

cold comfort for change

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cold comfort for change

by [goddammitgabey](#)

Summary

The next direct flight from Montreal to Moscow leaves around five a.m. He looks up at the clock in the top corner of his phone screen, thinking. It's close eleven now. Ilya must still be on Boston time if he's up that early. He hits "add to cart" before he can stop himself and the next thing he knows, he's got a flight confirmation code in his email.

OR : Shane goes to Russia for Ilya's father's funeral. And the Russian confession is said to his face instead of over the phone.

Notes

Hello everyone~

This has been niggling at me since episode 5 aired. Some of the dialogue is stolen directly from the episode itself. (I watched it back way too many times lol)

I googled a lot of these funeral traditions, so I apologize to the entire country of Russia if I got anything wrong.

I'd say everything in italics is supposed to be in Russian, but I love italics too much to make that be completely true. Just consider that most of the things in italics are supposed to be in Russian.

Title from Pink Floyd's Wish You Were Here.

This was beta'd by Alyssa and cheerleadered by Tegan and the rest of our Hockey Hell discord.

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

"What the fuck do you want?" Ilya hisses into the phone. This is the last thing he wants to deal with right now—especially since he just fucking won against Montreal (and he only feels *a little* bad for Hollander. Only a little.)

He hears the rough sound of his brother's voice down the line, but doesn't comprehend what he's saying after, in lieu of a greeting, he says, *"Dad's dead."*

He clenches his hand around the phone so hard he thinks he can hear the plastic groan. It definitely feels like it might snap.

He doesn't remember what he says back to his brother. He had to have said *something*, but he doesn't remember. He must've moved on—what was it—oh, *autopilot*, because the next thing he's cognizant of is that he's sitting in his car, in his garage, staring absently at the steering wheel.

He comes back to himself almost like he'd been asleep. He blinks, turns the key to off and climbs out of his car. He presses the button on the wall next to the back door and the garage door shuts behind him, the car popping as it cools down.

He walks into the house and drops his keys to the kitchen table and toes off his shoes. His phone buzzes in his pocket; he ignores it. He walks through the kitchen to the living room and nearly jumps out of his skin when he sees Svetlana sitting on the couch. She gets to her feet as he walks in, making him curse at her in Russian, heart pounding. He averts his gaze from hers, looking somewhere over her shoulder as she moves quietly towards him.

She stands in front of him, a frown on her beautiful face. *"Hey,"* she says softly, cupping his cheek with a perfectly manicured hand. He finally meets her eyes and exhales. She smiles a small, sad smile up at him. *"I'm so—"*

He pulls her into his arms and holds her tight, despite knowing he hasn't showered since before the game—when he was with Shane. She doesn't say anything about it—simply holds him, scratching a hand through his damp hair, rocking him side to side. He can smell her perfume—something light and floral. He wishes it was something else. Something clean, like fresh linen. And sunshine.

"You need to shower," she says as she pulls away from him. She wrinkles her nose with a fond smile. *"You're disgusting."* Ilya finds himself smiling.

"Yes, but I'm a winner," he says. She cups his face again.

"You are. That was an incredible third period. I thought Hollander was going to break his stick when you made that goal."

Ilya huffs out a laugh. He'd seen Shane's little scrunched face as he skated by. He'd looked upset, but his eyes were smouldering with pride. Ilya had wanted to grab him by his jersey and kiss him. A frustrated Shane was positively irresistible.

"You go take a shower," Svetlana says, brushing her hands down his arms. *"I'll be here when you get back. We have a plane to catch."*

"We?" he blinks at her. She nods and smiles up at him again.

"Our flight is in three hours. Go before I push you in myself." Ilya gives her a suggestive leer. She rolls her eyes fondly. "No."

"I didn't say anything," he says, already turning towards the bedroom.

"You didn't have to," she laughs after him. He hears the creak of the couch and the television turn on.

—

"Hey, did you hear about Rozanov?" J.J. is wandering around the locker room after practice, looking down at his phone. He stops over by his locker, scrolling through a webpage.

"What about Rozanov?" Shane steps back into the locker room, towel around his waist. His hair is wet and a little crazy because he hasn't combed it after drying it. The mention of Ilya, though, has made his heart start to race.

J.J. looks up from his phone and holds it out for Shane to see the article he's got pulled up. Shane squints at his screen. "Well, he did not fly with the rest of the team to Nashville," he says. Shane clutches his towel closed as he all but rushes to his locker and grabs his phone.

"He flew separately?" Shane asks, unlocking his phone with his thumb and pulling up his browser. J.J. hums.

"He did not go to Nashville at all," he says, moving over to the bench, continuing to scroll through his Twitter feed.

"Well, he didn't get hurt last night, did he?" Hayden asks. Shane can feel his eyes on him.

"Not that I know of," J.J. says absently.

"No, he didn't," Shane answers too quickly, pulling up ESPN and finding the article J.J. must be talking about.

"Maybe he's sick," Hayden says, turning back to his locker, putting deodorant on.

"No, he's not—I mean, he didn't seem sick," Shane says, pulling up his Messaging app, avoiding Hayden and J.J.'s eyes.

"Who gives a shit?" J.J. asks, standing back up and walking over to his locker. "ESPN is just saying he did not go to Nashville." He turns to look at Shane, watching him carefully. *"Calm down,"* he says in French.

Shane shoots off a text to Lily while he bites the inside of his cheek.

Are you okay?

—

By that evening, Shane's pacing his apartment. He's already finished stress cleaning, including fluffing all the pillows in both the couch and his bedroom and wiping down all the kitchen and bathroom counters. He's considering doing a deep clean of the inside of his refrigerator when he finally huffs out a sigh and walks over to his kitchen table, picking up his phone again.

Nothing. The exact same as it was a few moments before.

He sets the phone back down before he walks over to the fridge, opens it, pulls out a ginger ale, pops it, and takes a sip. He narrows his eyes in determination before he marches back over to the table, picks up the phone, opens his Messaging app, taps Lily's name, and hits call.

The phone rings. It rings and rings. Finally, he hears, "*Hi, this is Ilya, I will never listen to your voicemail.*"

He pulls the phone from his ear and clutches it tight in his hand. He bites the inside of his cheek again.

He worries.

—

He's in bed later that night, book resting in his lap, glasses on his nose when his phone finally, *finally*, begins to ring. It's a FaceTime request. From Lily.

