

i'll follow where your light goes

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by [countdracilya](#)

Summary

Shane's heart drops into his stomach. "*Ilya*," he breathes. His vision goes blurry, throat tight. He tries to swallow it down and focus, shove his swirling thoughts into a neat little box, but it's impossible. He feels—he might throw up, actually. "Are you seriously telling me you tried to fucking kill yourself?"

"Yes," Ilya agrees blandly, "It did not work."

Ilya calls Shane from the hospital. Shane handles it very normally.

Notes

back with my third heated rivalry fic in like three weeks... i haven't written this much in years. i just can't stop putting these boys in situations and projecting onto my good personal friend ilya rozanov.

please mind the tags; this is a heavy topic and deals heavily with the aftermath of a suicide attempt. ilya uses a lot of self-directed ableist language, which shane corrects pretty immediately. still, proceed with caution! timeline wise, this takes place instead of tuna melts (rip, sorry). title from halo by poppy (who also has a super sick cover of all the things she said!!)

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

MLH Status Report: Rozanov out on unknown injury.

Shane reads the notification once, all the way through, and then reads it again. The din of the locker room fades to an unpleasant hum. He clicks on the article without thinking, alarm bells clanging through his head. The subheading reads, *Wolski returns to the Falcons; Rozanov placed on IR*. The rest of the article—which Shane only skims until he finds Ilya’s name, focus sharpening into something like fixation—goes on to give very little detail.

Ilya has been placed on Injured Reserve. There’s been no timeline provided for his return, and no reason given for his absence.

Shane reads the article again, and tries very hard not to freak out.

“Whatcha reading?” Hayden asks, peaking over his shoulder. Shane startles, almost dropping his phone. “Dude, are you seriously reading injury updates right now? Put the hockey brain to rest, buddy, we won!”

“Rozanov is on IR,” Shane says, and he doesn’t even know why. Maybe just to tell somebody, test the words out loud. Somehow, they sound even worse than they do in his head.

Hayden snorts. “Good fuckin’ riddance. It’ll make Boston easier to beat next week, anyway—oh, don’t give me that look.”

Shane wasn’t trying to give any sort of look, but to be fair, he rarely knows what his face is doing. “You shouldn’t celebrate other players’ injuries, Hayd. That could easily be—”

“One of us, I know, I know.” Hayden rolls his eyes, but it’s good natured. Shane kind of sucks at reading other people, but Hayden has never been unkind to him. “What’s he out for, anyway?”

“Doesn’t say,” Shane says, still frowning at his phone.

“Maybe he finally got his lights punched out for all the stupid shit he says.”

Shane frowns deeper. That’s—not an impossibility.

But he would have seen it, right? The Raiders just played two days ago, fucking demolished the Admirals in a home game that left their fans rabid and practically hanging off the stands. Shane watched it on his flight back from Detroit. Nothing out of the ordinary happened. Sure, Ilya was a complete asshole and landed himself in the penalty box a few times, but again—nothing out of the ordinary.

Shane angles himself away from Hayden’s prying eyes and pulls up Ilya’s text thread. Nothing new; just the congratulations Shane sent the other night, unanswered. He hesitates, before typing out: *Are you okay?* He hits send before he can talk himself out of it, then promptly panics. His immediate follow up text reads: *Saw the update. Wanted to check in.*

There. That's normal. That's—a perfectly reasonable thing to text your fuck buddy. It doesn't come off as clingy, or overly attached, which, okay. Maybe he is. But Ilya doesn't need to fucking know that.

It isn't until later, when Shane's home and maybe spiralling a little, that Ilya finally texts back.

Am okay. Can I call?

Can he call. Can he fucking *call*?

"Rozanov," Shane says, the very second Ilya picks up. "What the fuck happened?"

"I take it you are available, then," Ilya says, warm and low down the line. Just the sound of his voice is enough to settle the arrhythmic worry in Shane's chest. "How was game? Did you embarrass yourself?"

"Fuck you," Shane shoots backs, "Are you hurt?"

Ilya takes a moment to consider this. "No?"

