

cause that's the love that i attract

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cause that's the love that i attract

by [REDRAGEOUSED](#)

Summary

It's maple-something. Sugar, shaped like leaves and it makes him smile a little. Shane would hate it, tease him about his lack of a "performance diet" like that means anything, and he would lick the taste off of Ilya's lips, which really, is all that's needed to cement the fact that he needs this candy. It is also so painfully Canadian. Russia at least does bear. They are cooler, objectively. Maple leaves are boring.

5+1 where Ilya rather likes Canadian gas stations. Shane only likes the coffee.

Notes

okay so yes i have read the books. all six of them. however i have never really been someone to abide by canon in any way other than the loosest of senses, so this is set vaguely during the long game, in the time where shane is in montreal and ilya plays for ottawa. also i wrote basically all of this in one go while very tired and i dont believe in editing either, so if theres any mistakes just hit me up in the comments and let me know so i can fix it. also i am in love with hudson williams and connor storrie in an unwell sort of way so this is definitely their shane and ilya im picturing in my heart.

also i am still lowkey recovering from the flu + a sinus infection that spread to my ears and gave me a really evil ear infection so. give me grace on this one
title from six strings by natalie madigan which you should all give a listen because i love it
happy (early) new year/s eve!

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

1. Maple Candies

The drive to Montreal isn't far enough to make a stop, not really. The way Ilya drives, dangerous but not really, sharp like his edges sometimes, but easy-easy, like it's an extension of himself, makes it pass fast. He's gotten rid of most of the flashy cars, doesn't have the space or the need for them anymore, but he keeps a few and rides them hard when he can. Sometimes, the times he drives Shane, he kind of gets why no one likes riding shotgun for him. Ilya knows it makes him twitchy, out of control, not in the good way where Ilya takes him out of his head, but like there's something devastating about to happen. It's a little unfair but he's still who he is.

Anyways. The drive to Montreal.

It's a little gas station, one Ilya's sure he's passed every fucking time he's done this fucking drive, and it's only a three hour drive, less if he's going at night and willing to risk getting pulled over by the cops (*he's gotten good at toeing the line. He doesn't like cops*). He stops in anyways, figures the extra five minutes won't really hurt his time with Shane. They're so close now, it makes him feel greedy, makes him want to twist his fingers in Shane's clothes, pull him in and never leave. Which is probably, maybe, a little bit unhealthy in some way. Something to worry about another day.

He parks, a jerky little thing, ducks his head when he steps out of the car. There's no one else there. Probably because it's ten pm in the middle of the week, a lucky trick of scheduling that's resulted in Ilya not having practice the next day, and Shane only having an afternoon skate. He's mostly in the lines, he thinks, but it doesn't really matter as late as it is. The bell chimes when he goes in, and he waves at the young-looking cashier, smiles tight at her greeting. Ilya's baseball cap is pulled low, covering his eyes. Even if Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov are friends now, friendly enough for a foundation, it probably wouldn't be good if anyone spots Ilya in a weird spot at night, partway to Montreal.

Ugh. He sounds like Shane, even in his head. They, somehow, might be spending too much time together. Ilya thinks he's okay with that, knows he's okay with it. Bumps his elbow into a display when he's distracted trying to will the redness from his face. He's too big for the small, cramped aisles, and he knocks something over. Grabs it just barely, balancing on his fingertips. Shane has better reflexes than he does.

It's maple-something. Sugar, shaped like leaves and it makes him smile a little. Shane would hate it, tease him about his lack of a "performance diet" like that means anything, and he would lick the taste off of Ilya's lips, which really, is all that's needed to cement the fact that he *needs* this candy. It is also so painfully Canadian. Russia at least does bear. They are cooler, objectively. Maple leaves are boring.

Decision made, he wanders off towards the back of the gas station. There's bad music playing, something one of his new teammates might put on in the locker room. It's a little country, country in an off-key guitar-heavy sort of way. He does not like it. He knows Shane wouldn't.

The fridge doors here are cheap. Ilya drags his free hand down the front of the glass, smears the condensation away. It's cold, shocking, and the wet it leaves on his fingers would drive Shane insane if it were him. He draws a little smiley face in the remaining fog, then a little heart, and wants to act like a stupid teenager, drawing his and Shane's initials with a little plus, but that's stupid, obviously, so he doesn't. Ilya thinks he might be up there among the bravest men alive. This gas station must be secretly evil somehow because Ilya is not this sentimental. Not at all.

He grabs plain water. The plastic is slick. It sort of balances out the maple candy, kind of, and he will be sure to tell Shane that he didn't get candy *and* one of the weird flavored energy drinks that he prefers. Ilya still won't cave to the performance diet though.