He drops the book, sets it to the side, and hits answer immediately.

"Hey," Shane says, feeling the tightness in his chest loosen as he sees Ilya's face appear on screen. "Are you okay?"

Ilya's face breaks into a surprised smile. "You wear glasses?" he asks in amusement. Shane pulls them off and sets them to the side next to his forgotten book.

"Just for reading," he says, a little self-conscious. "Where are you?" He doesn't recognize the room Ilya is in—his house in Boston has so many white walls with lots of art. It looks like he's currently in a room with dark curtains pulled.

"Home," Ilya says. "Put them back on, please."

"Boston?" Shane asks. Ilya shakes his head.

"Moscow."

"Oh," Shane's heart rate picks up again. His mind is whirring a mile a minute. "Are you okay?"

"I will be better when I see you in your glasses again," Ilya says softly. Shane rolls his eyes, switches hands, and picks up his glasses again. He slips them back on his face.

"Happy?" Ilya's smile brightens, but it does not reach his eyes.

"Happier," he says.

Shane looks around the room behind Ilya, hoping the curtains can give him context for why Ilya just left the country in the middle of hockey season. Suddenly, it dawns on him.

"Is your father...?"

Ilya nods, this time averting his gaze from Shane's. "Yes, dead."

"Ilya," Shane says softly, heart breaking in his chest. "I'm so sorry."

He knows Ilya isn't—well, *wasn't*—particularly close with his father, especially in the past few years due to distance and his illness. But the thought of Shane losing *his* father—god, it kills him. He wishes he could reach through the phone and pull Ilya into his arms.

"What are people saying about me?" Ilya asks, changing the subject. Shane sighs.

"Nothing, um. The media is being super secretive, and the Raiders haven't—"

"Good," Ilya interrupts. "I will be back by the end of the week."

"You should take some more time than that," Shane says softly. Ilya shakes his head.

"Why? So you can catch up to me in the scoring race?" he jokes. Shane glowers at him.

"I'm being serious," he sighs. He can feel Ilya watching him. "You know," he says, reaching down with his free hand and playing with a loose string on the blanket he's currently under. "You can always talk to me about whatever. I want to help if I can."

"Take off your clothes," Ilya says, voice firmer than before. Shane blinks at him.

"What?" he asks, huffing a laugh.

"I'm also being serious," Ilya says. "If you want to help me, take your clothes off."

Shane blinks at him through the screen, feeling his cheeks heat up. Ilya gives him a Look and Shane sighs and sets the phone on the bed next to him before he pulls his glasses off so he can shirt off.

"Glasses back on," Ilya says as he sits down, propping his phone up on something. He also strips out of his tank top. He tosses his shirt to the side and looks back at Shane, tapping his temple.

Shane slips his glasses back on his face, making Ilya's smile turn somewhat hungrier.

They're sitting in the silence, trying to get their breathing back under control. Shane takes his glasses off his face and wipes at the sweat beneath them, hating the way they're fogging up close to where the lenses sit against his cheeks. He doesn't know what to say now—this is usually when one of them starts to inch towards the shower to get ready to leave. Or—well, before Florida, that's what they would be doing.

Ilya breaks the silence first. "I have to go." He does genuinely look upset at the idea of getting off the phone.

"Okay," Shane says softly. Again, he wishes he could reach through the phone and run his fingers through Ilya's messy curls and press kisses to the bruises under his eyes. To hold him tight and whisper that he was safe, that he was okay. That he was *here*.

He smiles at Ilya through the phone before he brings his free hand to his lips, pressing a kiss to the tips of his index and middle fingers, and then slowly brings this fingers to the screen, pressing them against it, as if he could reach through and brush the kiss over Ilya's cheeks.

Ilya stiffens, eyes going wide. Shane ignores it; his smile is soft and relaxed. He rakes a hand through his hair.

"Goodnight, Ilya," he says quietly before he disconnects the call.

He drops his phone to the bed next to him and flops back onto his back, looking up at the ceiling, his eyes sliding closed. God, he was so *fucked*.

His phone buzzes again. He grabs it, unlocks it with his thumb, and checks his notifications.

Goodnight, Shane.

—

He's crawling back into bed after taking a quick shower to clean himself up, still wrapped in his towel, when he catches himself pulling up his Clock app and typing *Moscow* into the search bar. A small icon of a clock set eight hours ahead pops up, showing him what time it is across the world where Ilya is.

He slaps the bed next to him, grabbing his glasses and slipping them on his face as he bites his lip, thinking. Was this a bad idea?

Everything we do is a bad idea, he remembers Ilya texting him yesterday—was that only yesterday? or was it the day before?—immediately before he'd headed over and they'd fucked, happily rolling around on top of crumpled sheets, laughing with his tongue in Ilya's mouth, hissing out a reminder that he can't leave marks through a moan as Ilya bit at his neck.

He takes a deep breath and pulls open one of his many, and *god*, does he have many, airline apps and starts to peruse before he can talk himself out of it.

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on Boston time if he's up that early. He hits "add to cart" before he can stop himself and the next thing he knows, he's got a flight confirmation code in his email.

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He shoots a quick text to Hayden before he begins to pack his suitcase. In true Hayden fashion, his phone rings a moment later.

"Dude, it's super fucking late. Is everything okay?" Hayden asks. He sounds like he's in the car.

"Yeah, yeah," Shane says, going from his closet to his bed, shoving a pile of clean underwear inside the bag. "I just wanted to tell you, uh," he searches for an excuse. "I'm gonna text Coach about it too, but something's come up. I'm gonna have to miss the next game."

"*What?*" Hayden screeches. Shane swears he can hear the sound of tires squealing. "What *the fuck* are you talking about, Shane?"

Shane pauses and pinches the bridge of his nose. "Yeah," Shane says, shaking his head at himself. "Something's come up and I have to miss the next game."

"What is it? What's come up? Is everything okay?" Concern drips from Hayden's voice. Shane hates that he's *lying* to him. That he's *been* lying to him. Some so-called best friend he is.

"Yeah, yeah," Shane says, shaking the thought away. "I just. I don't know, I'm—" He searches for another plausible excuse. Something that would make *Shane Hollander* miss a fucking hockey game. "A friend called and needed help, so I'm going to..."

Hayden is quiet. Shane can hear the clicking of what might be a turn signal. "...It's Boston Lily, isn't it?"

