

my red string of fate (is the color of his blood)

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by [fleezerweezer](#)

Summary

Ilya Rozanov's new life began at eighteen years old.

But his new life truly started at four hundred and thirteen years old when he met the love of his life.

Notes

">dialogue like this<" means that its being spoken in a different language!
ignore spelling mistakes i didn't re read this...

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

The Black Death was sweeping through Rus'.

Чума.

Some people called it God's punishment. The divine punishment. A scourge sent to punish the people of Rus' for their sins.

Ilya thought it was stupid until it sunk its claws into him.

It was 1348 in Novgorod when it snuck up on him. Ilya woke up feeling hot and heavy, his skin cold and clammy to the touch. Everything ached. He could not breathe. It had to have been the worst pain he had experienced in his eighteen years of life.

He just wanted it to stop. He was willing to do anything to make the pain go away. It was rare that anyone came back from this horrible illness. Ilya was ready to beg for death, beg for mercy.

There was no one left for him. He had no living family. Death would be nice, it would be so incredibly peaceful.

Everyone who had the sickness was quarantined together. Dozens and dozens of rows of uncomfortable cots. The smell was almost worse than the pain was. Rotting skin and bile.

It was day four of Ilya's personal hell. The nurses would come and feed him. Men would come and wheel away the cots surrounding Ilya's own when his peers would pass on. It would take less than an hour for a new man to take their place.

On day four, Ilya had started to beg for death. He asked every doctor, every nurse.

">Please. Kill me. I have nothing. I have no one. Please make this stop.<"

It was a fruitless effort until day six. Ilya had calculated through his daze that most of the men around him never made it past day seven. Maybe this would finally be over.

There was a new doctor that day. New to Ilya, at least. Or maybe he just hadn't recognized him before. It didn't matter much to Ilya, because the doctor said he was there to help him.

">Do you wish to die, boy?<" He had asked. Ilya thought that his voice sounded like sunshine. Like a calming wind. A song that was meant to lure you in. Ilya had lost his voice by then, too weak to keep his eyes open for more than a few minutes.

The doctor with the sweet voice continued. ">Do you have any family? Any friends who would miss you if you were gone?<"

Ilya thought it was a stupid question. He was going to die tomorrow anyway, wasn't he? Why did it matter if he was going to be missed by one extra day? It didn't matter. He had no one left. So he shook his head.

A moment later, Ilya felt something sharp in his neck. A knife, he hoped. Maybe he would bleed out quickly. The unforgiving pain would be over and he would finally feel peace.

Then it started to burn.

It burned worse than any of the pain he had experienced in the past week. It was the worst burning sensation of his life. Ilya was pretty sure he screamed. He wondered if it disturbed the other patients around. Maybe they could not hear him. Maybe they were already dead.

Ilya didn't care much. Because now he just wanted the burning to stop. He would take the aching bones and muscles for the rest of his life if it meant this could be over. He would take the fever, he'd take the vomiting and delirium.

The burning didn't stop for a long time. Ilya couldn't keep track of it. He just remembered screaming, thrashing, writhing. He was vaguely aware that he wasn't in the hospital anymore. No, he was somewhere smaller. Colder. Wetter.

When the burning stopped, Ilya felt that cold deep in his bones. It was almost all he could feel. He did not feel his pulse, he did not feel his own breath in his lungs, and he did not feel blood pulsing through his veins.

Blood.

That's the other thing he felt. A thirst that felt like sandpaper in his throat. He clawed at his throat and choked. His skin was ice cold to the touch, it felt hard as stone.

All of his other senses flooded in after that. Ilya could hear everything. It made his mind ache. He could see every particle in the air, every water droplet dripping down the side of the cave wall. Cave. Why was he in a cave?

That didn't matter. Nothing else mattered in that moment besides getting something to eat.

Something to drink.

Ilya heard the snap of a twig, and his head snapped up with it. He could smell the blood. He could hear it rushing through the veins of whatever unfortunate animal was outside. He could hear its heart, the snuff of its nose, the rustling of its fur in the wind.

Ilya was on his feet in seconds. Less than seconds.

Then he was out of the cave in the blink of an eye. If he was a bit more coherent and less focused on his need to eat, to drink, he would have taken note of the superhuman speed.

And the strength as he pounced onto the giant bear.

As he sunk his teeth into its fur, through its flesh. As he drank every last drop of blood from it's body.

It wasn't enough, but it sated the thirst for now.

Enough for Ilya to come back down to Earth. Enough for him to panic.

What the fuck was happening to him?

He was never able to find the man that changed him. That turned him into... Ilya wasn't exactly sure. It sounded similar to the tales of упырь. Not exactly, but close enough. He supposed that they were only tales. Maybe he was just the real thing.

In Rus' he never found anyone like himself. Not that he looked very hard. Ilya stayed to the woods for the first few years of his new life.

The first week of his change he had ventured into the town. To try and find that doctor, who now he wasn't so sure was a doctor. Ilya wanted to kill him. He wanted to rip him to shreds for turning him into this god awful monster.

Being surrounded by humans, by so much blood, it was impossible. Ilya had killed two men, draining the blood from their bodies until they were cold and pale. He retreated back into the woods after that.

During his time in the woods, Ilya tried to end this second life. But he wasn't sure how. He didn't have a pulse to stop, he didn't have blood to drain.

So he tried to remember the tales of the упырь. There were wooden stakes to the heart, but those proved to do nothing. There was no heart to stop.

The herbs didn't work. Ripping off his own limbs didn't work. Jumping from mountains and cliffs was nothing more than annoying. Nothing worked.

Ilya was stuck like that. A monster.

So, he needed to make the most of his new life. Hiding in the woods for the rest of time wasn't the most appealing idea. Ilya had made a dent in the wildlife population in Rus'. He didn't want to leave any sort of mark on this world, so he left.

Over time, being around humans became easier. Ilya had only had a few accidents, had only killed a handful or two of people. Each one he regretted deeply, each one he mourned. But it did become easier.

That burning feeling always lingered in the back of his throat when he was around humans. But it was subtle enough that he was able to ignore it. At least for a few days. Then the burn would become stronger and stronger until he needed to go hunt.

Ilya travelled with his time. With his speed. He could run across the lands in mere minutes and didn't feel the slightest bit of fatigue. He was strong, he was sharp.

And he was beautiful. His golden curls had become fuller, more luscious. His eyes, when he was not hungry, were a hazel-ish gray. His skin was flawless, porcelain. He looked like he had been carved straight from Bor.

Ilya learned so much. Languages, cultures, the arts.

But running so much, it got lonely. Ilya needed to travel with people, he had decided.

In the early 1500's he had ended up in Portugal. They were traveling the world; Ilya had run into their travelers all over Europe.

So, he learned Portuguese. It was easy to pick up on. No one questioned his accent. They didn't really question where he had come from, either. He was beautiful, he was strong, he was a good man for their team. They wanted to keep him around, and were clearly willing to turn a blind eye to do it.

They had set out by boat in 1543. Ilya, in the night, would go into the waters to hunt. He'd kill the sea life quickly to feed. It was nowhere near as good as mammal blood, nothing was as good as human blood, but it would do. He just needed to feed every day instead of being able to go several days without.

Then, there was a storm. They had gotten blown so far off course, so far from their destination. Ilya wasn't sure where they had ended up exactly, no one did.

The island they had ended up near wasn't on any of the maps they had.

">It could be an island of savages,<" one of the crew argued.

">Maybe there are no animals to hunt,<" another complained.

They tried and tried to come up with excuses, but Ilya was set firm. And, they always listened to him like he was an unofficial captain. He might as well have been, seeing as their real captain went missing in the storm.