Making his way back up the front, Ilya shifts the bottle to the same hand as his candy, feels the way the cardboard softens from the water. He has his wallet out and ready before he even drops his items on the counter. The cashier, even younger now that he's standing in front of her, rings him up and he pays in cash, large bills because he never remembers to carry the small ones. Probably too paranoid of him to not just use a card but. Shane has influenced him.

When she tries to offer his change back, Ilya waves her off. Grabs his stuff, slides his wallet back into his pocket, next to the pack he's trying not to smoke. His keys jingle a little, heavy from the new and ugly Ottawa Centaurs keychain he added to it.

"Is okay. Keep it." Ilya offers another smile, and she beams back.

Ilya feels confident that she didn't recognize him. Worst case, she tells the story of how Ilya Rozanov left her a bunch of cash at a gas station, which, honestly, can't hurt his reputation. No one would believe it, and if they did, it would just seem like he's a better person than he probably is.

Sliding back into the car feels like building up his walls a little, a reminder of who he is. He's still Ilya, even if he gets weirdly emotional in gas stations at night halfway between Ottawa and Montreal. He reverses back out of his spot fast, faster than advised, hand on the headrest of the passenger seat even though he doesn't really need to, because he knows Shane thinks it's hot but won't admit it. Keeps the habit even when he's not there.

By the time he's pulling up, five blocks away from Shane's place, as usual, he's fairly confident that Shane will both recognize and make fun of the maple taste clinging to his lips.

The code is automatic under Ilya's fingers. He's not there all the time, but more than enough to know all the spots Shane wants him to check before he punches in, and no one else is there. As usual. He takes the stairs two at a time, more urgent the closer he gets, and he tucks the leftover candy into his pockets alongside his keys. Shane leaves the door unlocked once Ilya's on the right block, says it makes them less conspicuous, something about Ilya always "shaking his keys like he's calling a cat," which is offensive and probably true.

Shane has him pressed to the door as soon as it's shut again, sliding his hands up into Ilya's shirt as he moves. It's kind of funny, how he's always so tightly wound and still so frantic. He kisses Ilya once, twice, pulls back to look at him, lips a little pouty like he's confused.

"Did you just eat something?" Shane leans in, tongue pokes out again, swipes over Ilya's bottom lip like he's investigating. Ilya is a fucking genius.

"Yes. I found new store. I am trying to be more Canadian," he's speaking directly into Shane's lips, moves to kiss along his face, working at the edge of his jaw, "for my citizenship. I hear they ask you of maple candy."

"Maple candy?"

"That is what I said. You know what candy is, yes?" Ilya can picture the exasperated look Shane has right now. He smiles into the next kiss.

"I don't think they ask you anything about maple candy. Who even told you that?"

Ilya has to fight for his life to not laugh when he says, "your mom did *Hollander*." Shane slaps at his chest with the hands that are still under his shirt, mumbles something about how he doesn't want to talk about his mom right now, and Ilya ignores the dull pain that curls in him when he thinks too hard about moms.

Shane changes the topic, awkward and clunky because he's Ilya's Shane, kisses him again before asking "bed?" and obviously Ilya wants to take his boyfriend to bed right then.

Naturally, Shane's stripping before Ilya does, but the way he always takes his time folding his clothes, as if they're still in a hotel room and he's going to have to put them back on later makes him take longer. Ilya fucking *loves* watching his boyfriend slide boxers down his pretty thighs, loves watching him bend to fold everything. Ilya, personally, drags everything off as fast as possible before going to their bedside tables to dig out lube. It's emptier than the last time he was here, and he wiggles his eyebrows in a ridiculous way while Shane blushes.

Reaching out, he curls his fingers around Shane's wrist, pulls him in and then plants a hand flat against the middle of his chest, all smooth skin, pushes him until he's flat on the bed. Shane goes as easily as he always does for Ilya, and he really, really cannot imagine what he's done to get someone as *good* as Shane.

"Knees up, okay?" Shane nods at him, pupils already blown wide, and Ilya can barely tear his eyes away long enough to pour lube onto his fingers. He drags them down Shane's dick, barely touching. He wants Shane to come on him tonight, he thinks. Shane's always so *wet*, leaking, all red and pretty in a way that makes his mouth go dry. Skating further down, he moves to press a finger into his boy, grins wide when it slides in easy, easier than usual.

"Had fun without me?" Shane's blush gets worse, like he hasn't gotten himself off in front of Ilya, by Ilya's request, and he loves it so fucking bad.

He doesn't keep his eye contact but he *does* reply, says, "yes, maybe, just a little bit. You were running *late* with your candy. You can just- fuck me now." Which really, is incredibly

bold of him, even if it comes with a bit of a stutter, but that just means he'll like it when Ilya plays a little.