Shane's heart stops. Has he really been that fucking transparent? There's *no way* Hayden knows who Lily is—right? "N-no," Shane lies, voice cracking a little. Hayden hums into the phone.

"Listen, dude. I get it," Hayden says. The clicking from his end of the phone stops. "The things we do for our girls, right? Why do you think I'm out at eleven-fucking-o'clock on a weeknight in search of fucking Thai food?" Shane chuckles.

"Jackie had a hankering?"

"No, *Amber* had a hankering, thank you very much. Jackie is perfect."

"Hayd, you shouldn't blame anything on the unborn."

"Oh, I do," Hayden says with a put-upon sigh. "She's the reason I'm not at home in bed curled up with my wife right now."

"You're going to give her a complex fresh out of the womb," Shane laughs.

"Parents are supposed to fuck up their kids," Hayden says with a sniff. "Anyways, you let us know if you need anything. You know Jackie would do anything for you. Or Lily." Shane opens his mouth to say something, but Hayden pushes through. "And, dude, bring her around some time. If you're officially missing games for her, I think it's definitely serious enough for her to endure a double date with the best friends."

Shane takes a deep breath and nods into the phone. "Thanks, Hayd," he says softly.

"You bet."

The line beeps and disconnects, leaving Shane standing alone in the center of his room, looking down at his half-full suitcase sitting on the bed. He bites the inside of his cheek again—it's practically raw at this point—and he drops his phone to the bed as well before he goes back to packing, tossing socks and undershirts into the bag, packing efficiently and tightly.

—

He gets to the airport far too early, parking in the short-term lot despite not knowing exactly how long he's going to be gone. The ticket he bought was one way—though Ilya said he'd be home by the end of the week, he didn't quite know what he was walking into.

Yet another reason why this was *such* a bad idea.

Shane leaves his suitcase at baggage drop and joins the pre-check line for security. He's double and triple checking his pockets, patting his keys, phone, passport, wallet—he hopes to god that no one recognizes him—hopefully the baseball cap and wearing his glasses will take care of that.

The security agent at the front of the line arches an eyebrow at him as he reads his passport. "What happened the other night?" he asks with a hard look. Shane narrows his eyes and opens his mouth to say something, but the guard just huffs. Shane's mouth clicks shut. "That last goal by Rozanov was fucking painful to watch, man. But I don't need to tell you that—you probably fucking hate that dude."

Shane's mouth twitches in an attempt not to smile. If he only knew.

He gets through security and slides his feet back into his shoes before he wanders through the airport looking for his gate.

—

The terminal is deserted; all the little kiosks and shops are closed since it's still before five am. He stops at a vending machine and buys himself a bottle of water and a nutrigrain bar before he finds his gate and plops down in one of the most uncomfortable chairs on the planet.

He's got a book in his backpack, but since no one is around, he pulls up his phone and decides to fall down a Google rabbit hole. A familiar one, too.

He flips to incognito mode and types in "Ilya Rozanov."

Top link is a link to his Twitter. Second link is his Instagram. Third is his Wikipedia page. Shane looks to his right and then to his left as he taps the Wikipedia link and begins to read.

There's barely anything written in his "Early Life" section, other than the names of his parents, his brother, and what schools he attended in Moscow. A blurry group photo of some young hockey team pops up along the sidebar. Shane squints at the photo and finds Ilya almost immediately in the back row: golden curls wild, face serious. He ghosts a fingertip over Ilya's face, chest hurting.

He pulls open another tab, still in incognito mode, and types in Ilya's father's name along with the word "obituary." The google page populates a second later listing several Grigori Rozanovs in Moscow, but only one with an obituary dated from this week. He taps the link and pulls up a website to a Russian newspaper. His phone gives him a popup about whether or not he wants it translated, which he does, and he begins to read.

The obituary is short and very to the point. Just mentions that he's survived by his wife, Polina, his two sons, Andrei and Ilya, and his granddaughter Sofia. There is no mention of his first wife. The obituary begins to go on about Grigori's long career in both the military and then shortly thereafter with the police.

It does not mention a cause of death, but it does mention information about his funeral service. Shane screenshots the page. He then begins to research hotels near the church. He's hit "book" about twenty minutes later.

—

He gets up to stretch his legs after about an hour and a half of sitting around. The terminal slowly starts coming to life around him. Right as people start coming to sit at the gate, he finally shoots off an email to Coach Theriault telling him that he's had a family emergency and that he's going to be missing the next away game. He throws his phone onto airplane mode and shoves his phone into the pocket of his hoodie before he can overthink *that* completely.

He finds himself people watching, bouncing his leg in anticipation, arms crossed over his chest. He catches a couple of girls across the terminal staring at him with curious glances. He pushes his glasses up his nose and tries to not look caught, hoping they don't come over for a picture or anything. He finally smiles at them, making them squeal and rush away, speaking in rapid French.

*"Oh, my god that guy looks **just like** Shane Hollander!"*

"It can't be Shane Hollander!!! Why would he be here???"

"He's so dreamy!"

"He smiled at me!"

He readjusts his baseball cap and slouches into the seat, hoping he doesn't draw any more attention to himself.

Fifteen hours and some change later, Shane is in the back of a taxi. His driver is a short, balding man who speaks decent English, but even better French, to Shane's surprise. He makes polite small talk at the beginning of the drive, mostly about what brings him to Russia, especially so early in the morning. Shane responds back, fighting exhaustion. He'd slept on the plane, but not well. He kept waking up and then couldn't get completely comfortable, despite having flown first class.

Shane rarely indulges in creature comforts. What's the point in buying something extravagant when basic needs are met? And besides, when he flies with Montreal, he flies privately anyways, so it's not like he has to choose between economy or first class then.

But on a flight as long as the one he just took, he figured he'd take all the comfort he could get. Especially since he didn't want to be recognized.

He arrives at his hotel about thirty to forty-five minutes later and tips the driver well before he nearly stumbles into the lobby, looking around at the high ceilings and marble polished floors. He'd splurged here, too.

He must somehow con the concierge into feeling sorry for him, because fifteen minutes later, he's in the elevator heading up to one of the higher floors. He slumps against the wall in the elevator, looking down at the time on his phone. It's so fucking early—about five am—and he's just realized he's practically been some kind of awake for twenty-four hours.

He makes it to his room at the very end of the hall, unlocks the door, and shuts it behind himself. He flips the light on in the bathroom, toes his shoes off, drops the hotel key and his hat to the dresser, and then crawls into bed still dressed.