The vein in Shane's forehead gains its own gravitational force with how hard it starts to thump. "Either you're hurt or you're not, Rozanov, it's not that hard of a question."

"Eh, is more of a—" Ilya cuts himself off, trying to find the words. "душевные проблемы. What is English word? Brain problem?"

"Mental illness?" Shane offers. There's a growing sense of dread spreading through him, pins and needles down to the tips of his fingers. He stands, starts pacing around his living room like a caged animal. He needs to move. "Rozanov—"

Ilya snaps his fingers. "Yes, that is word. Mental illness. They keep me in hospital and watch so I do not do anything stupid. Will not even give me plastic knife with my dinner. It's fucking embarrassing."

Shane stops walking, his heart in his throat. "Hold on. Are you telling me you're on fucking *suicide watch*?"

"It's called *involuntary psychiatric hold*," Ilya says, pronouncing the words like they've been repeated to him multiple times. "I'm not supposed to have phone, but I am famous and very charming. Special privileges."

Shane sits down heavily on his couch. "Does your team know? Your coach?"

"Who put me here? Who found me? Use your brain, Hollander."

Shane's afraid to ask. Shane's really fucking afraid to ask, but he forces the question out anyway. "What do you mean, found you?"

Ilya sighs. It's big and blustery, faux-annoyed. Shane is immediately one thousand percent more on-edge. "In my room. Unresponsive. Big word for me, I know. Hold applause."

Shane's heart drops into his stomach. "*Ilya*," he breathes. His vision goes blurry, throat tight. He tries to swallow it down and focus, shove his swirling thoughts into a neat little box, but it's impossible. He feels—he might throw up, actually.

There's a pause on the other end of the line. Then— "You are upset." He has the audacity to sound *confused*.

"Of course I'm fucking upset!" Shane snaps. It comes out thick, a little wet. He pulls the phone away from his face, wipes at his nose. Takes a breath. "Jesus Christ, Ilya, you tried to—" He stops, lowers his voice to a hiss. "Are you seriously telling me you tried to fucking kill yourself?"

"Yes," Ilya agrees blandly, "It did not work."

"Oh my god," Shane whispers. There's a sourness in his mouth, a churning in his stomach. The lights in his apartment are suddenly too bright. The game he threw on in the background is too loud. His shirt doesn't fit right, sits tight and itchy across his chest, his shoulders. The seam of his sweatpants keeps rubbing against his right calf and it feels like it's scraping skin. Everything burns. Everything is—

"I called so you would not worry, yet you are worried," Ilya says. Shane can hear him frowning over the phone. "It's *fine*, Hollander. I go home the day after tomorrow."

Okay. *Okay*. That's a timeline. Shane can work with this. Ilya will be released from the hospital in two days. Has his team arranged for pick up? Does he have anywhere to stay? Will he be by himself at home? Shane can fix all of these problems. Shane can book a flight and be in Boston tomorrow morning. He can get Ilya's house together and go grocery shopping, pick up any medication, pick up *Ilya*—

"Do you need someone to—" Shane's already mentally cataloging what he'll need for a multi-day trip to Boston. Maybe longer, even, if Ilya's not—

Anyway, he'll probably need at least a week's worth of underwear, just in case. Double socks. The fleece blanket from the sex apartment that Ilya loves. Snacks? Fuck, what kind of snacks?

"No," Ilya murmurs, "Sveta—Svetlana, I mean, my best friend, she—she is coming to stay with me for a while. Until I can be *trusted*."

He scoffs, like the very thought is ridiculous. Like he can't possibly imagine why his *best friend* would be worried enough to want to stay with him after he tried to *kill himself*. Which means he would probably view Shane's offer, if he'd actually gotten the chance to make it, as really fucking stupid.

Without something to focus on, without a problem to fix, that seasick feeling comes creeping back in. He thinks back to the last time he saw Ilya, just a few short weeks ago. Flashes of

crooked smiles and bruising kisses. He remembers Ilya's laughter, mischievous and bright, the gravitational center of every room, every party, every game.

The last time. It could have been the last time.

"Hollander. You are still there?"