"I don't know. Want to be- thorough, yes? Be thorough with you." He slides a second finger in, stretches them, probes for Shane's prostate, watches with pleasure when his stomach tenses and his dick leaks just a little bit more. Watches the way Shane nearly bites through his lip to keep quiet. Ilya keeps him there, pinned with one hand pressing into his hip, looks at Shane as much as he wants. "Say please? Use polite Canadian manners?"

The look Shane gives him could kill a lesser man. He waits till Shane parts those soft, pink lips to push in his ring finger, catches a "*fuck, Ilya. Jesus, please, fuck me,*" and God his boyfriend is so hot it might possibly be illegal.

"Fine, fine. If you want so bad, I *guess* I can fuck you."

"You *guess*." Shane only keeps up the glare for a few seconds, losing it the moment Ilya pulls his fingers out to get his own dick lubed. He groans when Ilya presses against him, teasing, waiting till Shane gets the point and half whispers-half moans another "*please Ilya,*" face flushing something fierce, and he closes his eyes like it'll save him from the slow, stinging stretch that Ilya knows Shane loves.

This is why, as much as he loves Shane's ass, he loves missionary more. Loves watching his pretty boyfriend get red all the way down his chest, loves that he can drag his nails down Shane's chest as he pulls out, can pinch lightly at his nipples when he pushes back in. Loves swallowing moans and biting lightly at his neck, never hard enough to leave any long lasting marks.

He fucks Shane slow and sweet, savoring the drag, the way Shane tightens on him when he nips at the right spot on his neck, just a little behind his jaw. Ilya loses himself in it, and when he hears the high, keening moan that Shane lets out, he knows he can fuck *harder*; that Shane's just about to tip over the edge without any hands-on help from Ilya. He digs nails into muscular hips, slides his tongue up the salty skin of Shane's throat, and, like clockwork, Shane comes. The overstimulation of it makes him shake, and it makes Ilya come too, burying his own sounds into Shane's skin, thumbs massaging circles over the half moons he's carved into soft skin and hard muscle.

When he works up the energy to move again, he kisses Shane first. He can feel Shane's tongue slide across his teeth, and he mumbles something incoherent that makes Ilya back up and blink at him, questioning.

"It's good candy."

"Yes?"

"Not part of the diet though." Ilya, for a split second, thinks he's being serious. Shane cracks immediately, laughing at Ilya in an unrestrained, hazy from sex way that drags Ilya into laughter too. Everything about this stupid, short-ass hockey player is so fucking perfect.

2. Sunflower Seeds

His stop at the gas station is quick this time, because he's already running super fucking late and they only have the night today. Fuck daytime games, truly.

The first thing he sees is sunflower seeds, which are a ridiculous item but are kind of funny, because who even eats seeds. It sounds like one of those bullshit things that Shane insists is healthy and good for him and *really Ilya, it's just as good as whatever crap you eat, they're good, why would I lie about that.* The thought makes him laugh, so he gets them, a tall thin plastic packet with bright yellow text and a stupid cartoon of a smiling sunflower on the front. He's pretty sure he left a water bottle in his car, so he doesn't bother with the drinks. The girl behind the checkstand is the same as that first time, but she looks dull around the edges, a little frazzled. She doesn't offer conversation, so Ilya doesn't either, just pays and leaves.

The car tires screech a little when he pulls out of the gas station lot, cutting it too close in front of some big ugly SUV that Shane would insist is practical. Ilya ignores the blaring horn that he's sure is accompanied by the car braking. If he doesn't get hurt it doesn't really matter anyways.

The sunflower seeds are pretty good. He likes the salt. The music he's playing is loud, rattling in his bones, and Ilya couldn't tell anyone if the last few lights he'd gone through were actually green or not. These are probably all bad things.

Ilya parks five blocks in the opposite direction from last time. For variety. It's cold, really cold, and he eats the last of his sunflower seeds on the walk for something to do because he's stupid and forgot his earbuds when he was rushing out of his place. Some of the salt is brushed onto his coat, and he crumples the plastic bag with its last few sunflower seeds and shoves it deep into his pocket. Shane would have a fucking stroke if he saw it. He's the type to fold up his trash, make it all tidy like it isn't all going to the same place. It is, as all things Shane does, painfully hot to watch. God, he's gotten so boring and he's *okay* with it. He types in the code to the door, makes his way inside. Shane's door is locked, ridiculous, but he knocks in a light, barely audible from inside way. Mostly because he's not an asshole, or at least not as much of one as people think he is, but also because he has so little time with Shane tonight, and he doesn't want to spend it all on getting a hundredth lecture about the importance of *discretion*. Which he had to google after. When the door opens, he slips in, slides his shoes off and turns to face Shane, who is uncharacteristically restrained in touch, like he's worried about tipping over the edge before he really wants to.