The men were out of food and clean water. They had no choice but to dock and go ashore.

They walked through the small village. All of the locals looked at them curiously. The men looked at them all the same.

The language they spoke was not one Ilya recognized. But, his men pushed him forward to try. They only knew Portuguese. They were simple sailing men. Ilya was the most competent out of their group.

Ilya stopped at one of the market stands.

">Hello,<," he tried in Portuguese first. Just in case there was any lick of hope that the man would understand him.

The man looked up, a little wide eyed at the sight of Ilya.

Ilya stared at him the same.

He was... he was gorgeous.

His eyes were dark, almost black. His hair was the same. There were these beautiful freckles on his cheeks, he had the smallest button nose. And, he had no idea what Ilya was saying. Because his expression quickly turned from shocked to confused, and he tilted his head.

“Hello,” he tried in English. It was a fast spreading language. And the English settlers had been traveling around the world quickly. Maybe they had gotten here already. Maybe enough for this man to pick up on the language.

The man’s eyes lit up. “Hello,” he said, slowly. His accent was cute. But Ilya still wasn’t sure if he knew the language all that well.

So, Ilya would keep things simple. He glanced back at his men who were shifting around uncomfortably, anxiously. They were hungry. Ilya could hear it, he could see it. He needed to get them something to eat.

“Food?” Ilya tried. When the man hesitated, Ilya made an eating motion. As if he was eating soup with a spoon.

“Ah. Food, yes,” the man nodded slowly. He turned and disappeared into the building that was behind his stand.

“>Are we getting food?<” One of the men asked.

“>I think so, yes. Be patient,<” Ilya sighed heavily. He could hear the man inside rummaging around. He must have been getting them something.

A few minutes later the man was coming back out with a large bowl of rice.

“Food,” he said, holding it out to Ilya.

Ilya took it, looked down at it. It would be enough to feed his four men. He turned around and handed the bowl to them. They could eat with their hands for all he cared.

The beautiful freckled man looked at Ilya with that confused expression again. He pointed to him, his mouth, then his stomach. “Food?”

Ilya blinked. Oh, right. “No,” he shook his head.

The man did not like that answer, clearly, but didn’t argue.

Ilya wanted to know his name. He wanted to talk to him, even if it would be difficult. He was a fast learner. Surely he could pick up this language in no time. Maybe he would stay here.

He could help his men fix their ship. They had some things left to trade. Maybe the islands people would help.

Then Ilya would stay here. With this man.

Ilya had met hundreds if not thousands of people by now. They were all mundane to him. They were all boring. They all had the same smell to them, the same sound of blood in their veins.

This man was different.

He smelt sweet, intoxicatingly sweet. He looked so beautiful. As if he was some sort of monster, too. If Ilya's heart could beat, he knew it would be racing in his chest.

So, Ilya spent the week surrounding himself with the people and their culture. It was a bit difficult to learn the language. Writing and reading it, at least. Speaking it wasn't nearly as difficult.

Ilya wondered if this new form he had taken on increased his IQ as well. It was something he feared he would never get the answer to. He had yet to find another one of his kind. It had been almost a hundred years. Ilya wondered if he was the only one sometimes.

Was it possible for him to turn someone the same way that doctor had turned him? Could he have a companion? Ilya had never really thought about it before. He'd never considered it. Not until meeting the freckled man.

The freckled man who Ilya had learned was named Shane in pronunciation. Although some of the locals pronounced it closer to Shen.

But it was only when Ilya was confident in his speaking of the language, Nihongo, that he approached Shane.

">Hello<," Ilya said as he approached the stand.

Shane's eyes lit up. ">Hello. I didn't know you spoke Nihongo?<"

Ilya took a moment to translate the words before he responded. ">Yes. I learned it. It's a beautiful language.<"

">Oh. You're a fast learner.<"

">I get that a lot.<"

Shane smiled at that. He set down the basket he had in his hands. Most people were bewitched by Ilya. His voice, his looks. He had gotten used to people looking at him with such admiration. But the way Shane looked at him... it was different. It was exhilarating.

Ilya loved his smile. He never wanted to be without it again.

Over the next few weeks he helped his men repair the ship. And when he wasn't doing that he was spending every waking moment with Shane.

He learned how to cook, how to write the language more efficiently. Shane's mother took a liking to Ilya as well, made him clothes and taught him more of their culture. Shane's grandmother on the other hand... she wasn't the biggest fan.

She always looked at Ilya with this fear in her eyes. Ilya had overheard her talking to her daughter, Shane's mother, about demons. Blood sucking ghouls. He knew that each culture had their own tales, similar to the ones from Rus'. It wasn't uncommon that the older folks had their suspicions about Ilya.

It probably didn't help that he never ate around the family. He could eat regular food, but it would just sit uncomfortably in his stomach until he could force himself to throw it up.

When it was finally time for him and his men to leave, Ilya was torn.

"Shane," Ilya approached the stand. It was Shane's grandmother's silk stand, but he ran it most days.

"Ilya," Shane looked up from what he was working on and he smiled. His accent was adorable. Ilya wanted to eat him up. And, not even in the way he literally could.

">I have to leave soon. In two days. It's time for us to return to Portugal,<" he said. Just deciding to break the news.

Immediately Shane got a sad, faraway look in those beautiful eyes of his. ">No.<"

Ilya's heart ached. ">I know. I'm sorry. It... I cannot stay.<"

He wanted to. More than anything he wanted to stay. But the number of mammals and livestock on the island was limited. Ilya could only feed off of the ocean life for so long before people started to notice. Not to mention Shane's grandmother had been talking to everyone else in the village. Now even more people were skeptical of Ilya.

Shane's brows furrowed. He must have heard about the rumors by now. The rumors that Ilya couldn't bear to tell him were true.

">Stay. Please. Tonight, stay with me.<"

Ilya blinked at the request. But Shane looked desperate. How was Ilya ever meant to say no to that?

">Your grandmother won't like it,<" he did argue. Not that he was particularly scared of a small mortal woman, but he didn't want it to affect Shane. For his family to resent him.

">We can go somewhere else,<" Shane tried.

He looked like he was ready to cry. Ilya would rather die again than be the cause of any tears. So he agreed that he would spend the night. A final evening together.

They ended up going for a walk on the outskirts of the village at sunset. Ilya kept his distance, not wanting Shane to feel his cold skin.

"Ilya," Shane started. ">I have a few questions.<"

Ilya took a breath. ">Go ahead.<"

“>I’ve heard rumors about you. You don’t eat, your men say you don’t sleep. Your skin is like glass. You could lift all of the heavy lumber for the ship without any trouble...<” He trailed off. Shane stopped walking. Ilya stopped too.

“>Yes?<” Ilya prompted him to keep going. If Shane asked him, he would tell him. If he ran away screaming, that would be the end of it. At least Ilya would have... some peace of mind for the rest of his existence. Although he was sure he’d never be able to forget Shane. He made him feel alive in a way he hadn’t since before the plague.

“>I need to know if the rumors are true. If you are... one of the blood-drinking monsters.<”

“>They are.<”

Ilya heard Shane’s heart race. But he didn’t run. His eyes widened, but it was more in shock than it was in fear. Ilya wasn’t sure what to do. So, slowly, he opened his mouth so Shane could see his sharpened canines.

“>Have you killed people?<” Shane asked.

Ilya frowned. “>Yes.. But only bad men. I have never- I do not kill innocent people.<” He couldn’t say never. His first kill had been innocent. It had been an accident. “>I don’t drink human blood anymore. I drink from the animals. The sea creatures.<”

Shane hesitated. “>And you can survive like this?<” When Ilya nodded, Shane let out a breath. “>Okay. Good. I don’t want to kill people.<”

Ilya stared at him. He blinked. “>What are you talking about?<”

“>I want you to change me.<”

“>What?<” Ilya was a little gawked. Did he hear that right? Was he mistranslating the language in his mind?