"Yeah," Shane rasps, "Still here."

So is Ilya. If only he could convince his misfiring nervous system of that very fact.

Ilya clears his throat. "Like I said, I'm not supposed to have my phone—"

Shane cuts him off. "Yeah, I know, I just—we play, uh. We play Boston next week."

He'd been looking forward to it all season. Now, he just feels nauseous.

"Yes," Ilya agrees easily, "I will not be there, so you will have much easier time scoring. You are welcome."

"Please don't—" Shane stops, squeezes his eyes shut. He can't stop himself from picturing another world where the reason Ilya won't be playing is different and final and *horrible*. "I don't think I can joke about this."

Ilya pauses. When he speaks again, he sounds a little smaller. "I'm sorry."

"No, don't apologize." Shane covers his face with his hand and presses against his eyes until he sees stars. "I only brought it up because, you know, we had—plans." He winces. *Plans?* Jesus. "Can I still...can I still come see you?"

Another pause. "You would still want to?"

"Yes," Shane says, maybe a little too fast. "Yes, I mean, of course, but only if you—"

"I do."

Shane's shoulders slump in relief. "Yeah?"

"Yes. I will send address."

"Okay," Shane breathes out, "Okay, yeah. And you're—you're okay?"

Ilya is quiet for a long moment. "I have to go," he murmurs, "Nurse is giving me mean face. I will see you next week, yes?"

Shane agrees, and the line goes dead. He holds his phone to his face for a little longer, just to prove that the conversation really happened. Ilya really called him.

Ilya tried to kill himself.

The thought punctuates itself with a sob. Shane curls in on himself and lists sideways until his head hits the couch cushion. He wants—he wants his mom, honestly, but what would he even tell her? There's nobody he can talk to about this, and even if there were, it would be a betrayal of Ilya's trust to give any sort of detail. Because Ilya did trust him, enough to call a rival captain with potentially career-ending information. He called because he didn't want Shane to *worry*.

It's enough to start the tears again, unfiltered and ugly without Ilya to consider on the other line. He just has to—he has to deal with it. If there's one thing Shane knows how to do, it's push past the discomfort.

He just has to get through the fucking week.

Unsurprisingly, the rest of the week is shit. He plays like it, too, against Philly and against Pittsburgh. By the time they arrive in Boston, he's receiving an equal amount of worried glances and annoyed glares. It's hard to tell the difference, which makes Shane all the more uneasy. Is Comeau's somber, "*We'll get 'em next time*," a platitude or a dig? Does J.J. keep side-eyeing him because he's concerned, or because he's wondering why his captain has turned into such a fucking loser overnight?

"Everyone has an off week." Hayden means it as a comfort, because Hayden is a good friend, but all it actually does is grate on Shane's already-frayed nerves. He's not everyone. He's Shane fucking Hollander.

(His thoughts stumble over a memory; Scott Hunter's voice. *You're starting to sound like him.*)

As far as semi-public breakdowns go, he's in good company. Boston's been tight-lipped and terse during interviews. Marleau almost bit a reporter's head off for attempting to bulldoze past another "no comment" for more information. From the worryingly sporadic texts Ilya's been sending, it sounds like the Raiders are taking his recovery seriously. Ilya seems to find this annoying. Shane, for his part, is dizzyingly grateful. He doesn't think his own coach would have been so understanding, his own team so protective, if roles were reversed.

They manage a win against Boston, but it's messy. Shane spends the entire game feeling like he's crawling out of his skin. When it finally ends, he can't get out of the arena fast enough. He showers and dresses in a daze, and his teammates are content enough with the win to let him.

“Boston Lily,” J.J. crows, and Shane leaves the locker room to jeers and wolf-whistles. He waves a hand dismissively over his shoulder, not bothering to look back.

There’s a text from Ilya in his inbox. *Congrats on win. You played terribly.*

Shane laughs, starts to cry a little, and calls a cab.

When Ilya opens the door, he’s shirtless and smirking. He looks Shane up and down like usual, but it’s all wrong. His eyes are so sad.