The bed is not uncomfortable, but it doesn't smell right in this room. The air is a little stale. It's still dark outside but he knows the sun will be peeking through the curtains sooner rather than later. He sighs, looking around the room from where he's laid out on the bed. The light from the bathroom has illuminated the details of the room slightly, but there's not much to see.

He crawls out of bed, readjusts the curtains, and heads to the bathroom. Normally, he'd shower to get the smell of the plane off of him, but he's too fucking tired to do that right now. Instead, he relieves himself, washes his hands, and sets to starting to unpack his suitcase.

He hangs up his suit in the closet, checking if there's an iron (there is). He then drops his toiletries bag in the bathroom before he begins to strip his clothes and crawl back into bed in just his boxers.

He checks his phone right before he lets sleep overtake him and sets an alarm. The service doesn't start until two in the afternoon. He sets his glasses on the side table and lets sleep pull him under.

When Shane wakes up again, his phone alarm is blaring in his ears. He slaps the bed next to him, searching for it and hits snooze before he rolls over onto his back and rubs his eyes with the heels of his palms.

Everything from earlier comes back quite quickly, making him freeze and look at his phone. It's noon. He drops his phone back to the mattress and stares up at the ceiling.

He's going to see Ilya today.

He has no idea how he's going to react. Knowing Ilya, it's probably not going to be well. But maybe he'll surprise him. Ilya's always surprising him.

Especially lately.

Things have been different since Florida. Hell, since *Boston*. And Shane hopes he's not overstepping here. Even though he (most definitely) is.

But he feels like Ilya would do this for him, somehow, if their roles were reversed.

Or maybe he wouldn't. Maybe that's just wishful thinking.

He throws the covers back and climbs out of bed. He's still so *exhausted*. But this is definitely nothing compared to how Ilya probably feels.

He walks to the bathroom, leaving his phone on the mattress.

—

Standing outside the church, gripping his bouquet of flowers (even numbered, he'd made sure), Shane starts to feel nervous.

There's a man standing out front on the steps watching him with interest, smoking a cigarette. Shane wonders idly if he's a relative of Ilya's. Or maybe a friend.

He checks his watch (yes, it's a Rolex) and moves to get out of the cold. The man nods at him as he walks past, taking another drag on his cigarette. Shane wrinkles his nose at the smell, but says nothing.

The interior of the church is beautiful. Wooden pews line the floor, some already occupied by mourners. Up at the front, in front of the stairs leading to the altar, is the open casket. He joins a line of what he hopes are well-wishers—they're at least all holding flowers as well—and tries not to bite the inside of his cheek.

When he reaches the front of the line, his breath catches.

God, even while mourning, Ilya is fucking *beautiful*.

He's standing next to another man in a suit, greeting the people in line in quiet, hushed Russian, shaking hands, probably thanking people for coming. Ilya looks behind the man in

front of him, his eyes looking behind Shane, possibly to see how many people are left, when his hazel eyes fall on him.

Shane holds his breath as he watches Ilya cycle through several different emotions at once. Finally, he lands on one that Shane should have braced himself for the most: Anger.

He steps forward, grabs Shane by the upper arm, and pulls him out of line, away from the crowd. His grip on Shane's arm is hard, firm, *bruising*. Shane opens his mouth to protest, but Ilya's hand tightens around his bicep and Shane nearly yelps.

Ilya pulls him off into an empty side room, lets go of Shane's arm, and steps away from him, putting a large amount of distance between them. He finally turns back around, eyes dark with fury, mouth twisted in a snarl. "What the fuck are you doing here? You *cannot* be here," he growls. Shane sees he's shaking with rage. "What the *fuck*, Hollander?!"

Shane grips the bouquet of flowers tight in one hand, the paper wrapping crinkling, the other is clenched in a fist at his side.

He called him *Hollander*. Not Shane. *Hollander*. Like Florida hadn't happened.

And God, all he wants to do is pull Ilya into his arms, even though he knows he's so fucking *mad* at him. He can't help it—his heart fucking *aches*. Ilya's eyes narrow and he grits his teeth before turning away from Shane and pressing the heels of his hands into his eyes.

He takes a deep breath. "Why are you here?" he asks in a calmer voice, though he sounds two seconds away from losing it again. He sounds *so fucking tired*.

"I—" Shane hates that his voice sounds shaky. He doesn't know what he was expecting, but somehow this wasn't it. Hindsight is 20/20 as they say, right?

"Well?" Ilya hisses, turning back around.

"I don't know," Shane says, lifting his chin to look Ilya in the eye. Ilya drops his gaze. "But it felt like the right thing to do."

Ilya scoffs and rubs a hand over his mouth. He's looking everywhere but at Shane. Shane's heart clenches again. He takes a step forward—Ilya takes a step back, eyes flashing dangerously.

"Hollander," Ilya begins, deflating. His eyes are shining with unshed tears. "I—"

The clicking of heels behind them interrupts them, making Ilya tense up again. Shane turns to see a woman standing in the doorway. She's wearing a tastefully short black dress and knee high heeled boots, her curly hair bounces with her every movement. A flash of recognition crosses her face as she sees who Ilya is with, but she doesn't look shocked. If anything, she looks *too* devoid of emotion—like she's trying not to react at all.

"*Is everything okay in here?*" she asks Ilya in Russian. Ilya is glaring down at the carpet, jaw clenched. He nods. The woman turns her attention to Shane, eyes watching him cautiously.

"Sveta," Ilya says quietly. She steps forward into the room and over to the two of them. She looks from Shane to Ilya and back, stopping next to Shane.

"*Your brother is looking for you,*" she says to Ilya as she reaches out and takes the flowers from Shane. He reluctantly lets them go. "Lilies? They're very pretty," she says. At the mention of the type of flowers, Ilya's eyes shoot to Shane. Shane's cheeks grow warm. "*I'll stay with him. You go.*" She holds out the bouquet to Ilya, who drops Shane's gaze. He takes a step towards her, whispers something to her in Russian, which she nods to, and walks out of the room, not looking back.

Shane watches him go, mouth a firm line, eyes stinging. He wants to call out for him. He wants to pull him back into the room and take him into his arms like he did in Florida. He wants to press kisses to his cheeks and wipe tears from his face. He wants to pet his hair and whisper sweet things to him. He wants, he wants, he *wants*.

