there's a panic in this house, it's bound to surface

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by livelyvague

Summary

“Do what?” Shane replies, acting oblivious. He is on the floor of their bedroom, sort of contorting his body in a vague yoga pose that Ilya thinks means he's trying to stretch the pain away.

“Do what?” Ilya repeats, completely monotone. “Where you act like you are superhuman! That your body is just a tool, and not a human body that may have issue!”

or, shane bursts his appendix after a fight w/ ilya

Notes

ok, man. this was like. supposed to be fluff about shane hopped up on painkillers. i literally don't know what happened. LOL. also, the eating disorder stuff is not like. overt. but it is also. what this fic is about but it also is not at all. i hope this helps. not super in love w this writing, but it's the longest hollanov thing i've written so i shall post anyways!

spoilies for the long game, this is set after the book

- title from "a matter of time" by the killers
- no beta, very little edit lets be honest

See the end of the work for more notes

“You always do this, Shane,” Ilya roars. He’s leaning against their dresser, with his head in his hands, finally feeling fed up with the back and forth.

For the past *day*, Ilya has been watching Shane carefully. The intakes of breath, the uncomfortable shifting and holding his stomach when he thinks Ilya isn't watching. He told Shane yesterday—pretty much begged, with pouty lips and promises of many blowjobs—on the plane ride home to just let him take him to a doctor. But Shane is stubborn and will always choose hockey before his own comfort. Maybe once upon a time Ilya would have admired the strength and dedication, but now after years of watching Shane ignore his body's needs, it's driving him up a fucking wall.

“Do what?” Shane replies, acting oblivious. He is on the floor of their bedroom, sort of contorting his body in a vague yoga pose that Ilya thinks means he's trying to stretch the pain away.

“Do what?” Ilya repeats, completely monotone. “Where you act like you are superhuman! That your body is just a tool, and not a *human body* that may have issue!”

“Ilya!” he shouts. There's no playful lilt in his voice, no shy smirking smile, nothing convincing Ilya that he really is *fine* and it’s *just* a muscle ache. “I–fuck! It quite literally is a tool! It’s my whole life. And I know it fucking better than you do.”

“No you do not!” he yells back, because, *fuck*. It sounds insane. Ilya sounds possessive and delusional, but he does know Shane’s body better than him sometimes. He knows how much overstimulation Shane can take. He knows when Shane needs a fucking meal because sometimes he outright refuses to eat when he's stressed. He knows when Shane's muscles are screaming at him and the temperature of the bath he needs to draw to soothe them. Ilya knows *all* of this because Shane doesn’t *listen* to his body, not when it’s pleading for attention and care that doesn't line up with the fervor of his hockey first mindset.

Shane looks stricken. “So, what? I marry you and you fucking own my body now? It’s not mine! Not even hockey’s! It’s yours! Here you fucking go, Ilya. All fucking yours.”

He’s still on the ground fucking stretching. He looks stupid. No. Actually, Ilya *wishes* he looked like his little stupid yoga-cute self right now. Instead when Ilya looks at him, he looks like pain is wracking his body. Pain that he won't even discuss, won't name or try to interpret. Shane rips off his shirt and throws it across the room at Ilya.

"Wanna fuck me? Because this is *your* body? Right? I don't have any say in it?"

"Shane, you know that is not what I am saying," Ilya replies sadly. He takes a deep breath, tries to flush out all the anger he's feeling. Shane needs to know Ilya is on his side. Right now he's reacting—reacting to the encompassing love and attention Ilya pays to him, it's out of that uncomfortable feeling of letting yourself be taken care of. "You are in… pain. Or sick. I am not sure. But you cannot play tonight if you are hurt. Take night off, go see a doctor! It could be nothing. Could be something. Why won't you take care of yourself?"

"You don't trust me," Shane curses, his eyes now shiny and wet. "Why can't you trust me?"

"That is not true, *kotyonok.* I do trust you," Ilya promises. He steps closer to where Shane is sat on the ground. He crouches down and takes Shane's hands in his, rubs his knuckles and his wrists. "Always I trust you. But you do not let yourself be taken care of. Not in this way. And it hurts *me* to see *you* in pain."

Shane's features soften, the oppressive boiling point of the room simmers for a moment. "I just, fucking, pulled something, okay? I have played on worse, Ilya. I'm okay, alright?"

"Do you promise me, Shane?"

