurting as bad, the heavy thumps lulled to soft throbbing against his skull as Shane occasionally pushed fingers through his hair. When they were finished Ilya was the first up, taking the dishes to the kitchen and loading them into the dishwasher before Shane could do it. Shane followed him into the kitchen, letting himself fold into one of the bar stools.

“You were serious earlier? Boyfriends?” He asked. Ilya nodded, wiping the counter with a cloth as a nervous habit.

“Yes. Is that... what you want?”

“Yes- yes of course. Yeah, I- I want us to... I love you.”

The stern look on Ilya’s face softened into a relaxed smile.

“I love you too.”

“Say it in Russian again?”

Ilya did, rounding the counter. He watched Shane for a moment, then pushed a hand through his boyfriend’s hair.

“We should sleep,” he said. Shane immediately nodded, standing from his seat to take Ilya by the hand. They separated in the bedroom, getting ready apart before reuniting when Ilya curled up on his side under the sheet and Shane crawled into his arms.

“Do I smell again?” Ilya teased. He wasn’t feeling 100% quite yet, thankful he didn’t have to be anywhere near a rink for a little while, but knew he’d be okay to enjoy the rest of his time at the cottage.

“No,” Shane murmured, muffled by the way his face was pressed into Ilya’s shirt. Ilya smiled, rubbing Shane’s back.

“You are going to get sick.”

“If I was going to get sick I would have already, we’ve had three days here.”

Shane glanced up, taking in the way Ilya did seem a lot more at ease. He brushed a thumb down his cheek, smiling as he let himself bury into Ilya’s arms.

He’d spent the day cleaning up vomit and crying. Sue him.

Ilya wasn’t so warm to the touch anymore, either.

-

When Ilya only woke Shane up once tossing cookies overnight, they figured they were Yuna and David were right; they were through the worst of it. Shane slept until 8am and woke to the cold sheets on the other side of the bed, a confused expression crossing his features briefly when he turned his head to check the ensuite door was open.

“Ilya?” He called. Sitting up he hissed, holding a hand to his head. Oversleeping always made his head hurt, but especially over the break when he wasn’t playing rigorously.

“Ilyaaaaaa-”

When he realised he wasn’t getting anywhere (nor was he getting railed, unfortunately), Shane tossed the sheets back, grabbed Ilya’s Raiders hoodie from the spot on the bed and heading into the living room. Peering into the sunlight, Shane spotted an Ilya-shaped figure sitting on the rock by the lake. Smoking, of course. Probably brooding... or planning his next attack on Scott Hunter. Shane yanked the soft blanket off the edge of the sofa that Ilya had spent most of the day prior curled up in, giving it a cursory sniff before he carried it outside.

Ilya helped him up on to the rock, offering Shane his cigarette. When Shane's nose immediately wrinkled, like every other time Ilya had done it, he smirked to himself and took another drag.

"You slept hard last night," he started, "barely woke up when I almost threw up on you."

"I'm sorry. Were you okay?" Shane asked. He let himself prop his chin on Ilya's shoulder, eyes closing when Ilya started to rub his back in that special way only he could. The sun was definitely warm for the time of day, and Shane knew he was wincing as he turned his face away from it.

"Are you okay? Is your head hurting?"

"A little- no, Ilya don't move, m'okay. It's not a bad headache."

Shane appreciated that Ilya's hand came up to block the sunlight from his eyes, his free hand pulling the blanket over Shane's shoulders so it didn't fall off.

"Come," Ilya said as he put out the cigarette on the rock, "we go inside. I introduce you to my new best friend; Mr Trash Can."

"You're an asshole," Shane moaned, letting himself lean into Ilya as they climbed back on to the grass.

-

When Yuna stopped by around 11am, Shane and Ilya had switched places. Shane was hugging the toilet and cursing everybody in his vicinity while Ilya provided soothing reassurance. Yuna had glanced between them once, her son still hunched over the bowl, and gently patted Ilya's shoulder to get his attention.

"I'll get some water. Do you need me to bring the trash can in?"

Ilya shook his head, then realised he'd regret it later and nodded.

"Just in case."

She left the bathroom smiling to herself despite her son's condition, reaching for her phone to text David who had gone to work.

Yuna: Shane caught whatever Ilya had

David: uh oh

Yuna: we should have known, they're inseparable now

David: I'll bring dinner over on my way home

Yuna: Ilya says he's got it handled, told me to go home

“Are you sure, Ilya?” Yuna asked softly, watching the two stumble back into the bedroom together, “I don’t want you to push yourself too hard, you’re still recovering.”

Ilya immediately nodded, helping Shane lie on his side.

“Cigarette helped with nausea, I will be fine. Shane is going to feel like death-”

Shane cut him off with a deep groan, turning on to his back and lifting a hand to his face. He was overheating, he was sure of it.

“-but he will be okay. I will watch him.”

Yuna watched Shane reach for Ilya, tugging at his hand to get his attention. Ilya listened, attentively, then nodded.

“I am going to get water... give you two space.”

Dropping a kiss to Shane’s forehead, Ilya got up and left the bedroom, softly closing the door behind him. Yuna took a seat on the edge of the bed, unsurprised when Shane held up a hand for her to take. He always did that, even when he didn’t necessarily know that he wanted to be touched in that moment.

“So, you and Ilya,” she said, “am I going to come back to bloodshed tonight?”

“No,” Shane said, “mom, I-”

“-Shane, I...”

“Oh, sorry, you go,” they both said at the same time. That broke the tension, Shane huffing out a snort while Yuna rolled her eyes.

“I just wanted to say, um. I know that you probably didn’t intend to come out like that. You were scared, Ilya was really sick for a moment there. I... I wanted to apologise.”

Shane opened an eye.

“W-what?”

Yuna knew she could make it through this without crying. If she tried really hard. If she held her breath, maybe.

“I’m sorry that we made you feel like you couldn’t come to us with something like this.”

Shane sucked in a breath. For half a second, Yuna thought he was going to throw up again. Then, she realised he was crying.

“Oh, honey...”

“-I wanted to, *so bad*,” Shane sniffed, “I just- I didn’t know how to, and I mean I tried mom, I tried to- I tried to meet someone, I tried with Rose, I-”

“-Shane...”

Yuna helped him to sit up, pulling him into a hug. Shane was hot to the touch, burning with a fever he probably had all night, but she could feel the damp tears dripping.

“I forgive you,” he whispered, “I forgive you, mom. I- I love you.”

“I love you too.”

She gently rocked them, listening to the sound of Ilya moving around in the kitchen.

“*What* is he doing out there?” She murmured, Shane smiling to himself.

“Plotting Scott Hunter’s demise, probably.”

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