He doesn't even bother saying hello. Shane sinks to his knees in front of Ilya, eager as always, dragging his branded sweatpants down with him. Ilya pokes at his lips, bitten pink, puts the smallest bit of encouragement into it and Shane's mouth falls open, easy-easy like there's nothing he'd rather do than cry on Ilya's dick. There's nowhere he'd want to be more than here.

Ilya presses his fingers down, slides them across Shane's tongue and wonders a little what he's done to deserve a boy like this. The edges of Shane's teeth catch on his fingertips, scrape them and he can feel Shane's tongue working at him before he pulls back. Ilya frowns down at him, grasps at his jaw with spit-slick fingers, knows he's gonna get shit for that later. Shane hates a mess.

"Why do you taste like that?" It's not nearly as questioning as it was the last time he'd asked. Probably because it isn't sweet.

"Why are you always asking what I eat?"

"Don't deflect. You taste like..salt. Like, a lot of salt, Ilya." He's frowning at Ilya. It's unbelievably impressive how he holds himself while literally on his knees, lips a little swollen and wet.

"Well, I have decided I am too good. At hockey." Shane snorts at the clarification, and Ilya taps his fingers against his jaw one more time, "I will be professional baseball player now. Would be good, as I am hockey. Will you suck my dick now?"

"Sunflower seeds?" Shane really is so unimaginably single minded.

"Yes, that was joke. *Now* will you suck my dick?" The sunflower seeds are much less worth it now that he's got Shane kneeling in front of him, and his dick pressing against his boxers and *not sucking his fucking dick*.

"Fine, Jesus. Impatient?" Ilya doesn't bother responding to this, just uses his free hand to tug his own boxers down far enough to prompt Shane. He gets the hint, helps Ilya out. He's an asshole though, as much as everyone wants to insist he's a sweetheart. Instead of doing anything *real*, he presses open-mouthed kisses around the base of Ilya's dick, and Ilya groans, loud. His fingers twist in Shane's hair, tighten a little on his jaw and he won't beg, but he is a big enough man to admit that he kind of really wants to. He's so *fucking* hard it almost hurts, and he's kind of regretting all the times he's edged Shane till he cries because this feels a little bit like payback. He gives one more insistent pull at Shane's hair, not hard enough to really hurt, and he finally, finally, takes mercy on Ilya.

Any English he's learned in his years since starting international hockey dissolves when Shane swallows around his dick. The way he moans is *definitely* too loud for the back side of Shane's door, but it isn't even his fault, and he can't be expected to control it when Shane lightly drags his teeth across the top of Ilya's dick the way he had to his fingers.

"*Shane*," it comes out broken and breathy and it's the only thing he can even begin to think of saying anymore. Ilya's pretty sure that the only thing keeping him upright while his stupid hot fucking boyfriend licks at him like the taste could save his life *is* his stupid hot fucking boyfriend with his hockey-calloused hands and the weight of a guy who can hold his own. He's taking Ilya apart with nothing but his insane mouth and Ilya might cry a little and he's fighting to tense his core before he tips over the edge.

The hand that's been holding Shane's stretched-out jaw slides down his throat, squeezes lightly, and it makes Shane whine around Ilya, whine in a way that sends vibrations all the

way up. God he can feel the want in his fucking blood, and Shane gets one last warning tug before Ilya lets go of his tight hold, gives him the opportunity to move away, catch it on his face.

Shane does not, and Ilya might possibly be transcending, and the muscles in his thighs are flexed so tight he thinks they could snap. Shane's tight fucking throat works around him, draws out his orgasm, tortures him in the hottest way possible.

Shane sits back on his heels when he's done. Wipes at the corner of his mouth with his thumb, licks it off, politely pretends he doesn't see the absolute meltdown Ilya has at seeing it. Smiles at him in his nice, loose and relaxed way.

"Can I have one of those sunflower seeds before you get me?"

"Yes. Whatever you want. Is in my jacket though, and I cannot walk now."

3. Jerky Sticks

He only buys the jerky because it's funny. *Meat sticks*. Canadians are ridiculous. But he does need to get more protein, and there's no good candy that he hasn't already gotten around to trying. There's also the joy that rises when he thinks of all the jokes he can make about it to Shane, and there are very few things he enjoys more than making fun of his boyfriend (*blowing his boyfriend. fucking his boyfriend. beating his boyfriend at hockey*). All of this, naturally, means that he should get the jerky.