Shane is not the type of person to act before thinking. Mostly, he overthinks until he does absolutely *nothing*. It paralyzes him. But then, that’s never really been true around Ilya. With Ilya, his body reacts. His body decides.

Shane steps forward and wraps around Ilya like a vine, uncaring that they’re still halfway on the porch. He presses his face against the sleep-warm skin of Ilya’s shoulder and breathes.

“Hey...” Ilya trails off, uncertain. His arms fall gently against Shane’s waist, pause, then wrap more solidly around him. “Hollander...”

“Sorry,” Shane manages. He’s shaking, he knows he is, stuck to Ilya like fucking velcro. “Sorry, I think it just, um. It just hit me—”

I almost lost you, and I would have never recovered. I would have mourned you in silence for the rest of my fucking life.

He can’t say that. Can’t put that on Ilya, not now. Bad enough that he’s here, acting like he’s the one who’s been suffering, who needs comfort. “It’s good to see you,” Shane murmurs instead, hoping like hell it conveys even half of the relief he feels to see Ilya whole, here.

Ilya rubs a hand up his back, then uses it to squeeze the nape of Shane’s neck. They linger in the doorway, breathing. Shane counts to five and then forces himself to step away.

He doesn’t get far—Ilya catches him more firmly around the waist, using the momentum to pull Shane inside. He walks them backwards into the apartment, kicking the door closed as he goes. It’s a dance they’ve done a thousand times but here, in Ilya’s *home*, it feels like amateur fumbling.

“Sveta will be back in a few hours, so we are on time limit. I bet I can make you come at least twice.”

Shane holds onto Ilya's shoulders, reeling at the whiplash of it all. He allows himself to be manouevered until there's a hand on his ass, lips on his neck. In the space between seconds, Ilya hoists him onto the counter, and his stomach swoops, equal parts dread and arousal.

His brain kicks back to life before they start something he's not sure he can finish, not with so much unsaid. "Wait—"

Immediately, Ilya stops. He leans back, catches Shane's eye, and a flicker of—*something* crosses his face. Fear, maybe. Resignation. "Ah," he says, nodding like he understands. Shane is pretty sure he doesn't. "It's...too complicated now, yes? You signed up for sexy Russian hookup, not sexy Russian headcase."

"I—wait, who the fuck taught you that word? Did someone call you that?"

Ilya ignores him. "When you say you want to come over, I think, of course. We will have sex. But you do not want. You have changed your mind. It's okay."

"Ilya, stop," Shane pleads, hands fluttering centimeters above Ilya's chest, unsure if he's allowed to touch. He has no idea how he's already fucked this up so badly. It hasn't even been five fucking minutes. "You seriously thought I was coming here to *hook up*?"

Ilya shrugs, staring blandly at an unspecified point past Shane's head. "Why else would you be here, Hollander?"

Shane sputters indignantly. "To check on you! To see with my own eyes that you were okay and still fucking *alive*!" He finally lets his hands drop, needing the point of contact. One on Ilya's bicep, the other light against his chest. "You—you scared the shit out of me."

They stare at each other like an old western stand-off. It goes on long enough that Shane almost starts to back track—maybe he's overstepped. Maybe he doesn't actually have the right to be here, demanding Ilya's time and emotional labor when he's supposed to be recovering. Maybe he should—

But then the blankness in Ilya's expression cracks like porcelain. Shane sees the slight wobble of his bottom lip and cups his face, catching him just as he tries to pull away. Ilya's gaze drops and he won't meet Shane's eye, but he stays put, fingers flexing against Shane's waist.

"I scared myself, I think," Ilya admits, so quietly Shane has to strain to hear him. "I—" He cuts himself off with a sniffle, mouth twisting.

From his position on the counter, Shane's got a little bit of height on Ilya. He makes full use of it now. "C'mere," he whispers, pulling gently until Ilya's folded carefully into his arms. He rocks them, humming softly, the way his mother used to do for him when the world got to be too much. He's not good at comfort, not usually. He never knows what to do. But Ilya clutches at the back of Shane's shirt, his curls tickling Shane's chin, and it feels alright. "Hey. Hey, it's okay. Ilya. I've got you."