“>I want to be like you,<” Shane said.

And, Ilya wanted to say yes. That was everything he ever wanted. To be with Shane for the rest of time. But... “>No, Shane. You have a family. I cannot...<”

“>They are going to send me away,<” Shane cut him off.

“>What?<”

“>They want to send me away. They need the money. Someone offered them a great deal of coin so I could go and work for them. I do not... I do not want to be a house maid.<”

Ilya frowned again. “>It will hurt, Shane. It hurts.<” Ilya remembered the burning sensation like it was yesterday. How it felt like poisonous fire spreading through every nerve and vein in his body.

“>But will it be worth it?<” Shane asked quietly.

He wanted to say yes. Ilya wanted to tell him that yes, of course it would be worth it if they got to be together. But, what if Shane ended up leaving him? What if they spent one hundred years together, and he got bored? Ilya would once again need to try and find a way to end his miserable afterlife.

Then, there was the actual monster part of it all. The hunger. The no sleep. The fear and never being able to fit in... it was hard. And it had taken Ilya so many years to feel sane around humans. What if Shane couldn't do it?

No. No, Ilya knew that he could. He was so kind and he was so patient. Of course he could do it. He could do anything.

">I think it's worth it<," Ilya finally said.

">Then I want you to change me.<"

And who was Ilya to deny him anything?

He stepped close and took Shane's face in his hands. Shane shivered at the ice cold feeling of Ilya's skin against his own. Ilya just grinned, brushing his thumbs over warm cheeks. Those beautiful freckles. He hoped that turning him wouldn't erase them.

If Shane was beautiful now, Ilya wasn't sure what he was going to do with himself after he was turned.

">This will sting,<" Ilya whispered. It would do more than sting. It would burn. But Ilya would stay with Shane. He'd take him somewhere safe and he would stay with him until the change took place. He'd stay with him for the rest of their eternity together.

Shane nodded and closed his eyes.

Ilya leaned forward, pressing his cold lips to the side of Shane's neck. He was so warm. Ilya felt his rapid pulse, he could feel the blood rushing. He smelt so sickeningly sweet. Ilya felt a little dizzy with his hunger, with his want. Would he be able to stop once he got a taste?

He had to. He had to be strong.

After only a moment's hesitation, Ilya was sinking his teeth into Shane's skin.

The days that followed, it rained. It stormed. But they were sheltered. Ilya had taken them to the mountains, found a cave not unsimilar to where he had his own transformation.

The only difference this time around was Shane wasn't alone. Ilya would never let him be alone, not like this. Not through his shaking cries of agony, his pleas for death, and his violent thrashes. Ilya stayed, holding Shane's head in his lap.

Even as his own hunger made his throat burn, the idea of leaving never once crossed his mind.

After three days, the rain stopped. Shane's pain stopped with it.

The sun glistened outside of the cave. It caught on the raindrops that dripped from the leaves, making the woods shine. The animals were moving again, emerging from their hiding spots. Similarly to show Ilya and Shane would soon enough. Only they were the predators, not the prey.

">My head.<" Was the first thing Shane groaned in pain. Then, he hissed, ">My throat.<"

Ilya still had Shane's head in his lap. He was idly playing with his hair. Black as night, soft as silk. The touch seemed to be soothing, but not enough to distract from the hunger. The thirst. Nothing would ever be enough to make that stinging burn go away.

">I know. I know, I'm sorry. Sit up slowly,<" Ilya instructed, his voice soft.

Shane nodded once, then allowed Ilya to help him up. Finally, then, Shane opened his eyes. And he gasped. Ilya knew exactly why. He had been the same sort of shocked and amazed at his new heightened senses.

Shane looked around the cave before he slowly, finally, looked at Ilya.

Ilya's unnecessary breathing caught in his throat.

Shane had been beautiful before. He was gorgeous, stunning. Ilya would have killed for him.

Now he was ethereal. Ilya would find a way to catch the moon and the stars in the palm of his hand if that's what Shane asked him to do.

"Ilya," Shane said. His voice was as sweet as sugar. Ilya wanted to devour him. ">It burns,<" he continued, a hand coming up to rest at the base of his throat.

Ilya nodded once, then was on his feet. He offered a hand to Shane, who took it, so he pulled him up as well.

Shane was still a bit disoriented, having to grip onto Ilya to catch his balance. Ilya allowed it, of course. He would not allow Shane to feel the same confusion he felt when he was first turned. He would not leave his side unless he was explicitly told.

">You need to hunt. To eat,<" Ilya said, soft.

Shane's eyes widened slightly, terrified. He looked like a baby deer.

">It is not so bad. I will show you. I will help you. I promise,<" Ilya whispered.

Getting out of the cave was a bit of a struggle. Shane was terrified of the sun. In almost every legend of blood-drinking creatures, they were always affected by the sunlight. They would burn, shrivel up, vanish.

">I will go out and show you,<" Ilya tried to insist. That made Shane freak out even more, grabbing at Ilya's arm.

“>No. No, you can’t die. I can’t lose you,<” Shane was begging him.

Ilya’s heart ached. He rested a hand on Shane’s cheek. “Shane,” he whispered. He looked into his eyes. Those deep and dark eyes that had stolen his dead-heart on the first day.

“>Breathe. It helps,<” Ilya said. The only reason they needed to breathe was to talk, but Ilya found himself doing it often anyway. The habit of breathing deeply when he was anxious or scared carried with him into this afterlife. And, it was probably just a placebo effect, but he always found it helpful.

Shane took a deep breath. Then he winced. It probably burned his throat, the scents of the damp forest soaking into the cave. Ilya brushed his thumb over Shane’s cheek gently, over those beautiful freckles. He was glad that they hadn’t vanished, that the universe didn’t consider them an imperfection.

“>The sun is okay. Watch. Please trust me,<” Ilya told him, softly.

Reluctantly, Shane let him go.

Ilya stepped out of the cave and into the sunlight slowly. Shane inhaled sharply and held his breath.

“>See?<” Ilya tugged off his tunic to show more of his skin. There was no burning, no sizzling. There was just a faint glow and sparkle that wasn’t too noticeable unless you stared. And, even then, Ilya wasn’t sure if the human eye was able to catch it.

Shane did stare. He was in awe. Slowly he stepped out into the light, too. He tentatively rested his hands on Ilya’s chest. The skin there was still cold. Ilya wasn’t burning, he wasn’t on fire. Shane exhaled the breath he was holding.

Ilya smiled at him, bringing up a hand to rest over Shane’s on his chest.

For a moment they stood there, gazing at each other. Ilya wished that he had a heartbeat so he could feel it racing. So he could feel that rush of love that he never got to experience in life.

The moment was broken by the sound of a twig snapping. Both of their heads snapped in the direction of it. Ilya stayed trained on the sound, but Shane looked at him expectantly. Ilya would teach him how to hunt properly. He wouldn’t allow Shane to stumble and almost hurt himself as Ilya had hundreds of times before he got the hang of it.

“>Come on,<” Ilya slipped away and tugged his shirt on. Then he disappeared in a flash.

Shane was right behind him. Then easily caught up with him.

Together they ran through the thickly wooded area. Until Ilya stopped, and caught Shane by his arm. They were tucked behind a large tree. There was some sort of deer. Three of them, actually. Which would be good for the both of them.