Ilya looks into his eyes. Wet and so, so brown and Ilya searches for reassurance in them. It kills Ilya to see his husband in pain, to see him not accept Ilya's love. It makes his stomach hurt, his brain run in circles trying to pinpoint why, why, *why* Shane just won't always fully let go with him.

"Promise you that I'm okay?" Shane asks, and Ilya nods. "Of course. I–I'm not stupid, okay? I wouldn't play if something was really hurting or wrong."

"You just said you have done many times," Ilya counters with a tilt of his head.

"I know, but, that was when I was younger and hungrier for… I don't know, validation? I'm okay. Just a little side pain, must have pulled something last game. I promise you I'm okay."

Ilya nods again, because Shane's wide pretty eyes are too much sometimes, too full and heavy with emotion. He's looking at Ilya like every word he's saying is deep, sacred truth. So it must be. Shane's lips are pink and a little dry, a small scab forming from where he's bitten down on it too many times. Ilya wants to kiss him so bad it's making him feel woozy.

"Come kiss me, if you really want to promise me."

Shane rolls his eyes, but he's already letting himself be stood up and pulled into Ilya's arms. Shane eases into the hug, Ilya wholly embraced by Shane as he wraps his arms around his waist. When Ilya goes to squeeze, Shane's breath falters and he hisses. Guilt wracks through Ilya, but Shane has promised him he is okay, so Ilya will choose to believe him. Because they've been through a million and one things together, communications stilted and therapy had, so now they are honest with each other. Ilya really hopes Shane is being honest with him.

Shane tilts his head up for a kiss and Ilya gives in willingly, pressing his lips against his and breathing in the scent of his shampoo.

"I love you, Shane," he whispers. Shane doesn't reply, and Ilya really, really tries to not let it hurt his feelings.

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There's four minutes left on the clock, the Cens and Admirals tied 2-2. They're on the

powerplay now, and Ilya is ravenous for a win, so he intends to make it count. Powerplays are the funnest he's able to have on the ice, because he gets to play *with* Shane, his husband that is too good at hockey for his own fucking good.

At the faceoff Ilya watches Scott Hunter say something to Shane, but Ilya doesn't think it's a harmless chirp. There isn't a smirk accompanied with his words, no bite coming through the tone that he can hear. He looks Shane up and down, and Ilya's hair stands on end. Not because it's Scott fucking Hunter and he shouldn't be looking at his husband like that—although that's not an unlikely reason—but because it has Ilya on *edge* now, worried out of his mind that something is wrong. Something *feels* wrong. What is Hunter noticing that Ilya cannot see right now?

It's over in less than a second, because Hunter wins the faceoff and Shane is back to pummeling for the puck. Ilya tries to meet his gaze, now barely even caring about winning the game, because he needs to know if he's *okay*. Shane isn't in possession of the puck, but he still looks too slow for what Ilya and the entire goddamn arena are used to. When Ilya finally meets his eyes, he instantly feels his stomach plummet. Shane looks deathly pale, skin looking greener by the second as he lazes on his skates.

Time stops for him, Ilya swears, because he can pinpoint the exact moment that Shane does gown. He didn't get checked into the boards, didn't get slashed, hell, barely even any players were close enough to touch him. Still, Shane's eyes roll back in pain and his hands dart to holding his stomach. He's on the ground in seconds flat, a horrible whining noise wretching out of his mouth as he plunges onto the ice.

"Shane!" Ilya screeches, his whole body going numb before he starts moving.

Whistles are blown. Clocks are stopped. All Ilya can see is Shane writhing in pain, and Scott fucking Hunter was closer to him, so he's the first one down trying to reach out to Shane. Ilya skates in fast, pushing Hunter out of the way to get right down on the ice with his husband.

"Shane, sweetheart, what is wrong? What is happening?"

"Fucking dying, Ilya. Fucking, fuck, fucking fuck, I'm dying," he splutters and gasps, hands still drawn tight towards his abdomen.

The medics are careening in, attempting to get Ilya out of the way but he can't leave Shane. He wasn't able to be with him last time he was incapacitated in the rink, but he's here now. They're *married* now, Ilya is Shane's one and only forever, yet they're still trying to get him away. Ilya can't understands the words they're *yelling* because the pulse is too loud in his own ears.

"Mr. Rozanov, please," a young medic begs him. "His appendix probably ruptured and we really need to get him to the hospital now. Just let us get him off the ice, okay?"

"Ilya," Shane murmurs. "Fuck, Ilya, I'm so sorry."