"I'm sorry," Ilya sniffles, sounding miserable.

“You’re okay,” Shane promises. He chances a kiss to the top of Ilya’s head, asks, “Do you wanna go sit?”

Ilya nods, shuddering through a wet sigh. He helps Shane off the counter, lets him lead. Shane doesn’t let go, not even when he’s got Ilya situated on the couch exactly where he wants him, half in Shane’s lap. He needs the closeness, and he thinks maybe Ilya does, too.

Once they’re settled, Shane waits. Talking would be very hard for him right now, if he was in Ilya’s shoes. So he waits. Eventually, he starts to think that maybe Ilya’s fallen asleep. Shane considers the pros and cons of moving him to his bedroom, when Ilya finally speaks.

“I didn’t plan it,” he whispers, words muffled against the fabric of Shane’s shirt. “I’m glad it did not work. I don’t—I don’t think I want to die.”

Shane grabs a blanket off the back of the couch and drapes it over the both of them, keeping himself busy while he tries to process what Ilya’s saying. He doesn’t understand how you can choose to do something so final but not actually mean it. His first instinct is to clarify, to ask *why* and *how* until the picture clears, but he hesitates. Ilya is upset. He might not want to talk about—

“I can hear you thinking,” Ilya sighs. He drags Shane’s arm over his stomach in a silent demand for a hug. “You get three questions. And I have power to veto.”

Relief crashes over Shane like a wave. It’s kindness, he knows, to be given permission to ask. To not have to wonder where the line is. “Why, then?”

Ilya takes a moment to consider his answer. When he speaks, his voice is gentle, like he’s delivering bad news. “I wanted quiet. My head is...is so loud, sometimes. I didn’t know how else to make it stop.”

And God, Shane gets that. He understands exactly how it feels to be pulled into the shifting tide of your own thoughts, to be so overwhelmed your body starts to physically revolt against itself. There’s nowhere to go, no one to fight, not when it’s just *you*.

“How did you do it?”

“Sleeping pills,” Ilya tells him, casual like a weather report, “Got them from team doctor, mixed them with the last of my good vodka.” He snorts. “A waste, truly.”

Shane absorbs this quietly, and promptly decides he will figure out how to feel about this later. If he thinks about it *now*, he might throw up all over Ilya’s nice carpet. “How have you been, since you’ve gotten home?”

Ilya smiles faintly. “You are sweet.”

“Shut up.”

“No, you use your final question to ask how I’m feeling. Is very cute.” The smile fades. He sighs. “It is...too much, maybe. Stressful. So many therapy appointments. It’s my own fault, I know, but I am tired. Sharing so many feelings with strangers is exhausting.”

Shane buries his fingers more firmly in Ilya's curls and listens.

"And the medicine, *God*. One makes me nauseous, cannot hold down food. So I change. Get new medication. Interacts bad with other one. Change again. Now I am too dizzy. They say wait it out." Ilya thunks his head against Shane's shoulder with another punctuating sigh. "Sveta has been a fucking godsend, but she cannot babysit me forever. Team does not trust me to be alone. I go from best player to liability overnight."

Shane frowns, offended on Ilya's behalf. He'd thought Boston was handling this pretty well, but maybe he'd been wrong. "You're not a liability. Who told you that?"

Ilya scoffs. "No one has to tell me, Shane. Is obvious. With single mistake, I have made myself a problem. This is why they give me medication, to *unmake* problem. Mood stabilizer, because I am unstable. Anti-psychotic, because I am crazy."

Shane shifts, dipping down to frown more directly at Ilya. "Hey, no. You're not crazy—"

"Cannot even take them myself, no, they have to be hidden. Makes sense—I try to kill myself with pills, they cannot just give me *more pills*, no matter how much I say it was mistake. I regret it *now*, but what happens when it...when it all comes back? So Sveta gives them to me like a child." He gestures at himself like he's made an excellent point. "You see? Liability. Not responsible person you want leading team."

"You're being unfair to yourself."

Ilya huffs. "I'm being realistic. Boston will trade me, watch. I will bet you million dollars."