They would need the strength. They couldn't stay here. Shane's family, his village was here. Ilya wouldn't keep him here while his thirst was still out of control. He wouldn't risk him hurting the people he loved. Shane would never forgive himself.

">You will need to jump,<" Ilya whispered. ">Use your hands. They are strong. Do not hesitate.<"

Shane nodded. Ilya watched as he dragged his tongue experimentally over his own teeth. To test their sharpness.

Ilya waited for Shane to lunge first. And, when he did, Ilya was right behind him.

Together they killed. Together they drank.

When they were finished, leaving the three heaps lifeless in the brush, Shane was rubbing at the base of his throat. ">It still burns.<"

Ilya frowned. ">Yes. It's going to burn for... a while. You crave human blood. Animal blood is.. A temporary solution.<"

Shane frowned too. ">How long is a while?<"

Ilya smiled then. ">I'm almost two hundred years old.<"

Shane's eyes must have bugged out of his head. Ilya laughed. He clearly had a lot of questions, and Ilya was going to answer them all. But, not here. They needed to move.

">We can talk at our next destination,<" Ilya said.

">We can't stay here

No. It's too dangerous for you. And, there isn't enough wildlife. We need to go to the mainland.<"

">The mainland?<"

">I'll take you there. I'll take you all over the world. It's beautiful.<"

Reluctantly, Shane agreed.

In the night, when the village was quiet and dark, they took a final walk through. Ilya told Shane not to breathe, not to talk. He didn't want to risk it. So they walked in silence as Shane got a last look at his home.

Then, they took to the waters.

Together, for nearly two centuries, they traveled the world. They went to continents not yet touched by humans. They explored abandoned castles and villages. They partied, feasted, and

made love in too many cities to name. They were never apart for longer than a few hours, almost like a gravitational pull was drawing them towards each other at all times. Ilya never resisted it.

Rome had always been one of Ilya's favorite places to go. They made their way back there every few decades. He loved the art there. He loved the sun there, how Shane truly glowed. It made his freckles stand out, too. More than once Ilya had made it a point to kiss every single freckle on his lover's body.

But, his favorite memory of doing so would always be in Rome under the moonlight. On the soft carpeted floor of their home there, the curtain and windows wide open to allow the light to spill in.

"Ilya, that's cold," Shane breathed out, his entire body shuddering as if to prove his point.

Ilya just smiled up at him. He was settled between his lover's legs, hands on his waist, mouthing and kissing at every mark on his chest. Each freckle, each mole, each dimple and divot. "We are always cold," he countered.

Shane rolled his eyes, adjusting himself slightly. He had a pillow behind his head for comfort. They had already been there, on the ground, for nearly half an hour now. Ilya hadn't even touched him properly yet. He was simply kissing every inch of his cool skin, worshipping him with his tongue and hands. It was driving Shane fucking crazy, and was working and winding him up tightly.

"Can you get on with it?" Shane bit out.

Ilya's smile turned into a smirk. A cheshire cat type grin. "I have not even gotten to your legs yet. You know how many freckles are on your thighs? So many," he cooed.

If Shane had the blood to blush, he surely would have. He wondered, and not for the first time, how he was even able to get hard without blood. But he didn't think about it too hard. He wouldn't complain about it.

Ilya continued, "Then I will need to turn you over. You have so many on the back of your neck, your shoulders..." He dipped his head down to press a kiss to Shane's stomach, just under his navel. Shane shuddered again.

"I hate you," he managed to get out.

Ilya kissed again. "No you do not."

Shane couldn't hide his smile then. Just shook his head slightly.

Ilya had spent the next hour or so committing every mark on Shane to his memory. They didn't need to rush, and that was the best part. They had all of eternity together. They didn't need to waste their time sleeping. They could just simply be together.

By the time Ilya had gotten to kissing the back of Shane's thighs, biting the plush skin there, Shane was getting increasingly impatient despite their infinite time. And, Ilya wouldn't deny

him anything ever.

So he flipped him onto his back again, crowding between his legs comfortably. Shane wrapped his legs around Ilya's waist to keep him there, which had Ilya smiling into the kiss when their lips met. Their lips fit together so perfectly.

Ilya pulled back after a moment, having to untangle Shane's legs from around him so he could adjust him more comfortably.

He took his time working his lover open with his fingers, kissing and whispering soft words against his mouth the entire time. Shane's nails dug into his shoulders hard enough they would have drawn blood if they could. Ilya loved it. More often than not he wished that they could leave marks on each other. Even the bite he had given Shane when he was human had healed away into nothing.

"Ilya. Fuck. Please," Shane groaned, biting hard on Ilya's earlobe. "I need you. I need you."

"You have me," Ilya said soothingly. He dipped to kiss Shane's mouth as he removed his fingers slowly. He grabbed the oil that was set to the side, pulling back enough to slick more of it onto his cock.

Shane shifted mechanically, spreading his legs and lifting his lips slightly. Ilya grinned, leaning down to kiss him.

Sinking inside of Shane was never short of perfect. It was an out of body experience each time. For him, at least. But with the way Shane always whined for him, Ilya knew it must have been the same for him too.

Shane cursed into Ilya's mouth when his lover was fully inside. But Ilya didn't give him too much time to recover, to process. He'd been teasing him for nearly two hours now. Shane wanted him to speed things along, didn't he?

Ilya kissed him deeply as he started to move, capturing Shane's moan in his mouth. He felt those nails in his shoulders again, dragging down his back firmly. Ilya snuck a hand between them, wrapping his fingers around Shane's cock.

"Ilya," Shane broke from the kiss to moan. Ilya pressed their foreheads together, letting out a soft noise. He worked his hand over his lover's cock whilst keeping a steady pace with his thrusts.

"So pretty. Always so pretty," he whispered, his voice heavy. Ilya drew back then, looking down at his lover with lidded eyes.

Shane had opened his eyes at the same time. Ilya wanted to drown in them. He groaned, dipping down to kiss him again. His tongue slipped into Shane's mouth, dragging along his teeth, prodding at the sharp points of his fangs. That had Shane whimpering into his mouth.

Ilya pulled back so he could kiss down Shane's neck, over the column of his throat. He mouthed there, grazing over the skin with his teeth.

That dragged Shane closer to the edge. Close enough that he was nearly teetering over it.

“Ilya!” He choked out, his back arching off of the soft rug.

Ilya removed his hand from where it had been holding Shane’s waist, planting it onto his chest instead to hold him down. “I know. You take it so nicely,” he breathed out.

Shane moaned, clawing almost desperately at Ilya’s back as he fucked into him harder. Deeper. More purposefully.

“Ilya- I can’t-” Shane gasped, throwing his head back onto the pillow that was slowly but surely sliding away with each thrust.

“Give it to me,” Ilya whispered, working and twisting his hand faster over Shane’s cock.

With a cry of Ilya’s name Shane fell apart, his body shaking as he spilled over Ilya’s fist and onto his own chest. Ilya worked him through it, whispering praises to him until he stilled and finished as well.

Ilya leaned down to kiss him, then. It wasn’t like they needed to catch their breaths. They could go again if they really wanted to. If they never wanted to stop, they didn’t have to.

“I love you,” Ilya murmured against Shane’s lips.

“I love you more,” Shane whispered.

Ilya grinned. “Prove it.”

They learned a lot together. They spent a great deal of their time in England, both of them learning English and defaulting to it. It was easy to make friends that way. Even if English, they both agreed, was very annoying.

“There are so many rules,” Shane complained, his nose in a book. They were lounging in their current residence in London. Shane was reading, and Ilya was staring over at him with all of the love in the world in his gaze.

“Yes. But you are smart. You are getting the hang of it,” Ilya responded softly.