"No, no," he replies back immediately. He can't tear his eyes away from Shane, can't stand a moment of not looking at him, even as he's being rushed out on a stretcher to the ambulance.

"It's okay, Shane. I'll be right here, okay?"

"Okay, Ilya," he slurs. "'m so scared, baby."

"No need. I'm right here. Cannot be scared when I am with you."

Ilya watches as the EMT's do their jobs. Practiced precision from years of training and experience, so deeply unaffected by the cries and the pain, and Ilya wants to kill them all. Even if he's so grateful to them for saving his husband that he could cry. The sight still makes him ache, because Shane shouldn't need medicine, he shouldn't need a life-saving surgery. Ilya wants to be the one to open his stomach, feel his organs and watch the blood pour through his veins and he wants to be the one to fix him, he wants to fix him and heal him and kiss him. Ilya wants to hold him in his hands and stitch him up.

The ambulance closes with one final definite slam of the doors and Ilya watches them drive away. Someone's next to him. There's definitely people next to him, saying things, he's sure they are about next steps. Maybe even the game. Ilya couldn't care about the outcome of this game if he was paid a billion dollars to. His calves are aching from his skates and he's plastered in sweat but—but, fuck, he can't think about his own body right now, not when Shane's is trying to actively kill him. His brain catches up, shuddering an uneven breath and hurries his way to the locker rooms to change as fast as possible.

Shane will be okay, Shane will be okay, he repeats to himself all the way to the hospital.

—

The time drags like thick honey in the waiting room. It's just Ilya with his legs bouncing as he waits, and waits, and waits. Yuna and David are out of town, so they couldn't be here to help him stay calm. When Ilya called them he was still out of his mind with fear, but Yuna is nothing if not a level-headed woman. She helped him through deep breaths and told him how lucky Shane is to have such a wonderful husband, told him that it will be a routine surgery and all will be okay. While, yes, it's a surgery these doctors do probably every day, they don't know Shane. They don't know how *special* he is, that he needs to be treated like a precious item. His stomach turns, and he waits, and he waits.

A nurse comes out every once and awhile to update him on the surgery. It's going well, and Shane is not actively dying from a stupid, useless organ that humans don't even need anymore. But it's… it is painful, this longing for the need to see him again. Shane didn't even say I love you back to him because he was pissed and in a fret over an inane argument (that Ilya *has* won now, at least), puffed up like an angry kitten.

Three mind numbing and anxious hours later, finally a nurse brings him back to Shane's room. It feels the exact same and somehow completely different than the last time that Ilya had visited him in a hospital. This time when he walks in and he sees Shane's doped up little face, he knows that Shane is his to keep. Not an incessant, dark secret that he would have to hide forever. No, Shane is his, and he is beautiful even in the ugly nightgown and horrendous florescent lighting.

"Shane, sweetheart?" Ilya asks cautiously, already sidled up to the edge of Shane's bed.

Shane's eyes flutter open, those pretty eyes get one look at Ilya and in an instant they're wet with welled up tears. "Ilya," he croaks. "I'm so sorry, Ilya, Ilya."

"Don't be sorry, my love. You are okay. Gave me another heart attack, though. Please don't cry, all is okay."

"No," Shane cries. The tears are insistent, big drops running down his face. Ilya soothes a thumb across his cheek to gather the tears by his freckles. "Ilya, I love you, I love you so much. I love you."

"I love you, too, Shane. Don't cry, okay?"

At that, a heaving sob wracks through Shane and it makes Ilya want to murder everyone in this building. It makes him want to retire from hockey completely so that he can become a scientist, and become the first person to invent a time machine. He wants to be able to go back to a day ago and force Shane to go to the doctor like he had been *saying*. But Ilya doesn't have the energy to be angry at Shane at all, only now with himself.

"I love you," Shane says again. His eyes are bleary with tears and cheeks red with exertion. "'m so sorry, and, baby, you were right. Knew something was wrong, Ilya, I knew it, I knew it, I'm a fucking idiot, I'm so stupid—"

"Shush," Ilya whispers, still stroking Shane's cheeks. "Please do not say those things about yourself."

"I–I don't know… I don't know what's *wrong* with me. Ilya, I need you to come closer please."

"I'm here," he assures and gently scoots Shane so there's (barely) enough room for Ilya to squeeze half of his body onto the small bed. "I am here with you."