"I'm Svetlana," she says, turning to Shane.

"I'm—"

"I know who you are, Mr. Hollander." Her voice is soft, her accent not as heavy as Ilya's, but still present. She reaches out and takes his arm, wrapping it around hers. "Come. You can sit with me."

Shane lets her lead him from the room.

—

The service, though completely in Russian, is beautiful. Shane can feel Svetlana watching him throughout, a knowing look in her eyes. She translates for him quietly, explaining what is being said and done, explaining their traditions to him without judgment. Like she knows he's dying to know. Like she understands why he's here. And in that moment, Shane knows Svetlana knows. He knows she sees right through him and Ilya. And he feels his eyes brim with unshed, embarrassed tears.

He might have—no *definitely has*—made things *so much worse* for Ilya by coming. He shouldn't have come at all.

He watches the back of Ilya's head, sniffing to himself, trying hard to breathe through the lump forming in his throat. Svetlana reaches over and takes his hand and gives it a squeeze.

—

The funeral ends with Ilya and some other men carrying the casket out of the church. A young woman and a little girl follow close behind. The other mourners begin to file out of the church, talking amongst themselves. Svetlana keeps hold of Shane's hand until everyone is gone.

"You should go back to your hotel," she says softly, letting go of his hand, standing. He watches as she shakes out her coat and starts to pull it on. He stands and follows suit. "And

then text Ilyushka where to meet you."

"How do you know he even wants to see me?" Shane asks dully. He checks his phone and sees he has several texts from Hayden and his mother. She grabs her purse and slings the strap over her shoulder.

"He will see you," she says in a soft voice. She gestures to Shane for them to exit the pew and she takes lead, walking in front of him up the aisle. At the steps outside, she looks off to the side, watching the crowd of funeral-goers head towards the cemetery nearby. She then turns back to Shane and gives him a small smile and a kiss on the cheek. "I am glad to finally meet you," she says. "Jane."

Shane freezes, his stomach flipping. She readjusts her purse strap and begins down the steps, heels clicking on the pavement as she walks to catch up with the crowd.

—

Shane arrives back at the hotel a little bit later in a sort of daze. He did what Svetlana told him to do and texted Ilya the address and room number of his hotel. He has no idea when to even expect him. He changes out of his suit and crawls into bed wearing a pair of sweatpants and a t-shirt that doesn't fit him quite right.

He turns on the television and finds a sports channel. It's in Russian, but it's not hard to follow along, even though he's mostly using it for background noise while he scrolls through his phone. He finds the closed captioning button and turns it on, finding that it's thankfully, in English.

Hayden's texts are full of concern about Lily and whether Shane even arrived alright. Shane shoots texts back, telling Hayden he's fine, that he's mostly just trying to stay out of everyone's way, that he doesn't even know if he should've come *at all*. Hayden doesn't text back—it's far too late for him to, anyways. He drops his phone to the nightstand and begins to watch television with disinterest. He orders room service. He waits.

—

Several hours later—he's about to call it a night—there's a familiar knock at his door. He looks over at the door cautiously, pushing his glasses back up on his nose. The knock sounds again, this time a little louder. Shane scrambles off the bed, mutes the television, and walks over to the door, pulling it open without looking through the peep hole.

Standing on the other side of the door, hands in his pockets, trying (and failing) to look nonchalant, is Ilya. He has his coat folded over one arm. He pushes past Shane into the room. Shane shuts the door behind him and pads back to the bed. He sits down at the foot of the bed and watches Ilya look around the room. Shane can smell the cigarette smoke on him from his perch on the bed. He opens his mouth to say something, but snaps it shut immediately after. This is not the time, nor the place. He waits for Ilya to speak.

Ilya finally finishes looking around and his gaze falls on Shane. He pulls a hand out of his pocket and wipes at his mouth again. Shane notices he's a little scruffy. He fights down the

wanting to reach out and cup Ilya's face, to feel that scruff beneath his fingers.

Ilya studies him a moment. Shane looks down at his lap, biting his lip. Finally, Ilya speaks.

"Is that my shirt?" he asks, a touch of amusement in his voice.

Shane looks down at the shirt he's wearing, mouth open to deny it. Yet, he doesn't remember ever buying a shirt like this - even ever *owning* a shirt like this. It *is* pretty big on him, he supposes. He feels the back of his neck grow hot and his cheeks grow warm. Ilya must take this as an acceptable answer, because he chuckles to himself and pinches the corners of his eyes with his finger and thumb.

"I'm sorry," Shane says softly after a moment. Ilya snorts.

"Are you?" he asks. Shane nods.

"Yeah, I am," he says, trying (and failing) to not sound defensive.

"You do not even know why I am upset," Ilya says with another scoff and a shake of his head.

"Your father just died," Shane offers weakly. "Of *course* you're upset."

"*No*, that is not *why* I am upset," Ilya spits.

"Is it because of me?" Shane asks in a very, very small voice. He feels his eyes sting again, the lump in his throat is back. He blinks rapidly, hoping to will his tears away, and looks down at his lap.

There's a thump, then steps across the carpet and suddenly there's a hand at his cheek. Shane finds himself melting against it, eyes slipping closed.

"*Moya lyubov*," Ilya whispers softly, brushing his thumb over Shane's cheek, over his freckles. Shane raises his head and looks up at Ilya, who's watching him with a look on his face that makes Shane's stomach twist into knots. He doesn't know what he's just said, but he knows it's something Ilya *shouldn't* have said—especially with how dangerous this whole situation is.

"Are you angry?" Shane asks, licking his bottom lip. Ilya hums.

"A bit," he murmurs, cradling Shane's face in his hands. "Mostly, ah, scared."

"Because of me?" Shane repeats. Ilya takes a deep breath and nods.

"That's part of it," he says, brushing the pad of his thumb over Shane's freckles again. "But not everything."

"I just—" Shane begins, dropping his eyes to Ilya's belt then back up to his face. "I didn't want you to be alone. I wanted to be here for you. I-in case you needed—" his voice trails off.

Me, he thinks. *In case you needed me*. He pushes his glasses back up his nose.

Ilya's hands fall from his face back to his sides. He steps forward and sits next to Shane on the bed, clasping his hands in his lap. Just like in Florida.

"How was dinner?" Shane asks, changing the subject. Ilya snorts.

"Awful," he says. "My family is at their worst right now. My brother is...uh, I don't know, scared? It makes him terrible. And it makes me terrible back."