Shane sighed. He looked over at Ilya. The distasteful look on his face quickly turned into a smile. “What?”

“What?” Ilya tilted his head.

“Why are you looking at me like that?”

“I am just looking at you.”

Shane rolled his eyes fondly. “Aishite imasu,” he said softly.

“Ya tebya lyublyu,” Ilya answered with a stupid smile on his face.

Over the years they had found others of their kind. But, none that were good company to keep around. It seemed that they were the only pair that drank strictly from animals. Shane had never even tasted human blood before, which others of their kind found laughable.

After so many years of mingling and being around people, they decided they wanted time alone. Time to just be together. Because, undoubtedly, they were in love. They were twined together in so many ways.

They ended up in Serbia in the early 1700's.

It was Ilya's idea, and he would never forgive himself for choosing there.

It was good at first. They had a nice home in the village. They spent their days inside, wrapped up in each other like they couldn't get close enough. Then at night they would go out together. They'd run across long stretches of land. Sometimes it wasn't even to hunt, it was just to feel the rush of the wind in their faces. To feel alive for a few moments.

Sometimes they would end up tangled together in the woods. It was uncomfortable sometimes, the grass and dirt rubbing against their skin, but it was fine. Ilya would endure anything for Shane.

Things were great and perfect until... things shifted. And Ilya's entire world ended.

He remembered the day it happened.

May 10th, 1732.

“Ilya. You need to eat,” Shane insisted, touching his lover's cheek.

Ilya, of course, leaned into it. “You need to as well.”

“It's more dangerous if both of us go out,” Shane reminded.

There was a vampire scare in Serbia. And, well, Ilya and Shane fit the description. Beautiful beings that were rarely seen in the daytime, never seen getting food at the markets, secluded. For the past few months they have very rarely left their home. It was risky, and Ilya couldn't risk Shane. Shane wouldn't risk him, either.

“Then you need to go first,” Ilya insisted.

Shane shook his head. “I ate more recently. Please, Ilya. You look sick.”

Ilya couldn't deny that. He felt sick as much as he looked it. Paler skin, sunken in eyes, dulled hair. Even his senses seemed to be dulled. They really needed to get out of Serbia. They just needed to figure out where it would be safer. Ilya had heard about colonies across the ocean. Maybe they could flee there, build up a new life with the rest of the settlers.

“Okay. Okay,” he agreed. “You will go right after me. Alright?” Ilya brought his hand up to rest on top of Shane’s.

“I promise,” Shane whispered.

Ilya leaned forward to kiss him. Slow and soft. He often wished that he could just live off of Shane’s kisses alone. The gentle press of his lips, the sweet taste of his mouth.

Hunting without Shane wasn’t something Ilya did often. Actually, not ever. Not since he had turned Shane nearly two hundred years ago. The past few weeks though, they didn’t have much of a choice. It was easier to spot two in the woods as opposed to one. They didn’t need the attention.

Ilya made quick work of it. Or, he tried to. He was stalking a deer from the treetops, watching and tracking it’s paces. Then, just as he was about to drop down to claim his prize, he heard an explosion.

A scream.

A cry of his name.

Ilya felt sick, and not just because of his hunger. The hunger that was immediately forgotten, and the deer was spared.

He was running as fast as his body would allow in his weakness to get back home. He could almost feel the heat of the fire before he saw it’s glow.

Their home. On fire. A mob of humans outside of it with torches in hand. Ilya stood at the edge of the woods, looking with horror.

No. No. This couldn’t be happening.

Ilya blinked, felt his body move faster than it ever had. Then he was in the middle of the burning house. The fire didn’t hurt, it didn’t burn or singe his skin like it would have if he was human. All he could feel was the near unbearable warmth, but he didn’t care about that right now.

“Shane!?” He shouted, looking frantically around the main living space. Empty.

Upstairs bedroom. Empty.

The never-used kitchen. Empty.

The entire house was empty. There was only fire. Ilya heard shouting, cheering outside. The glass of the windows exploded from the heat. He jumped to one of them to look out of it, down to the crowd below.

What he saw would haunt him for the rest of his afterlife. The one he planned on ending as soon as possible.

Shane was there.

Ripped to pieces.

Being thrown onto a heaping fire.

By the time Ilya had finished slaughtering everyone in the village the fire had stopped burning. Shane was gone. Ilya was empty again.

He could be full. There were hundreds of human bodies around that he could drain the blood from, but he didn't. He wouldn't drink human blood ever again. That was a promise he had made to himself so many decades ago, and a promise he had reiterated to Shane in their early days. When Shane told him that he never wanted to taste human blood, Ilya told him he'd do it with him.

And maybe it didn't matter now. Because Shane was dead.

Ilya didn't know if he was watching over him the way humans always said their loved ones did when they passed. They weren't human. Did they get the luxury of a peaceful afterlife? Would he ever see Shane again, even if he did succeed in his efforts to die?

Ilya hadn't succeeded the first time, almost four hundred years ago, and he was having trouble succeeding this time around all the same. He wasn't able to rip himself apart limb by limb. He wouldn't give the humans the satisfaction of killing him, too.

He tried to starve himself. Ilya went two weeks without hunting, but he wouldn't fucking die. It just hurt, it ached. His bones felt brittle and his throat felt like sandpaper that had been set on fire. Starvation wouldn't kill him.

Ilya was forced to carry on in this godforsaken after life. Alone.

Shane was gone and everything was worse than it had been before.

Ilya returned to Rus'. Well, it was called the Russian Empire now. He didn't know where else to go. Russia was the one place that he had never taken Shane. It was the only place he could go without the memories of his love haunting him at every corner.

At some point, Russia had become less lonely. Because Ilya met someone.

Ilya was sitting alone in a tavern. The smell of ale was strong in the air, but he wasn't drinking. Of course he wasn't. He couldn't. Even if somehow the alcohol could get him drunk, he didn't like the taste. Anything but blood tasted sour to him. He had tried.

He wasn't doing anything spectacular. Just people watching. What else was he supposed to do to fill his time? Ilya didn't want to travel anymore. He didn't want to try and settle into a normal life. He didn't want to do anything. The only thing he wanted to do was end this miserable after-life.

">You don't drink?<" A honey sweet voice, in Russian, came from behind him. It was too sweet. It couldn't be human.

">No, I don't drink,<" he said, also in Russian, his tone flat. He didn't care about this. He didn't care about anyone or anything.

Ilya didn't react to the hand on his shoulder, only looked at it's owner when he was forcefully turned in his chair.

The woman in front of him was undoubtedly beautiful. But it didn't matter. Nothing did.

">Svetlana<," she introduced herself, smiling at him enough to show her fangs.

Ilya couldn't look more disinterested. ">Ilya.<"

">How long have you been like this?<"

">What year is it?<" He had stopped keeping track of time after Shane had died.

">Eighteen fifty-three.<"

Ilya sighed, closing his eyes for a moment as he did the math. He had stopped doing much of anything since Shane had passed. He was a little rusty with his smarts, his languages, his... everything.

">Five hundred years. Give or take,<" he responded.

">Oh, wow. I have only been around for about a hundred,<" she laughed. She sat next to him.

And, well, Ilya had been lonely. Maybe he needed a friend.

He and Svetlana spent the next century or so together. Not as closely as he and Shane had, of course. They would spend some years apart, but would always end up running into each other.

One time, after about a decade of not seeing each other, Svetlana found Ilya at a Russian bar. He, as usual, wasn't drinking. But he was talking and mingling, trying to do anything to fill the voiding ache in his chest.

"Ilyaaa!!" She jumped and latched herself onto his back.

"Svetka," Ilya greeted, prying her off and spinning to face her.