"Don't leave me," Shane begs. Last time Shane was hopped up on medical grade painkillers, he was loopy but overjoyed. Happy and uninhibited. This is sharper and sadder, but it is still Shane without another wall to hide behind. His chest pangs with how small and sad Shane looks like this. "Husband. You're my husband."

"Yes, *kotyonek*, you are my husband. Even when you are stupid and do not listen to your very hot husband when he says you need to see doctor."

"*Kotyonek*," Shane repeats. His accent is already a little rough when speaking Russian, and it's even worse now inebriated and weepy. It still warms Ilya's heart. Shane sniffles before speaking again. "I am not a cat. I'm a human. Your human husband. Don't marry a cat, Ilya."

He chuckles, swipes his knuckles across Shane's lips and presses a kiss to the top of his head. "But you are purring in my lap like a kitty. You love me like a loyal little kitten."

"Cats are smart, did you know that? Like, smarter than most people probably think. And they're," he hiccups, "they *are* very loyal. But selective. Any dog can meet you and love you. But cats… you have to, uh, work. Work to make them comfortable."

"Yes," Ilya agrees and bursts into a grin. Ilya loves Shane so much that he would crack open his chest and keep him safe inside there for the rest of his life if he had to. "As I said, you are my loyal little kitten."

Shane is silent after that. The sounds of the machines and doctors and nurses roaming the hall fill the gaps as Shane rests his head on Ilya's chest. While the tears on his face dry up, Ilya listens to Shane breathe and watches the heart monitor tick. Shane falls asleep and Ilya can't stop staring at his flushed cheeks, his dotted freckles and his cupids bow. A nurse comes in a few times, checks Shane's stitches but doesn't mind the fact that Ilya is there while he rests.

After awhile, Ilya finds himself drifting off as well, then Shane squirms, then a wet intake of breath.

So quiet it's nearly a whisper, Shane says, "Please don't leave me, Ilya."

"Why do you keep saying this, Shane? I would never leave you. Never in my life would I leave you."

"You were mad at me. It felt like torture, even when I knew you… I knew you were fucking right. *Fuck*," he says harshly. He coughs and winces when it probably irritates his stitches. The way his voice sounds now, rougher and more lucid, more hesitant, Ilya thinks the meds are wearing off.

"I think that," he starts up again. "I think that maybe it's, uh, I don't know. Easier for me… for you to be mad at me for a little bit than have to make myself care about shit I don't want to think about. I know what you'll say when you're pissed at me for skipping a meal. I know how to prepare for that. I know what to say to everyone when they're worried about me. I know your little eyebrow will go up and you'll pout a little bit, and I'll roll my eyes and say fuck you, and then I'll just suck your dick or something."

"And that's easier than eating a meal or going to the doctor?"

"Yeah, most times, I think so."

Ilya sighs, and Shane isn't even looking at him in the eyes. His whole body is facing towards the other side of the room and Ilya misses him even though they are touching. He doesn't press it, doesn't grab Shane's chin and force him to make eye contact when he's already so vulnerable.

"Why didn't you go to the doctor?"

"Because, I don't want to let anyone down," he admits softly. "It's so fucking stupid, but it… god, it makes sense in the moment. The team, you, my parents, my stupid fucking partnerships. It all matters so much, everything matters so much all of the time. It feels suffocating. And to slow down, to eat until I'm full, to think about even missing a single game, it makes me feel sick, Ilya."

"The team does not want you playing if you are hurt. You know this, Shane. I know you do."

Shane nods then gasps, short and staccato, like he can barely breathe. "I know, Ilya. I know."

"Come on, breathe, sweetheart. It's okay, everything is okay."

They both take a break from speaking again to just breathe together. When Ilya can tell Shane is getting even more worked up, he gets off the bed with knees creaking and stiff so he turns off the lights in the room. Ilya sits back down and snakes a hand up Shane's gown to press a flat palm against his chest, rubbing soothing circles into his skin.

"I really am sorry for not listening to you," Shane grumbles. "And I'm sorry for not saying I love you. That was, I don't know, it was cruel."

Ilya smiles and kisses the top of his head again. "Thank you," he replies. Galina would be proud of him for not immediately saying 'it's okay' and instead truly thinking it through for a moment, knowing absolutely he forgives Shane. "Though you are not cruel or unkind, you are my husband, my little kitten. I will help you not get suffocated."

"Really?"

"Of course. It is what I am here for. Same as you do for me."

End Notes

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