Ilya buys the jerky. And an energy drink that is a disturbing shade of pink. Both are mostly because it's funny, but also because he's beyond tired, coming more-or-less straight from the airport to meet Shane, who is *also* straight off of an away stretch. They probably won't fuck, Ilya just wants to get Shane off nice and slow, soft, be nice to him the way he deserves. Maybe a little mean. For fun. He thinks about blowing his boyfriend the entirety of his drive, and the caffeine calms the shake in his hands, and he chews his stupidly named meat stick. These things are followed by his nicotine gum, which is followed by another piece, because really on so little sleep his nerves are frayed in a way that is excessive. It's been too long since he got to see Shane. Ilya misses him.

There are long jumps in time that Ilya is missing. The drive, lost to monotony. The walk to Shane's door. Most of the events leading up to the bedroom, but not the important parts (*shane's begging, the wet heat of their mouths, the heavy pressure*).

He has Shane pressed against the bed, fingers twisting in the sheets like he's going to tear them up if he doesn't get what he wants. This is ridiculous because Ilya is a *very* generous lover, and Shane always gets everything he wants. Sometimes more.

Admittedly, he hasn't even touched Shane's dick yet, just biting at the area on his hips, the spots that will be covered by his boxer-briefs. Still not hard, they probably won't leave the

marks that Ilya wishes he could give, but it's good enough for now. It makes Shane writhe, pant like he's just come straight off the ice, off a three minute long shift, and beg indistinctly for Ilya to *fucking do something already, please*.

"Do not worry sweetheart," he's sweet, so incredibly sweet, pressing kisses almost on Shane's dick but not quite, "I will do *something*. Patient. Be patient." He licks stripes up Shane's stomach, moves up, holds himself up over his boyfriend, dips down so he can bite at Shane's nipple. Soothes it with his tongue after. He likes being a little mean to his pretty, pretty boyfriend.

Ilya kisses him, keeps himself just high enough that Shane can't get any friction when he tries to grind up. He shushes the little whines of disagreement he gets, kisses him deeper, slides his tongue into Shane's mouth because he loves-loves-loves making out with him. Wants to crawl into his skin, in the least weird possible way.

When he finally lets Shane press against him, it's with a hand wrapped around the both of them. They don't even need lube, not with the way Shane gets all wet. He's kind of like a girl in that way, but fucking firm, masculine and *hot*. Ilya's lips stay pressed to Shane's, greedy, taking in all the little, needy sounds that make it out. He knows Shane better than he knows himself, probably, so he knows when Shane's about to come from the way that his face starts twisting away, and how he loses control of himself a little.

It takes real, legitimate effort to tear himself away from Shane's lips. He presses one last kiss to his cheekbone, lets go of Shane's dick to a deeply upset, torn from the chest, sound, and sinks his mouth onto Shane. His hands come down to yank at Ilya's hair, as if there was any chance that he would pull off Shane now. He gets himself off too, tries to time it so that they get off together, connected. He knows when Shane comes, from the taste and the way that his hands go still for the first time the entire night. Ilya has great timing. When he pulls off, he licks at Shane, cleans him up. Ilya makes eye contact, because about half the time Shane burns red and avoids his eyes, and the other half he gets a sweet little dazed look, like Ilya had really just killed him with sex. This is a killed-with-sex time, and Shane's brown eyes are a little shiny, chest heaving from the strain. He's gorgeous.

Ilya lets himself sit still for a moment, then gets up, slides his clean hand up Shane's sides to watch him shiver. Then he goes and washes his hands, twice, to make his boyfriend happy. Gets a washcloth a little wet too, warm, even though he's pretty sure he got everything that Shane could've possibly been covered in because Ilya knows how much he appreciates it. Wiping his boyfriend down is still a little overstimulating, he thinks, and Shane is still melting into the bed a bit, holding a hand out for Ilya to hold. He does it because he is sappy and has gone soft from all the bad hockey.

"You'll stay the night?" Shane sounds so out of it, it almost makes him laugh. It isn't even a question, not a valid one.

"Yes. Of course." His own voice is a little hoarse, and he doesn't know why. Shane's fingers tighten around his and pull him in. They were quick, clean, so Shane won't need Ilya to change the sheets tonight. Ilya curls around him, tucks an arm over his chest, laces their fingers together again because there's no way to physically get as close as he wants to be but

this can be good enough. Ilya presses one last kiss to Shane's shoulder blade, presses his nose into the space behind Shane's ear and breathes in, deep. This is home for him.

4. Gummy Bears

For the first time in all his stops at this station, Ilya actually needs gas. It's a new enough station that he doesn't have to go inside to pay, but he does anyway. Mostly as an excuse to get food. He likes the little snacks there a lot, and he likes that their smokes are tucked mostly out of his view. He does not like getting gas, but he was in a rush tonight, and didn't think to stop and check his gauge before leaving. Ilya can never really remember how much he's supposed to put in at once, but, worst case, he has to stop a second time. He's pretty good at playing chicken with the tank, and he's always won so far.