Svetlana kissed his cheek. “>I have to tell you about my travels. They have a new game in Canada. It is so fun. I will show you!<”

That’s how Ilya ended up playing hockey. A sport they had come up with in Canada.

He was good at it. Maybe it was a little unfair for him to play, with his speed and his strength, but he toned it back. Hockey was thrilling, it gave him a rush. And, he decided that he wanted to play it for as long as he could.

It was distracting. He needed to throw himself into the game fully. He needed to focus on the people around him, the direction of the puck, the angle of his stick. Ilya didn’t have time to mull over the past. He didn’t have time to mourn the love of his existence.

So he joined a junior Russian team, signing himself up under the age of sixteen. He figured that the younger he was, the younger he could stick around.

Two years later, in 2009, he was in Canada for the World Junior Hockey Championships.

It was his first time traveling to the West. He was always supposed to come here with Shane. He wanted nothing to do with this place now. But, Russia was a terrible place. Shane would want him to be happy, to be safe. His hopes were that he could be drafted to an American team.

He would be the first draft pick. He was sure of it.

Ilya was on the ice with his crappy Russian team, bored out of his mind. He was leaning his weight into his hockey stick. He didn’t need to do stretches, he didn’t need to warm up. He was the best there was.

Nothing would throw him off of his game.

Then, across the ice, Ilya saw him.

The Canadian team made their way out. And Ilya saw him.

Shane.

His Shane.

It had to be.

Ilya slipped, his stick snapping in half as he toppled to the ground. But his head snapped up, he couldn’t take his eyes off of the man. Those freckles, those eyes.

No. It couldn’t be Shane. He was... this guy was alive. Ilya could hear his pulse, he could feel the heat radiating off of him from here, he could smell his blood.

The man looked over when Ilya fell. They locked eyes.

Ilya felt his entire world stop. It had to be Shane. There was no other explanation. But how...

“Hollander! Focus!” Someone had shouted. The man with freckles, Hollander, looked over.

“Sorry,” Ilya heard him mumble. He looked over at Ilya once more before he turned and skated away.

Ilya needed to find a way to get him alone.

Fuck, what would he even do? This was insane. There was no way that this Hollander guy had anything to do with Shane. They just looked the same. Their blood smelled the same. They looked at Ilya with the same look in their eyes.

No. It wasn't possible. Shane was dead. This guy was very much alive.

The game was rough. Russia lost, and Ilya knew it was his fault. He was avoiding Hollander like the plague.

Still, despite it, he did end up being the first draft pick. He was drafted to Boston.

There, at the event, he learned that Hollander was the freckled guys last name. His first name was Shane.

Was the universe really so cruel?

In his hotel room that night, Ilya couldn't sleep. He needed to do something. Usually he would just go for a run, but it wasn't as easy to do these days. There were so many cars, so many people. There wasn't nearly enough forest. Not around here, anyway.

His teammates always said that working out was a way they burned off stress. Ilya had never really gotten the appeal. He, of course, was already in peak physical condition. Working out burned, but not in the same satisfying way that running did.

But Ilya was desperate for anything. So he pushed himself out of the uncomfortable bed and tugged on clothes more appropriate for working out. Then he made his way down to the gym.

Shane was there. Ilya stood cautiously by the door. He was working out, obviously, and the smell of his sweat and the sound of his racing pulse drove Ilya crazy. He hadn't smelled blood so sweet in half a century. Not since he'd met Shane on that island.

They had gone back to that island together. The Europeans called it Japan. The people there still spoke a similar language to the one Ilya had learned to talk to Shane.

It had been a nice trip. The village Shane had grown up in was gone, replaced by something more modern for the times, but they went anyway. They walked through it together in silence, and Ilya allowed his lover to mourn.

Ilya had asked Shane all of the time if he regretted it. If he ever wished that he could go back and take back the bite. If he ever wished he could have been human. His answer was always no.

“I love you, Ilya. You were always meant to find me.” He had said.

Ilya, now, in this hotel gym, was starting to wonder if that was true.

Had his Shane somehow made his way back to him?

Apparently he had been standing there long enough for Shane to notice him.

He was on the bike, and he looked over at Ilya, and his foot slipped. He yelped. Ilya had to make an active effort not to smile.

It had to be.

He entered the gym and sat down on the bike next to Shane. Shane, who was blushing furiously with his own embarrassment.

“You are up late,” Ilya said simply.

“Yeah I- I couldn’t sleep,” Shane replied as he slowed his cycling to a stop.

“Hm. Me either,” Ilya shrugged. He hadn’t slept in nearly seven hundred years.

“Congrats, by the way.”

“Oh. Thank you. You too.”

“Boston, right?”

“Yes. Montreal?”

“Yup,” Shane popped the ‘P’.

“We will see each other a lot, then,” Ilya mused. He was counting on it. He needed to... god he needed to do something. Telling Shane that he was probably, likely, Ilya’s vampire lover in a past life would sound insane. He would probably get sent away to the crazy house for that one.

No, they didn’t really do that anymore.

It didn’t matter. Shane would think he was crazy. And he would hate him. And, they were already supposed to hate each other. The hockey world decided that because they were both equally great players, they had to be enemies. Why they couldn’t be friends Ilya didn’t quite understand. He didn’t understand humans’ obsession with rivalry. That was why they liked sports, gambling, and suspenseful TV. Why they couldn’t just love without consequence, Ilya wasn’t sure.

“Why could you not sleep?” Ilya prompted.

Shane seemed a little freaked out. “Does it matter?”

“To me, yes.”

“Fuck you, Rozanov,” Shane muttered.

The last name that Ilya had stolen off of some advertisement in Russia. He wasn’t sure if he ever had a last name when it was Rus’. There were limited records. And, it wasn’t like he was spectacular enough to be written down. He had died at eighteen due to the plague. As did hundreds if not thousands of other people.

“Humor me?” Ilya turned on the seat of the bike to face Shane.

Shane sighed, heavily. “You’ll laugh.”

“I will not.”

“Promise?”

Ilya grinned. “Promise.”

Shane hesitated, turning his gaze away from Ilya. “I had a dream.”

“A dream.”

“Yeah.”

“A bad dream?”

“A weird one.”

Now Ilya was very curious. “What was it about?”

“You,” Shane said. Then his eyes widened in a panic and he turned to Ilya. “I mean- fuck. Not just you. But you were in it. And it was- it was weird, okay?”

Ilya was grinning again. “Wow, Hollander. Did you have sex dream about me? We just met,” he joked. And it hurt to say. Because they hadn’t just met. Or, they weren’t supposed to just be meeting. They would have known each other for nearly five hundred years now. Ilya’s chest had a phantom ache.

“No!” Shane’s face turned bright red. Ilya wanted to bite his cheeks, his freckles. “I don’t know. It was just.. It was fucking weird. And it wasn’t the first time I’ve had the dream either. I’ve been having it since...” he trailed off, unsure. Then he looked horrified again. “Why am I telling you this?” He put his hands over his face.

But Ilya wasn’t finding it funny anymore. No, he... he needed to know more. He needed to pry this dream out of Shane if it was the last thing he did. “Tell me,” he said. “Please?”

Shane peeked at Ilya through his fingers. He groaned. He murmured something under his breath that Ilya couldn't quite catch. But, he was patient. He waited for Shane to work it out. Ilya could practically see the gears turning in his head, just like they used to. It was cute.

"You're going to think I'm insane," Shane eventually said. Ilya just shook his head. He remained calm, not even smirking. He wanted Shane to know he was serious.

Shane took a deep breath. "I don't know. It feels like... I know you? I mean, you've been in my dreams for years. So when I saw you on the ice today.. When I saw that you were real? I.. it was fucking weird. Like I could feel it, you know?"