"I've only been to my grandmother's funeral," Shane says, feeling silly for even bringing it up. Losing a grandparent is *nothing* like losing a parent. Ilya turns and looks at him, eyes roaming his face. "But the service today—what I could understand, anyways—was nice."

Ilya smiles softly at him.

"Svetlana was a big help," Shane powers through, clearing his throat. "She explained everything to me. I'm glad," he clears his throat again. "I'm glad you have her."

Ilya chuckles and nods his head. "She is good, yes."

"I know you said your father was sick, but—" Shane bites his lip. "Were you close?" Ilya shakes his head.

"No," he says. "My father and I had never been close. And my brother—my brother loves to point that out."

"Was your brother the man you were standing with? At the service?" Ilya nods.

"Yes," he says. "But I don't want to talk about him."

Shane nods, looking down at his hands in his lap, fighting the urge to reach out and touch.

"What do you want to talk about?" Shane whispers.

"I don't know," Ilya says, watching the television. "I don't know. English...is too hard right now."

"I wish I spoke Russian," Shane mutters. Ilya hums again.

"Mm, yeah. You could probably learn it in a week. No accent." He turns and looks at Shane, a smile on his face. "*Bonjour*."

A smile breaks out across Shane's face. "That's French, Ilya." Ilya's smile broadens.

"Yeah, I know, Shane." He bumps their shoulders together. Shane bumps his shoulder back.

Silence falls over them both before Shane hums to himself. "I, uh, have an idea." Ilya arches his brows and looks over at Shane. "How about you tell me everything that's on your mind, but in Russian? I—I won't understand, but...maybe it'll help?"

Ilya takes a moment, looking at Shane, but kindof also *through* Shane. He slowly nods. Shane beams. Ilya chuckles to himself before he looks back up at the television.

"I never want to come back here again." he begins. *"I fucking hate it here... And they all fucking hate me. I pay for everything. I make sure everyone has clothes they like. I make sure the food is perfect. That father is buried next to his parents, that the tomb is perfect. And the only fucking word I ever hear is "I want more. Ilya. I need more, Ilya. More, more, more."* He pauses, searching for more words. Shane wants to reach out again. Wants to place a hand on his back. Wants to pull him into his arms. Wants, wants, *wants*.

"And I have nothing for these people." Ilya continues. *"I give them everything... but I feel fucking empty. They don't care. They look at me, and they see a bank. Or an enemy. Or...I don't even know what. My brother... he always hated me. And I know why. but... it kills me. And it kills me that he took care of my father and I didn't. But I **couldn't**! I wasn't here. I still paid for it all. And he will never forgive me. For **any** of it. For existing. And it means...I have no one now."*

He pauses again. Shane thinks he sees tears welled up in Ilya's eyes. He blinks rapidly, as if he's trying to blink them away. The sight of Ilya nearly in tears *again* makes Shane want to break down too. Ilya looks down at his lap and takes a deep breath.

"Well, not no one. I have...Svetlana. She loves me. And I love her. But not like..." He looks over at Shane with a pained look on his face. Shane holds his breath, watching Ilya's face, noticing that the tears that had been threatening to fall earlier have brimmed over. *"Fuck me."* Ilya mumbles, looking away with a watery laugh. He then sniffles and looks back at Shane, slowly bringing a hand up to cup Shane's face. He brushes his thumb over Shane's cheek again. Shane nuzzles into his touch, slipping his eyes closed. *"But not like I love you. That's the worst fucking part of all of this is...that all I want is you. It's **always** you. I'm so in love with you, and I don't know what to do about it."*

Shane opens his eyes. Ilya is looking at him with that warmth in his eyes that makes Shane's stomach hurt. He turns his face and kisses Ilya's palm.

"Do you feel better?" he asks, looking up at Ilya through his eyelashes. Ilya's smile is soft.

"Yes. Thank you."

"Maybe you could teach me Russian some day," Shane says with a smile of his own. Ilya chuckles.

"Yeah, okay. Only useful phrases, though." Shane chuckles.

"Like what?"

"Oh, I don't know," Ilya exhales, looking away as if in thought. "'Harder, please' or 'yes, sir'—"

Shane giggles. "Fuck you," he pushes at Ilya's shoulder. Ilya finds himself giggling too.

"No, more like 'fuck *me*, please.'"

"How about..." Shane leans forward and pulls Ilya's head to rest on his shoulder. "I'm glad you're here."

He feels Ilya shudder against him.

"*I'm glad you're here, too,*" he whispers in Russian. Shane rests his head atop Ilya's.

They sit like that for a moment. The air conditioner clicks on, making the room even colder. Shane shivers and scoots closer to Ilya.

"When do you fly back?" Ilya asks, wrapping an arm around Shane's back. Shane sighs.

"I, uh," Shane says slowly. Ilya lifts his head, looking over at Shane with an amused look. Shane looks embarrassed, cheeks turning pink. "I bought a one way ticket." Ilya's eyebrows shoot up towards his hairline and he laughs. "I didn't know how long you'd want me to stay, or if you even wanted me here at all, so I—"

Still laughing, Ilya leans forward and presses a kiss to Shane's forehead, shutting him up. Shane feels a dopey smile cross his lips and his stomach feels like it's full of butterflies.

"Don't you have a game coming up?" Ilya asks. Shane nods and shrugs a shoulder, heart pounding harder.

"Yeah, but—" Ilya furrows his brows.

"But what?"

"I wanted to make sure you were okay," Shane says, meeting Ilya's gaze shyly.

Ilya leans forward and catches Shane's mouth in a kiss. He deepens it almost immediately, slipping his tongue inside, making Shane exhale through his nose against Ilya's cheek with a small, breathy moan.

When they break apart, Ilya presses their foreheads together, breathing heavily through his mouth. Shane closes his eyes.

"I want," Ilya mumbles, pressing another chaste kiss to Shane's slack mouth. Shane nods, brushing their noses together.

"Whatever you want," he whispers back. "Whatever you *need*—"

"Take off your clothes," Ilya says softly. "Please."

Shane pulls away from Ilya and stands. Without breaking eye contact, Shane begins to take his clothes off. Slowly.

By the time he's fully naked, he's breathing like he just ran a marathon. He moves to stand between Ilya's bent knees, fingers tangling into his hair, tugging his head back. Ilya's hands

slide up the backs of his thighs, over the globes of his ass, and stop at his waist.

