

Scrub

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Scrub

by [albinscounter](#)

Summary

Shane is used to the intensity, the roughness in wanting, not this.

Or,

Ilya gives Shane a bath while he's sick and he's struck with the realization that they're only naked together when they have sex.

Notes

Just an itsy bitsy warning, as the blurb may suggest, this involves discussion around sex and the expectance of it in a relationship. If this makes you uncomfy, please do take care of yourself click off,

xx

"Shane? You are passing out? Fever dream?"

Ilya's voice was faint- no doubt dulled by his own sinusitis-induced hearing. It certainly *felt* like a fever dream, considering the circumstances.

The door was open to the bathroom where Ilya stood, lazily donning a pair of gray sweatpants, ones that Shane struggled to look at for long periods of time.

He was focused, at first, arranging candles and drawing up a bath, testing the temperature every few minutes like a mother making her newborn's bottle for the first time.

It was endearing, albeit strange.

They only had a week left at the cottage until they reached what Shane liked to call the "after". Away from their bubble of safety in his home, into the growling, piercing teeth of the public.

They'd give out a label, and then it wouldn't be theirs alone anymore. An audience, free to jab whatever insults or praise alike at them. Maybe it would be fine, he didn't know- that's why he called it the after.

Ilya said he was being dramatic, said he liked Shane's brain better boring.

He couldn't really disagree.

Regardless, the stress was his leading theory for how he'd managed to get himself sick even in their sequester.

"Baby?" Ilya repeated, and Shane realized he hadn't even given a response.

"Yeah, yes, I'm okay." A small smile.

Ilya made the face he always made when he wasn't convinced enough of something, lips tucked into a pout, eyes a few shades darker. He took a few strides forward, charting distance that should really be taking more than a few.

He slipped a hand up to cradle Shane's jaw, fingers fluttering behind his ear before tightening their hold. It was a gentle gesture, but Ilya always made it feel strong, earthy, like he was on the ground somewhere and he'd be alright.

Maybe it was the fever talking.

"You do not look good, *malysh*."

"Gee, thanks." Shane let out a breathy chuckle, trying to focus his eyes on Ilya in his haze.

He didn't seem to bite back like Shane was used to. Instead, his eyes maintained the same level of hardness, flickering between Shane's, the grip on his jaw unrelenting.

Terrifying.

"Did you take medicine?" Ilya finally spoke, voice low.

He had given it to him before his nap, Shane briefly recalled. Yet, he somehow felt worse. He gave a small nod, not wanting to use the energy that speech drained.

"Okay."

Ilya nodded a few times before his hand left Shane's jaw, much to his disdain. It was replaced quickly, though, by one arm sliding under his knees, another behind his back.

He could have sworn he was swimming through galaxies in the first second of Ilya picking him up. The quickness was hard on his head, which had somehow begun pounding in shades of maroon behind his eyelids in the few minutes he was awake.

He was used to this, the way Ilya handed him. Not with force, but with meaning. Maybe sometimes it was soft, but it almost always turned rough, fueled by a tension between them that never seemed to burn out.

For some reason, the thought made him sad.

Shane felt like he had only blinked a couple of times before his clothes were off, a shiver trickling through his body as Ilya lowered him into the tub.

It was a perfect temperature. They'd taken enough showers together for him to know how he liked it, at least.

"Your hair is greasy," Ilya commented.

Shane frowned, suddenly more aware of himself. Whether it was brought on by Ilya's laser stare or the shock of the water, he couldn't be so sure.

A thoughtful look flashed across Ilya's face before he was moving, leaving the room in haste. Shane felt like calling out, but all he could really do was close his eyes and wait.

"Sit up."

He felt his body move without consulting his brain, obedient to the deep voice he'd become so familiar with.

He opened his eyes to watch as Ilya lowered a cup he must have gone to get into the tub, filling it before bringing a hand to cover Shane's eyes and soak his hair.

After repeating it a few times, he leaned over to reach the shampoo, squeezing a dollop into his hand before lathering it into Shane's hair.

He was methodical as he worked, spreading his fingers through and bringing them back, gently scratching his scalp in the process. He imagined the soap building up under his carefully trimmed nails.

He felt his headache melting away, the tension in his jaw and between his eyebrows following suit.

He must have been wearing it on his face, because Ilya let out a small chuckle.

He continued to massage the shampoo for longer than necessary, but Shane wasn't counting.

There was a damp rag folded and placed onto his forehead as Ilya began to wash out the suds, muttering something about making sure to keep his eyes closed. They repeated the same process for conditioner, Ilya humming a soft tune as he worked, one Shane didn't quite recognize.

When he was done, Shane looked up with eyes of anticipation. He never wanted to leave the bath, not even when his body pruned up, and his Earth was gone.