"I wouldn't ever be stupid enough to take a bet against you," Shane says, maybe a little too honestly.

It seems to take Ilya a second to process this. Once he does, he shifts against Shane, adjusting until he's more or less sitting up. Shane makes sure the blanket moves with him, keeps him warm. He fastens it over Ilya's shoulder with laser-point focus, and when he finally looks up, Ilya is already looking back.

He smiles, face drawn and pale, but it's a real smile. It makes all the fucking difference. "You are a wonder, Shane Hollander," he murmurs.

Shane opens his mouth to say something cool and charming (but still heartfelt and tonally appropriate.)

What he says instead is: "Let me stay with you."

Ilya blinks at him, all sweet blue eyes and a self-consciousness Shane has never seen before. He opens *his* mouth, probably to say something like *what the fuck are you talking about*, but Shane cuts him off before he can say no. Shane already knows he'll say no. He just—he needs to make his case. If there was ever a fucking time to lay all the cards down, it's now. It has to be, because Ilya almost died without knowing.

“You said Svetlana can’t stay with you forever, but—but I can. I would. Not forever-forever, I mean, but for a few weeks, at least. I can drive you to your appointments and to the pharmacy and—and I know it’s a big jump, a big ask, okay, I understand. And you don’t have to say yes. You can tell me to fuck off and I will.”

Ilya does not tell him to fuck off. Ilya just watches him, the tiniest furrow denting his brow. “You want to stay with me.”

It’s not phrased like a question, but Shane answers anyway. “Yes. I want to do your laundry while you nap after therapy and make bullet-pointed lists of side-effects you can give to your doctor so you don’t have to use extra brain power to translate.”

The corner of Ilya’s mouth quirks up. “That sounds very boring.”

Shane shrugs helplessly. “I want to do the boring stuff for you.”

Ilya watches him for another long moment, assessing. “I can handle it, you know. This. All of it.”

“I know you can. You’re so fucking strong, and brave. I just want to make it easier on you, if I can.”

Ilya’s fingers tighten around his. “You do.”

“Okay,” Shane breathes. He rubs his thumb across the delicate skin beneath Ilya’s eye, traces down the curve of his cheekbone. “So I’ll just tell my team the truth.” Ilya blinks, surprised. Shane pushes through. Tries to be brave. “I’ll tell them that my—my partner isn’t feeling well, and I need to be there for them. Family emergency.”

Ilya stills, his breath hitching. It’s impossible to read his expression. Shane tries his best to be patient, even with his heart hammering hard enough to break a rib.

He lasts all of two seconds before he’s rambling again. Off to the fucking races. “I’ve never even missed a game before, so they can’t, um. They can’t really get mad at me, or try to fight me on it. Besides, everyone—most of my team already knows that I—that I have someone. In Boston. Who is, um. Important to me.”

“Important to you,” Ilya repeats, like the words are unfamiliar.

Shane aches. “Very important. So fucking important, Ilya.”

He feels Ilya’s hand squeeze his side, tugging him closer. Shane goes. Settles more firmly against Ilya until they’re flush, chest to chest, and Shane has to twist a little bit to kiss him. It’s soft—not leading, just a comfort. Ilya’s mouth is warm and slick, his heartbeat steady and strong. He cradles Shane like he is something worth holding onto.

He’s also the first to pull away, turning to bury his head against Shane’s shoulder. When he speaks, his voice is muffled. “And your parents?”

“What about them?”

Ilya shrugs. “You have family emergency, but your family does not know. They will have questions.”

“I won’t tell them anything you aren’t comfortable with.” He kisses Ilya’s temple to punctuate his promise. “I can just say I’m seeing someone. They might be a little nosy, but they’ll leave it alone if I ask.”

At least, his dad will. His mom, on the other hand, will be like a bloodhound on a scent trail. She’ll have it figured out in hours. But that is a problem for later-Shane, and if he plays it correctly, it will never become a problem for Ilya at all.