"What do you want?" Shane asks softly, trailing his nose along Ilya's forehead and pressing kisses to his face. Ilya hums quietly, looking down from Shane's face, down his chest, then finally at his hard cock bobbing between his thighs.

"You," he says back. Shane chuckles.

"Well, okay," he says softly, breathlessly. "But *how* do you want me?" He's running his fingers through Ilya's hair absently. Ilya presses his face into Shane's chest, pressing kisses to the valley between his pecs. He looks up at Shane while he presses another kiss to his chest.

Shane cradles Ilya's face in his hands, tipping his head back so he can press kisses to his mouth. Ilya moans, opening his mouth for Shane's tongue. They meet halfway, brushing their tongues together.

Shane starts to pull at Ilya's suit jacket, keeping their mouths connected. Ilya lets him pull it off his shoulders, down his arms, and off his body. Shane feels a little awful about dropping the jacket to the floor, but Ilya grabs at his ass, making him moan into his mouth.

"Let me," Shane moans between kisses, pulling at Ilya's shirt. He laughs into Ilya's mouth, making Ilya laugh back. "Let me get you naked—"

"Get on the bed," Ilya says, pressing kisses to Shane's jaw. "I want you to ride me." Shane lets out an embarrassing moan.

Shane steps away from Ilya and crawls onto the bed, watching as Ilya begins to undress. He doesn't make it any sort of performance or anything, but Shane finds himself sliding his hand down to his cock and wrapping a hand around it, stifling any noises by biting his bottom lip. He lets his eyes slide shut as his hand drags down his cock slowly.

"Ah, ah, ah," Ilya's voice is a lot closer than Shane thought it was. He opens his eyes to see Ilya standing next to the side of the bed, naked, brows arched, a smile on his lips. "I did not say you could touch yourself." He sets a condom and a packet of lube on the nightstand next to Shane's phone.

Shane can feel himself blushing. He drops his cock and slides back further on the bed, giving Ilya more room to climb on. He crawls onto the bed, over Shane, between his bent knees, pushing him back against the mattress, pressing kisses up Shane's chest towards his mouth. Shane catches his mouth in a needy kiss, wrapping his arms around his neck.

Shane moans as Ilya rests some of his weight on top of him. He wraps a leg around him, resting a socked foot against the small of his back. Ilya begins to kiss down Shane's jaw towards his neck. Shane arches his neck to the side, giving him better access, sliding his eyes shut as he gets lost in the feeling. He slides a hand through Ilya's hair. *God*, does he love this man. So, so much.

"C'mere," Ilya mumbles into Shane's skin, pulling back. Shane whines at the loss. Ilya pats his side, smiling down at him as he rests on his knees. "*C'mere*."

Ilya tosses pillows out of the way before he settles back against the headboard. He slaps his thighs, looking at Shane expectantly. Shane eagerly climbs into Ilya's lap, settling his weight over Ilya's thighs.

Sitting nose to nose, Ilya smiles up at him before dragging his hands up and down Shane's thighs. Shane places his hands on Ilya's shoulders for balance before returning his smile bashfully.

"Hi," Ilya says, eyes warm. Shane's breath catches in his throat.

"Hi," he whispers back. He leans in and presses kisses to Ilya's forehead, the corners of his eyes, his cheeks, down to his mouth.

"I do so love these glasses," Ilya says as Shane pulls back. His lips are swollen. Shane wants to kiss them again. He does.

"God only knows why," he says with a breathy laugh. "They're gonna get smudged if I keep them on."

"So they get smudged," Ilya says. His hands are resting on Shane's hips in a tight grip. Shane hopes there are bruises tomorrow—bruises that match his fingers. "Keep them on," he whispers up into Shane's face. Shane nods.

Ilya's hands begin to knead at Shane's ass, fingers inching towards his hole. Shane rises up onto his knees, breathing heavily, as Ilya brushes a finger over his rim, making Shane keen.

"So eager," Ilya says, pressing a kiss to Shane's collarbone in front of him. "Get the lube for me," he says, pressing another kiss. Shane looks over at the nightstand, grabs the packet of lube, and hands it to Ilya. "Good boy." Shane moans.

"Ilya, please," Shane whines. Ilya tears the lube packet open with his teeth and begins to pour it over his fingers. He then reaches around Shane and presses two fingers into his ass.

Shane tips his head back, letting out a moan. "Oh, *fuck*—" He grasps at Ilya's shoulders, fingernails digging into his skin.

"Always *so tight* for me," Ilya says, watching Shane's face, thrusting his fingers in and out, scissoring them open. Shane begins to thrust down, riding his fingers, tipping his head back down so he can look down at Ilya. He bites his lip and runs his fingers through Ilya's hair.

"Always so *perfect*—"

"Ilya," Shane moans, pressing his forehead against Ilya's.

"Yes, *moya lyubov*. I'm here."

"God," Shane moans. "*Please fuck me.*"

"You're not ready yet," Ilya murmurs, sliding his fingers out of Shane's ass and adding more lube. Shane whimpers, hole clenching around nothing, before Ilya pushes three fingers in.

Ilya chuckles as Shane begins to lose his goddamn mind—especially once he starts circling and massaging his prostate.

Shane begins to tremble, his knees wanting to give out. "Fuck, fuck, *fuck, fuck—fuckfuckfuck—Ilya—*"

"You gonna cum for me?" Ilya asks cheekily as Shane pants, breathing heavily against Ilya's forehead, fingers tightening in Ilya's hair hard enough it probably hurts. "Gonna cum untouched for me? Like a good boy?"

Shane's moans get louder and Ilya's hand begins to move faster, the sound of it squelching in and out of Shane's ass filling his ears along with the heavy beating of his heart and his loud breathing.

"*Fuck, Ilya—*"

"That's it, *moya lyubov*. Cum for me. Cum on my fingers."

Shane bucks his hips and buries his face into Ilya's curls before he shouts out Ilya's name, cumming untouched between the two of them.

Shaking in the aftershocks, Shane begins to unclench his hands from Ilya's hair and slowly lower himself to Ilya's lap from his knees. He opens his eyes to see Ilya looking at him in awe, like he's something precious. Like he's the most beautiful thing on the planet.

Which can't be true, because Shane knows that that honor is Ilya's.