Wandering through the aisles settles any nerves he'd been feeling outside. Nothing, he thinks, is wrong, but he feels a little raw. He wants something Shane will like.

Looking through the options, it seems like nothing is really appropriate for the performance diet, even the "healthier" options until- fruit gummies. That he is fairly certain he has seen Pike offer to Shane, and be taken up on. Which, Pike has horrible taste, of course, but Shane wouldn't eat something he didn't like just to make Pike happy. This is clear from all of the horrible meals he's heard Shane recount from his dinners with Pike and his wife, who really must be an upstanding citizen from the way she modifies all her dinners so that Shane has something safe for him to eat too. So. Fruit gummies that advertise both REAL FRUIT JUICE and HEALTHIER INGREDIENTS in big, bold lettering. Shane likes fruit. He gets two packs, notes that they're a little more expensive than the ones surrounding it on the shelves, which surely means that they're nicer.

"Still trying new things?" It's the same cashier that is there almost every time Ilya makes a stop. She seems to like the way that he's almost never repeated his purchases, even if she doesn't usually talk to him much. He likes the way she doesn't try to get him to talk too much. Canadians always do too much small talk. Ilya does not enjoy it.

"Yes. For my- friend. Likes fruit." Then, because that's the whole reason he came in, "forty on the third? Please."

She smiles again, says "sure thing," like she really is overjoyed to be working there, and it puts him in a better mood.

He takes the silly fruit gummies outside, fills his tank with forty Canadian dollars, slides into his driver's seat. Wonders, just for a second, if it would be fully inappropriate to get back out and smoke really quick and then thinks about how pissed Shane would be if he showed up with candy and smelling like cigarettes. Only one of those can be maybe okay at a time. And he already bought the candy.

Quick drive this time. He doesn't even speed. He goes dead at the speed limit, but there isn't any traffic, and he catches every green light. Changes up his parking spot again, but comes further in than the five block limit because really, how will Shane know?

Ilya thinks that Shane might be psychic. Not even three steps into the apartment and Shane's pushing at him lightly, asking if he *really* parked far enough out and if he did, did he walk faster?

The “*Jesus*, Hollander, be less happy to see me maybe?” is teasing, and punctuated by the packet of candy Ilya shakes at him. The smile that splits Shane’s face makes Ilya feel good, like when they kiss.

“Those are for me?”

“No, obviously for the other man here. You do not see him?”

Shane shoves him again, laughs at his overdramatic, shocked face and grabs for the packet. “I like these. You know I like these?” He tears it open quick, eats one with an ease that Ilya almost never sees him with around food. It’s cute.

Ilya decides to make a concession to keep that smile, even though he’s getting rapidly more on edge the longer he stands by the door. “Yes. Pike had them.”

The look he gets is comical. “Pike. Hayden Pike? The Hayden Pike you really, incredibly, don’t like? That one?” Ilya finds the shocked smile unimaginably fun, and he pokes at the corner of it. He’s still feeling the prickle on the back of his neck.

“Is there a different Pike? Can I meet him?” He keeps his finger pressed into the corner of Shane’s smile so he can feel it twitch with another suppressed laugh. Ilya wants to laugh too, but he’s so tired, and Shane’s face is easing him up a little, and he tugs him over to the stupid big couch, dragging him on top like his own weighted blanket. He hooks his chin over Shane’s shoulder, wraps both arms around his waist and closes his eyes. “You eat. I will be sleeping, only a little. Here.”

The closeness is all he really needs from Shane right now, because he’s feeling a little unwell and untethered like he was in the gas station. The weight of a full grown hockey player is grounding. He can hear Shane chewing in his ear, slowly, like he’s trying to keep it quiet, but the sound doesn’t bother Ilya like it would Shane. He can hear the little hum Shane does when he’s happy, and he tightens his grip just a little, just for a second. The prickle is leaving him, but honestly, now he just wants a fucking smoke. Which he will not do. Because he is a good boyfriend and a good hockey player who does *not* smoke because it is bad for him.

At some point, he really does fall asleep. Not a little. Just regular sleep. He knows this because he wakes up feeling warm and cloudy and Shane is also asleep on top of him. There’s a soft, rhythmic breathing that matches his own, and a little bit of drool on his neck. Shane loves to be neat and tight-wound, but he always drools in his sleep. Unfortunately, it doesn’t make him any less attractive. It’s the first half-decent sleep Ilya’s had since- well. The last time he stayed with Shane.