Ilya just nodded. So, Shane continued. "In these dreams we..." he blushed, "I think we were... lovers or something? But we weren't here. I mean, god, we were in a lot of places. It sounds stupid. And insane. I mean, we just met. They were just stupid dreams," Shane said. Then he laughed a bit awkwardly.

"Maybe. Maybe not," Ilya shrugged. He was trying to remain calm, to appear nonchalant. But internally he felt like he was buzzing. Because, this was real. This Shane, here, in modern Canada, was his Shane. His love who he had lost three hundred years ago. And he almost remembered. "I felt something too. When I saw you."

"Is that why you fell?" Shane smiled then. Ilya wanted to hold onto it forever.

"Maybe," he smiled back. He relaxed it quickly. "Tell me more about these dreams."

"I don't really know how to explain them."

"Try?"

Shane sighed. "It wasn't just places? It felt like we were in different times? And, we didn't always speak English. Sometimes it was languages I didn't even recognize. But, when I was dreaming, I could understand them perfectly. Fucking weird, right?"

"Weird," Ilya agreed.

"Weird," Shane echoed. He continued, "I don't know. I've never... I've never told anyone about these dreams. I don't know what they mean. And, I'm sorry if this is.. If it's freaking you out. But, I feel like I've known you for a long time? I.. I should stop talking."

"Please do not," Ilya said quickly. He had missed hearing Shane's voice so much. It was a little different now, a different accent, but it was the same tone. It carried the same soft melody that Ilya loved so deeply. "I... I know what you mean. It feels like I have known you for a long time." Shane had no idea.

Shane smiled a little, tilting his head. "Really?"

"Really. Is why I fell on the ice."

"Oh, right. Right. Okay," he nodded. "Did you ever... have a dream like that? About me?"

Ilya sighed. If he could sleep, he was sure he would dream about Shane all of the time. “I rarely dream,” he said. “But, tell me a moment from a dream you had. I want to know.”

Shane pursed his lips. He looked down at his shoes, thinking. “Okay, uh. I mean, the first one I remember was... you kind of looked like a pirate or something. But, like, a really beautiful one. And I was... I don’t know where we were. But you needed food and-”

“And you gave me rice,” Ilya finished for him.

Shane’s head snapped up, he looked at Ilya a little wide eyed. He nodded slowly. “Yeah. Yeah, I gave you rice. But...”

“But I did not eat it. I gave it to the people behind me.”

“Stop. How the fuck do you know that?” Shane looked a little scared now.

“I was there,” Ilya said simply.

“No the fuck you weren’t. This- this isn’t real! This is just some dream I had you can’t-”

“Tell me another one.”

Shane huffed. He looked down to the ground again. “Okay. Fuck uh,” he closed his eyes as he tried to think. “Tell me about... we were at a river? I think? And-”

“In the woods or the sand?”

“The woods. Why were we there?”

“We were hunting.”

Shane paused. He didn’t look up from the ground. “Hunting,” he repeated, quiet. “We were-”

“Chasing deer, yes. Hunting,” Ilya said.

Shane swallowed. Ilya watched as his throat bobbed with it. He wanted nothing more than to sink his teeth into the skin there. To taste Shane’s blood one last time before he could change him again. Then, he would never leave his side again. Ilya would keep him attached at the hip for the rest of their eternal lives.

“Because we...” Shane trailed off. Like he didn’t want to say it.

“Drank their blood,” Ilya supplied. Maybe in a tone too calm.

Shane looked a little pale. Sick. Ilya could see his skin getting clammy, could see the slight tremor in his hands.

“Maybe we should-”

“Can we go-”

They both paused and looked at each other. And despite the tense situation, Shane laughed. “We can go to my room,” he offered. He needed to shower and change before they had... whatever conversation this was.

Ilya went back to his own room. Even if he didn’t sweat, he still liked to shower. Once he was cleaned and changed he went to the room number that Shane had given him.

1543.

If that wasn’t a twisted way of fate screaming directly in Ilya’s face, he wasn’t sure what else it could do to make this more obvious.

Ilya only knocked once before the door opened and he was being dragged inside.

“Sorry. I didn’t want anyone to... uhm. To see,” Shane said.

Ilya’s brows furrowed, but he nodded.

They both sat on the end of the large bed, not near each other. Not even close enough for an accidental elbow brush. The distance was killing Ilya, but he could be patient. He had waited almost three hundred years for Shane to come back to him. He could wait a while longer.

“I want to know everything,” Shane started. “I want to... I mean, what the fuck is this? They aren’t just dreams are they?”

Ilya shook his head. He pulled his legs up onto the bed and crossed them. “No. Memories.”

“Memories,” Shane scoffed. But the scoff sounded almost forced. Like he believed Ilya, but he didn’t want to. “That’s not possible. I mean, in some of the dreams it looked like we were in the nineteen hundreds or something.”

“Sixteen,” Ilya corrected. “Some seventeen.” Shane hadn’t made it to see the eighteen or nineteen hundreds. Ilya had endured them alone. But, maybe that was for the best. They were not the best of times. A lot of war.

“That...” Shane shook his head. “This is insane.”

“Yes,” Ilya agreed.

“So, we were... together?”

“Yes.”

“For how long?”

“One hundred and eighty-nine years,” Ilya said without missing a beat.

Shane faltered. “Fuck you. That’s not...”

“We were immortal,” Ilya supplied.

That did not seem to help Shane's spiraling. "Then how do I not remember any of it? I remember my life, now. Growing up in Canada with my parents. Living a life here. I don't remember... I mean, not clearly."

Ilya had to look away now. Down to the ground. There wasn't a day that passed that he didn't think about the day Shane died. Today was no exception, but it had been a while since he'd been forced to think about it.

"You died," Ilya said. Shane opened his mouth, but Ilya cut him off. "By humans. We were in Serbia. There was a... a vampire scare. They suspected us. So, they killed you." He was still staring at the ground. Angrily, like he was trying to burn holes into it. "I left you for maybe twenty minutes and... and I could not save you. I was not fast enough."

Ilya went over that day over and over again in his head. Maybe if he had taken the few extra seconds to kill that deer he would have had enough strength to run home faster. Maybe he would have made it there in time. Or, maybe, he should have insisted more firmly that Shane hunt first. It didn't matter how many times he went over it, felt guilty about it, the outcome would never change.

"How long ago was that?" Shane asked quietly after allowing the information to hang in the air.

"It was May tenth, seventeen thirty-two," Ilya said easily. May 10th was a day he dreaded every year.

"May tenth is my birthday," Shane blinked.

Ilya looked up at him, a little wide eyed. There it was again, fate screaming at him.

They talked late into the night. Ilya answered every question Shane had for him without sugar coating it. Yes, he was immortal. The closest thing he could compare himself to is a modern vampire. No, he does not kill people. He's been alive since the 1300's, and he's loved Shane since the 1500's.

He told Shane stories, filling in the holes of his dreams. They ended up lying on the bed together, facing each other. Inching closer and closer without really meaning to.

Shane had drifted off to sleep, and Ilya stayed. He stayed there until morning when Shane's alarm went off. And, when Shane woke up and saw that Ilya was still there, and wasn't just a figment of his imagination, he surged up to kiss him.

If Ilya could cry, he would have, He would have absolutely sobbed if he had the ability. He hadn't felt the press of Shane's lips to his own in so long. And, never like this. Never while he was alive and warm. He tasted different, he smelt different, but had the underlyings of the past. Ilya couldn't get enough of him.

They kissed until Shane was breathless.

"I want you to be with me again," Ilya blurted.