"*Fuck,*" Shane mumbles in a daze. Ilya leans forward and catches his mouth in a hungry kiss, sliding his tongue inside. Shane kisses back as best he can, tongue lazy in his exhaustion.

"You still with me, Shane?" Ilya asks. Shane nods, brushing their noses together.

"Y-yeah."

"Good. 'Cause I still want you to ride me."

Shane nods again, grimacing when Ilya pulls his fingers free.

Ilya reaches over and grabs the condom off the nightstand. Shane takes it from him in trembling fingers. He tears it open, scoots back enough to access Ilya's hard, leaking cock, and rolls it on him. He can feel Ilya watching him. He's petting at Shane's sides, up his chest to squeeze at his pec, to his face, cupping his cheek, brushing his thumb over the skin beneath his eye. To his *freckles*. And Shane can feel himself blush impossibly redder.

Ilya says something in Russian that Shane obviously doesn't understand. Shane nuzzles into his hand. He turns his face towards Ilya's palm and presses a lingering kiss to it.

Ilya's free hand grabs the almost empty lube packet off the bed and begins to slick himself up with a mumbled "*Fuck.*" Shane inches back up, grabbing the base of Ilya's cock and

positioning it at his entrance. Ilya's hands slide back to his hips, to where Shane hopes there are bruises.

"Ready?" Ilya asks. Shane nods and gives him a small smile before he bites his bottom lip and begins to sink down.

They both moan, breathing into each other's mouths, hands everywhere. "Oh, fuck, you feel so good," Shane mumbles.

"*You* feel good," Ilya moans back. "Like you were made for me."

I was, Shane nearly answers back. *I'd be all yours, if you asked.*

"Ride me," Ilya commands. Shane nods emphatically before he obeys, bouncing on his cock.

Ilya meets his thrusts halfway, making Shane cry out. His hands are back on Ilya's shoulders, fingernails digging crescents into his skin. Ilya's hands are clutching at Shane's hips, pulling him down on his cock with every thrust.

"Fuck, Ilya, I—" Shane breathes. He tips his head down, chin resting on his collarbone, looking down between them, at his neglected cock that's somehow still hard and leaking like a faucet.

"*Goddammit Shane*—" Ilya curses.

"Feels good?" Shane breathes out a chuckle. Ilya nods, looking up at Shane, watching him through hazy eyes. Shane brings up a hand to rest on the headboard, giving himself better leverage. Ilya's hands grip even tighter. "*God*, I hope you leave bruises."

"Bruises?" Ilya asks, amused. "Do you want me to mark you?"

"*Fuck, yes*," Shane moans. "I love it when you do that."

"I thought you told me not to."

"Wanna see—want you to—" Shane cries out as Ilya's cock hits his prostate. "Want proof—"

"Proof?"

"That this is real."

Ilya wraps his arms around Shane's middle and picks him up, pushing him to his back with his head at the foot of the bed. He kisses Shane, tangling their tongues together. Shane's hands reach up to cup his face, to hold him close, moaning into his mouth.

"This is real, Hollander," Ilya says softly, slowing his hips. Shane blinks up at him. He shakes his head.

"Is it?" he asks, sliding a hand through Ilya's hair. Ilya smiles and presses Shane's glasses up his nose, trailing his fingers down Shane's cheek.

"Da," Ilya says softly. Shane feels his face break out into a grin. He brings his hand up and cups Ilya's cheek, brushing his thumb over his stubbly cheek.

"Da," Shane repeats, eyes meeting Ilya's. Ilya smiles back at him and meets him halfway for a kiss.

"Can I go back to fucking you?" Ilya asks when he pulls away. Shane lets out a laugh, wrapping his arms around Ilya's neck, burying Ilya's face into the crook of his neck and shoulder.

"Please do."

Ilya snaps his hips forward, making Shane choke out a moan. He slowly wraps his legs around Ilya's middle and holds on tight as Ilya begins to fuck into him, biting and kissing his neck, pressing moans into his skin.

Shane cums again, this time with a silent scream, back arched, fingers clutching at Ilya's shoulders. He falls back onto the bed like a puppet with its strings cut. Ilya follows soon after, moaning Shane's name into his neck. Shane preens in the afterglow, petting through Ilya's hair.

Ilya pulls out and rolls over, chest heaving. Shane misses the weight of him immediately. He can feel cum and sweat drying on his skin in the cool, air conditioned air.

"I need to shower," he groans. Ilya laughs.

"You always complain like that after," he says. "Is cute."

Shane harrumphs and rolls to his side, propping his head up on his elbow. Ilya looks over at him and laughs at what has to be a sour expression on his face.

"Just enjoy it," Ilya says. Shane rolls his eyes.

"I don't enjoy being covered in sweat and cum," he mutters. Ilya rolls his eyes, reaches over and pulls Shane to him with a hand at the base of his neck. Shane shakes his head and goes willingly, pressing a tender kiss to Ilya's mouth.

"You are, what is word, high maintenance?" Ilya smiles up at him. Shane scoffs, offended—maybe just a little.

"I am not!"

"Just a little," Ilya teases, bringing his hand up from behind Shane's neck, fingers pinched together. Shane huffs.

"See if I let you fuck me again."

"Noooo," Ilya whines, pressing kisses to Shane's forehead. Shane smiles, already having forgiven him. He brushes hair off Ilya's forehead absently.

"Can you stay?" he asks softly. Ilya takes a deep breath, hand flopping back to Shane's neck.

"I shouldn't," he says. Shane feels his face fall. Ilya looks just as devastated. "But I want to."

"I need to buy my plane ticket home," Shane says softly. Ilya slips his hand from the back of Shane's neck up into his hair.

"I wish I could come back with you," Ilya says. Shane smiles.

"You're needed here," he says, brushing a finger down his face.

"So are you," Ilya whispers. Shane leans down and presses another kiss to Ilya's mouth. It's slow and languid, no heat behind it at all.

"Can you stay a little longer?" Shane asks, pulling away, hoping he doesn't sound like he's whining. Ilya smiles a soft smile and nods.

"Of course."

Shane beams. He settles against Ilya's chest, ear pressed over his heart. He lets the steady thumping of it lull him into a light doze.

He barely feels Ilya press a kiss to the top of his head. He starts to drift off as he hears Ilya whisper something into his hair.

"Ya tebya lyublu."

End Notes

If you made it this far, find me on [twitter](#). I need more friends to yell about hollanov with.
also, thank you for reading!

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