5. Red Plastic Lighter

Ilya has really, *really*, been trying not to smoke. He's chewing the stupid gum, and didn't buy a new lighter last time it ran out of fluid, and he doesn't step out at night when he gets a little anxious. He googles *ways to stop smoking* and *how to quit cigarettes* and *is there a way to get rid of the cravings* and he follows all the stupid ass suggestions other than throwing his last half-finished pack away. What if he needs them? Wouldn't be good to go unprepared.

So he carries the pack around, keeps it in his back pocket with his wallet, pretends his fingers aren't shaking a little when he reaches to pay for things.

It helps that Shane hates it when he smokes. Hates it hard, in a way Ilya doesn't really get, but it's Shane, so obviously he makes the effort. It helps that he refuses to kiss Ilya if he can taste any smoke on him. So unfair.

When he makes a pitstop at the gas station, as has become habit, he can't shake the need for something other than food. He's running late on going to Shane's, they're cutting it close on their time together- they're hitting an unfortunate part in their seasons where they happen to go on roadies on alternating weeks. Because God hates them a little. Or a lot. He doesn't even really think about it when he picks up the lighter, one of those silly small ones with the clear red plastic that lets someone see the fluid inside it.

"Smokes?"

"Ah, no. I have my own." The cashier, he should really learn her name, gives Ilya an awkward and friendly thumbs up, and he does one back. He leaves with the lighter clutched tight in his sweaty palm, and a deep seated feeling that somehow this is going to bite him in the ass later.

His driving is, somehow, more erratic than usual. There are moments when Ilya is fairly certain that he's going twice the speed limit, at the least, and it feels like he isn't even moving. His parking is probably shit too, and he's a lot further out than the minimum that Shane's designated. It's raining, and his walk is cold, and he's more than a little wet when he gets to Shane's door. It feels fitting.

He'd thought it was late enough after they fucked, that Shane was more than asleep, always fixated on his nightly seven to eight hours, for the best recovery, *sure* that it was safe to steal just one smoke. He doesn't even really know why he needs it, just knows the cravings are worse and he can't get them out of his mind, so bad that it feels like something's crawling under his skin.

"I thought you didn't smoke anymore. No lighters even." Shane's voice is flat. Flat in the way that shows how much he's feeling, not in the usual relaxing sort of way.

"Is just one, Shane. Do not worry. I am not addicted," Ilya's lying straight through his teeth, "just for fun now." He thinks he pulls off his relaxed tone, like nothing about this is a big deal. He knows he fails when Shane's jaw ticks, lips pressing together minutely.

“*Fuck*, Ilya,” and fuck Shane for still sounding hot when he’s this pissed, “do you *ever* think about why you shouldn’t be fucking smoking? Do you think I’m just messing around when I tell you not to?” It’s disturbing to hear Shane this pissed at *him*. He almost never gets mad, not like this, not at *Ilya*, and it hurts deeper than he would’ve anticipated. The cigarette starts burning down low, and it stings his fingers.

He tries to cut in, gets out a wet, thick-with-tears, “Shane,” before being stopped. He doesn’t even have to say anything, just levels him with a stare that’s different from how he normally looks at Ilya.

“Just- just go home tonight, okay? It’s been a long day, I’ve had a long fucking day and I can’t-” He doesn’t finish the sentence, and he’s not even crying the way Ilya is, tears welling up but not spilling over because he’s *Shane*, and he can’t let himself cry to save his fucking life.

Ilya steps back and nods. He has no intentions of intruding on what Shane would like of him, so he drops the cigarette on the ground, grinds it out with his boring ass sneakers. He already has his coat, and his coat has his keys, and it stopped raining sometime between the first time he got Shane off and the second. When he turns to leave, smooth and confident in a way he doesn’t feel at all, he expects Shane to take it back. He doesn’t, it makes him go cold. Ilya cranks the heat in his flashy fucking car.

None of the drive matters for Ilya. It all blurs together, and he knows he’s lucky that no one else is out, and he’s lucky that there were no cops out because he genuinely thinks that he could drive better drunk than during those three hours, dead sober.

When he’s back at his own place, his own boring place with none of his friends and no Svetlana, and nothing *good*, he smokes the rest of his pack. It’s only half, and most of them smoke out without him taking more than one drag. He coughs so hard he gags and he thinks *this is why I am bad for Shane*. There’s a long, long moment back inside, where he considers getting out his good vodka, getting drunk and trying to forget this whole night before he remembers he’s already deeply indulged in one vice. And what if Shane calls? He could come back, maybe, before Shane leaves for his away stretch and they don’t see each other for two weeks.

Wisely, he assures himself this is wise, he goes to bed. Brushes his teeth. Grimaces at the taste that lingers still, probably imaginary but just as uncomfortable. It’s all very- detached. Feels a little like he’s puppeting someone who isn’t him, and really that isn’t so bad. Instead of sleeping, he lays in bed. Stares at the ceiling.