Shane pulled back. He hesitated. “Be with you...”

“I want to change you.”

Shane was sitting up. “I can’t.”

“Why not?” Ilya sat up with him.

“I have hockey.”

“I play hockey.”

“I have my family.”

And, Ilya couldn’t argue with that. He had argued that with Shane five hundred years ago when he all but begged Ilya to change him. He closed his eyes and took a breath to regulate.

“Then I will wait for you.”

And wait he did. They both played hockey for their respective teams, seeing each other when they could. Which was fairly easy when Ilya could run across the entire country in less than ten minutes if he really wanted to.

On the ice they were still rivals. They played hard against each other. Then, they’d meet in hotel rooms, and would be nothing but soft and gentle. They’d kiss for hours. Ilya would make Shane come apart for him over and over again until he fell asleep in a heap.

They would talk. Shane would have another dream and immediately call Ilya the next morning to tell him about it. Then Ilya would fill him in, remind him of their years together. Sometimes it was hard to try and get Shane to remember and memorize two hundred years of a life, but he was nothing if not determined.

Every once in a while Ilya would ask Shane if he was ready yet. Because Ilya was always so anxious. Shane was fragile. All humans were so fragile. Especially because Shane played hockey. Hockey was dangerous. He could get hurt. Worse, he could get killed. Then Ilya would be alone again. Was he supposed to wait another three hundred years for Shane to come back to him? He couldn’t do it.

Each time, Shane said not yet. Ilya couldn’t be mad at him, but he was just... always worried.

Then it was happening all over again.

It was 2017. Shane was 26. Ilya was supposed to be as well, but, people were starting to get suspicious of the fact that he hadn’t aged a day since 18.

They were playing against each other in Montreal. It was going to be a fun game. It was always fun when they played against each other. Then, Ilya would go over to Shane’s

apartment. They'd spend the night together until he had to go back to Boston. He couldn't wait.

Those plans, and any other future plans, were ruined when Ilya saw Shane get body slammed into the ice.

It all happened so fast after that. Too fast.

Someone on the Boston team hadn't anticipated the fall. No one could have. He tripped over Shane. His skate sliced clean along the side of his neck.

Ilya's entire world stopped. The scent and sight of blood didn't affect him anymore, but, this was Shane. His Shane was bleeding out on the ice.

Ilya was at his side before anyone could even blink. Too fast for the cameras to even catch.

Time seemed to slow.

"No no no no- Shane-" Ilya heard a ringing in his ears.

"Do it," Shane choked out, coughing around his own blood.

Ilya has no choice.

He won't let the love of his life die. Not again. Especially not when he has the chance to do something about it. They can figure out all of the consequences later. Everything else can wait. Nothing else mattered.

"I'm sorry," Ilya said. For letting this happen, for the pain he's about to cause, and for breaking his promise about never tasting human blood again.

Ilya curled himself around Shane's body and he bit down on the gash where it would be concealed. It all happened in a flash, no one would see anything but Ilya freaking out over a dying player on the ice.

"Shane Hollander presumed dead after his body went missing from Montreal Hospital following a life threatening injury after a hockey game. Officials are still unsure as to how this happened. If you or anyone else..."

The reporter's voice on the TV got quieter as Ilya walked away and into the kitchen of Shane's parents' house.

It had been two weeks since Ilya had taken Shane's body from the hospital. What else was he supposed to do? They would have seen him die, watched his vitals drop, and he would have woken up a few days later. That couldn't happen. It would cause a worldwide panic. So, Ilya more or less kidnapped him.

The same as the first time around, he held Shane on the bed of his Boston apartment while he went through the tremors and the change.

When he woke up, he remembered everything.

They didn't have much time to talk, though. Shane needed to eat. Only this time Ilya didn't need to teach him how to hunt. He took the lead, and they both ate together.

"I need to tell my parents," Shane said once they were back in Ilya's bed. After they had showered off the blood and dirt, and were now tangled together under the blankets.

"Shane. They cannot know-"

"They have to, Ilya. Right now they think I'm dead and missing. It's probably killing them. I can't... I can't do that to them."

Ilya took a deep breath. "Will they keep a secret?"

"If it means keeping me? Yeah. They will."

"Okay."

Yuna and David Hollander were understandably freaked out when their son showed up at their doorstep two days later. And, when Ilya Rozanov was standing behind him.

It took a few frantic minutes before Shane was able to convince Yuna to not call the police, then they were sitting around the kitchen table. Shane and Ilya both refused drinks.

The conversation was... hard. Yuna asked them both repeatedly if they were on some sort of drugs or something. Even after they were done explaining it all, Ilya was pretty sure the Hollander's weren't convinced. But, they were willing to believe it enough as long as Shane got to stay in their lives.

Now they were just... cautious but accepting.

Ilya walked into the kitchen, sitting down next to Shane and kissing his cheek. Shane smiled at him. Yuna and David were setting the table, just for the two of them. But Shane and Ilya would still sit with them, they'd still converse. Ilya could see that Yuna was still buzzing with a million questions and he was willing to answer all of them. As long as Shane was happy.

Ilya finished out the hockey season before retiring early. It was probably for the best anyway. The number of his age was getting too high, and his face and body didn't reflect that number in the slightest. He needed to disappear.

Ilya and Shane spent the next twenty-two years living in Canada at Shane's cottage. They visited his parents every week, took care of them while they were sick. David passed first,

and Yuna had followed him just a few months later. It was understandably hard on Shane, who had gone quiet for the next couple of months.

It was hard. The knowledge that he'd have to mourn his parents for the rest of his existence. That it would never end. Ilya tried to comfort him as best as he could, but he understood that his lover just needed time.

After his ten month long mourning period, they left the cottage.

They travelled the world again together. Sometimes Shane still had trouble remembering things, so Ilya took him everywhere they had once been. Everywhere but Serbia. Ilya refused to step foot there every again, and he wouldn't let Shane do it either.

At least not now. Maybe in a thousand years, when Ilya was sure that all traces of negativity were wiped from that god awful place.

They had the time to wait, after all.

They were in Rome again. Five hundred years since they'd met for the first time on that small Nippon island.

Shane was leaning over the balcony of the apartment they were renting. He had his arms folded over each other as he looked down over the crowd. It was a beautiful day outside, and as usual he was glowing in the sunlight.

Ilya snuck up behind him, arms sliding around his waist. He pressed his chest to Shane's back, and he craned his neck to kiss at his lover's jawline.

"What are you thinking about?" Ilya whispered, his voice soft.

Shane hummed. "Forever."

Ilya smiled. "Forever?"

"Yeah. About how I get to have you, to have this, forever."

Ilya's heart would have burst in his chest. He spun Shane around in his arms. Shane immediately draped his arms over Ilya's shoulders, arms linking together behind his neck.

"Aishite imasu," Ilya whispered.

"Ya tebya lyublyu," Shane replied quietly.

When they kissed, they were both smiling so much that it probably didn't count as a real kiss.

Ilya didn't care.

They had forever to keep trying.

End Notes

this is an au where homophobia isnt real btw. like yuri on ice

if anyone would be interested in another story about their lives together as vampires i could potentially whip it up i dont know. this idea came to me right before i passed out one night, and then i woke up the next morning and just started writing it.

i tried to be as historically accurate as i could with the timelines and stuff... plague in 1348, portugal first ending up in japan in 1543 for trading, the vampire scare in serbia 1730's.... i did a lot of research for this even though nobody cares

anyway don't tell me if this is bad ill literally cry a lot!!

also lmk if there are any tags i need to add. im really bad at tagging

edit: yes there are a lot of twilight parallels sue me im just a boy who loves Edward Cullen

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!