“They will want to know—”

“Ilya, I don’t care.” Shane runs a hand through Ilya’s hair, presses another kiss to the top of his head. Noses gently at the spot above his ear. He can’t stop touching him, can’t stop trying to prove to his restless, uneasy heart that Ilya is solid and *safe* in his arms. “The logistics, they don’t—they don’t matter. I just want to be with you.”

Ilya shifts, rubbing his face against Shane’s shoulder.

“Okay?” Shane prompts, voice barely above a whisper. Ilya hesitates, then—

“Okay.”

Shane’s heart lights itself on *fire*. “Okay,” he agrees, nodding jerkily. He kisses Ilya’s brow, then dips down to meet his eyes. “Just—come here.”

He shifts them until they’re both lying down, with Shane on his back and Ilya draped over his front like a weighted blanket. The actual blanket gets settled meticulously over Ilya’s bare shoulders while Ilya himself presses his face against Shane’s chest.

“Just rest, okay?” Shane fiddles with the blanket again until it’s perfect before wrapping one arm around Ilya’s waist. His other hand moves like a magnet to Ilya’s nape, fingers buried gently in his curls. He presses yet another kiss to the side of Ilya’s head, adds, “You look like shit.”

Ilya laughs. It’s just a huff, a tiny burst of air, but it’s beautiful. It’s the best thing Shane’s ever heard.

Later, when Ilya's asleep on his chest and Shane has spent the last hour creating a color-coded google calendar for Ilya's appointments, the front door opens.

Shane freezes. Even if he was willing to disturb Ilya, which he isn't, he wouldn't be able to move; Ilya is 200 pounds of pure muscle and dead weight. Shane listens quietly as the person in Ilya's entryway shucks off their shoes and sets a plastic bag on the counter, his heart hammering.

It could be his team doctor, but why would he have Ilya's code? More likely it's Marleau, or another friend on the team, which—it's not the worst thing, not necessarily, but Shane would like maybe a full day of being Ilya's boyfriend before the world comes crashing down them, at least.

Soft footsteps, moving closer. A woman rounds the corner, whispering in Russian. When she spots Shane, she goes very still.

They stare at each other for a long moment. Ilya grumbles in his sleep, completely unaware. Instantly, Shane's focus shifts. He smooths the hair off Ilya's forehead, scratching his scalp in a slow, even pattern until Ilya relaxes again. Svetlana—because surely, this must be Svetlana—makes a soft noise of surprise, and Shane tries not to flinch. He has no idea what Ilya has told her, how she'll react—

"You are his Jane." Her voice is quiet, almost reverent. Shane nods warily. Svetlana beams. "I knew you would come. I told him to call you. I am Svetlana."

"I'm—"

"I know who you are, Shane Hollander," Svetlana says, her smile taking on an amused tilt, "And tomorrow, you're going to sign a jersey for me."

"Sure," Shane agrees, trying for a smile. "I would, uh, get up and shake your hand, but—"

Svetlana shakes her head. "Stay. He hasn't slept this soundly in days." She squats down in front of them, maybe a little too close for Shane's comfort, but this isn't about him. Even in his sleep, Ilya turns toward her like a flower bending to the sun. Svetlana presses a kiss to Ilya's cheek, rubs away the bit of lipstick she left behind, and pats Shane solidly on the shoulder. "I'll be in the guest room if you need anything. Rest well, Shane Hollander. We have much to discuss in the morning."

It sounds a little bit like a threat, but Shane doesn't hold it against her. He just waits until she's gone, wipes the sticky residue off Ilya's cheek with a little more displeasure than is strictly necessary, and falls asleep to the syncing of their heartbeats.

End Notes

couple of things:

1. it's not specified in the fic because there wasn't really a natural segue, but ilya was diagnosed with bipolar 2.
2. the frequency of his therapy appointments/medication changes is due to his participation in an intensive outpatient program.
3. marleau was the one who found him :(

please let me know if there is anything else that needs to be tagged! follow me on twitter/tumblr @countdracilya

EDIT: i love u all but please know this is a finished fic and there will not be a part 2 or an epilogue!! leaving a comment JUST to say how sad you are that there isn't any more makes ME sad ok ty

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