+1. Hot Coffee, Three Fake-Sugar Packets

This is such a waste of gas. It’s ridiculous, and it’s all Shane can think about while trailing Ilya, an hour or so behind him. Making him fucking drive out to Montreal, home to Ottawa

and now Shane, out to fucking Ottawa behind him, because he was *concerned* but when he's concerned he also gets a little, maybe moderately, insensitive.

He stops at a gas station, with a girl, early twenties, if that, who smiles and directs him to their coffee pots in the back. It smells burnt, and he doesn't need the calories in the regular sugar, so he digs through the packets for Stevia, anything similar. He finds three, rips them open all in one, dumps them in. It's all a little bit autopilot, especially when he pays and nods along with whatever the cashier says to him.

Back in the car, he rehearses what he wants to say. *I'm sorry. I got scared. Why do you want to kill yourself so fucking bad.*

Ilya's front door creaks open. He is only a little scared that someone will kill him. He is probably bigger. He takes light steps, as light as someone his size can go, peeks around the corner. It's *Shane*. Shane who somehow looks more fucked up than Ilya feels, and he feels a sharp guilt in his stomach about it. When he steps out the rest of the way, the floor creaks. Shane finds him, looks at him, look straight through him, keeping those fucking tears in his waterline because he doesn't cry and Ilya does.

"I will not smoke. If you do not want me to." Ilya doesn't look at Shane. He looks at his hands, tangled together.

"I don't care that you smoke Ilya, not really, I just. I care about the fact that you are going to *fucking kill yourself* doing this. I care that you're smoking even though you know it's bad, and that you don't worry when you get injured, and that you drive like there's no one on the road other than *you*, and that you don't seem to mind if you die." Shane is *desperate*, fingers clawing at Ilya's shirt, and he clings to that. Clings to the way that his shirt is probably stretching out a little, and he doesn't mind that but Shane does, and he's still got his nails pressed through the fabric and digging into Ilya's chest.

It feels familiar, like the thoughts that *he* has, all on his own.

"It is not like that," the denial makes him anxious, and something in him knows he's lying, "Shane, you *know* it is not. Why would I want to die?"

"I didn't say *want* Ilya. I said you don't mind, and," Shane hesitates, grits his teeth, trains his eyes slightly above and to the left of Ilya's face, the way he does when he knows he's about to say something that's going to hurt, "I think you don't mind and you're okay with that and fuck, it scares me. You *know this*."

Ilya. Ilya does not know this.

Something must show on his face because Shane's expression crumples, and he twists his fingers further into the shirt. "*Ilya*. Ilya, tell me you know this."

He tries to play it off a little, scoffs. “Of course. I always know,” only it doesn’t come out believable because Ilya has always been a bad liar.

Shane breathes out heavy and all-at-once, like he’s taken a bad hit. “Ilya,” and his hands come up to cradle Ilya’s face, as if he’s a child, “I’m not mad. I was *scared* for you, because I need you to be okay, and you haven’t been lately, and I *don’t know why*. Can we go sit in your room?” His thumbs trace over Ilya’s cheeks, and his touch burns where he wipes away tears. Shane’s voice is soft. Ilya nods because what else is he going to do?

They sit. On his bed. Shane kneels on his lap, lets Ilya bury his face in his chest even though he’s an adult, and grown, and should be more regulated than this. Shane just pets his hair. Eventually, he loses the want to sit up, tugs Shane back with him, falls backwards until they’re laying together and Shane is crushing him and he breathes in the smell of the clean-scented laundry detergent that his boyfriend uses.

“I do not want to die,” he can feel Shane tense a little on top of him, forces the words out anyways, “Things are- bad. Lately. I do not want to die but only that. You are right.”

There’s a beat where Ilya can tell Shane thinks he might say more but this is all he’s going to get tonight and all that Ilya can handle.

“That’s okay. That’s okay Ilya. Can we-” Ilya shushes him. He feels bad because he loves Shane’s thoughts, usually, but this is too red-hot raw for him.

“No fixing. We can wait for this, yes?”

A long, shuddering breath. “Yeah. Yeah Ilya, it can wait.” He can feel Shane go back to petting him, lighter than before, like he’s worried if he presses too hard that Ilya will run. He keeps his eyes shut, tighter than before, counts Shane’s breaths until he can tell his heart rate has gone back down. It takes a while.

Shane falls asleep first. But that’s okay.

End Notes

okay i hope this was good. if you liked it you should tell me or comment or something because i like that a lot or hit me up on [twitter](#) where i mostly do pitt and aftg fanart but also hollanov when im feeling a little bit too delusional

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