Ilya just stared, hand coming up to caress the side of Shane's face, thumb swiping over his lip and along the outline of his cheekbones. He could have been wiping away some leftover suds, but he wasn't too convinced that was it.

"You really should wash the rest, too, while you are here. Do you think you can?" He spoke, voice low.

Maybe if it were any other occasion, Shane would have said yes, scoffing like it was a dumb question, because he was grown and obviously he could wash himself.

For some reason, though, he wanted to feel small, to let himself be incapable, even if it were for something so trivial.

"Okay," Ilya said, understanding without a response.

"It will be easier if I join you." He gestured down into the water.

Shane took a moment to process before nodding, lest his voice betray him.

Ilya shed his clothes quickly, gently pushing up Shane's body to slot himself into the tub, arms coming around him in a back embrace.

The water felt impossibly warmer, and Shane hummed in a sigh of content, leaning back and letting his eyes fall shut.

"Don't fall asleep in here. I don't want to carry you asleep. Too heavy." Ilya planted a kiss on his temple as he spoke.

He grabbed the closest body wash, which happened to be Shane's own. It was a simple vanilla, because much else proved to be a lot for him.

Ilya muttered a small **boring** before massaging the soap into his skin. The scent filled the air, mixing with the candles and making for a comforting concoction.

Shane fell into a calming spell, with the rise and fall of his chest matching the one he lay against.

He was struck suddenly with the thought that it was the first time they'd been together naked without having done something sexual. It was an alarming thing, waking up something inside of him.

"Ilya..."

He only gave a questioning hum, busied with the task of scrubbing Shane's legs.

"Did you want- I mean- were you wanting to do something?"

"I do not understand." Ilya's accent had grown thicker in the phrase, focused more on Shane than himself.

"Did you want to have sex with me?"

There was a pause in the air, Shane regretted the question the moment it had left his mouth.

"Did you?" Ilya halted his motions, leaving only the sound of their breaths to fill the silence.

"I just feel like, well. We are only ever in the bath together when-" He cut himself off.

"Shane." He felt himself being turned around to face Ilya as he spoke.

"I am taking care of you. I do not want to fuck you while you are sick."

Shane blinked a few times at that.

"I just figured this must be boring, that's all."

Ilya gave him an incredulous look, and for a moment, he was taken all the way back to the first time he'd stayed the night, when he left in the morning like a runaway bride when he heard him utter his name.

"Loving you is not boring." He grabbed his hand under the water, bringing it up and giving it a squeeze like it'd make his message clearer.

"I know, even when it is boring, like now. I need to stop-"

Ilya cut him off, a glint of something passing through his eyes that Shane couldn't quite catch.

"Shane. We could never have sex again. I would not care."

"Bullshit-"

"No!" Ilya's voice echoed in the small space they were in. "It is not bullshit. We said we will be honest, I am being honest."

He paused for a moment. Shane imagined a little cog in his head, pushing the Russian words into English.

"I think about you all the time. Even when you are boring. You make my chest, hm, warm. I am thinking about you now. I don't care about sex. I only like sex because I like all of you."

He muttered a few frustrated words in Russian, following it up with something about not making sense. Shane squeezed his hand back.

"No, I understand. I feel that way about you, too I'm just not good at... thinking, I guess."

It earned a weakened laugh from Ilya, who pulled him closer, planting a small kiss on his forehead.

They had more to talk about, he knew, but it was nice now to forget about his anxious thoughts and let bygones be bygones.

The water was starting to get cooler, as well as both of their fingers were beginning to prune. Ilya rose from the tub to dry and dress himself. He moved quickly, like his biggest priority was getting his hands back on Shane.

Shane got out after he was done, leaning his head down and watching the water drip from his hair to the bathmat beneath him.

"Come."

Ilya wrapped a towel around him, squeezing and fluffing his hair until everything was dry. Somewhere along the line, it was replaced with a blanket, but Shane was too tired to tell.

He felt himself being brought to bed to lie on top of Ilya. It smelled like his own body wash, to his disappointment. He was quite a fan of Ilya's pine-scented soap.

He had an aversion to skin-to-skin contact sometime before in his life, but now, as his cheek pressed against Ilya's rising and falling chest, he couldn't imagine anything better.

"I love you. Stop thinking so much."

"Impossible." Shane let out a breathy laugh.

A hand was placed on the back of his head. Shane remembered learning once that it was the most vulnerable, where your brain was soft and could be damaged. Something about Ilya's hand planted safely on it, coming down to play with the hair at his nape, made him feel like he could never be hurt.

"Let's not do anything," Ilya mumbled.

"Hm?"

"We should just be boring for the rest of week. I want to do nothing but hold you."

"Okay," Shane whispered, and he was okay, falling asleep with the feeling of hands running through his hair.

It's all he really needed; he was on the ground.

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