**not okay ?**

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# not okay ?

by goldfishsyndrome

Summary

What if Ilya and Shane never had that fight on Boxing Day? What if he never told Shane how he felt about hiding their relationship?

an alternate(sadder) version of how that conversation in chapter 22 could have gone, set in the long game :(

Notes

just a random thought i had after finishing the long game- what if they never had that fight? and ilya's condition just worsens till he cannot help it?

i tried to make them sound like them, but it might be kinda off, pls bear with me

“You want me to go to a party with your teammates? Why?”

*So they can fucking meet my boyfriend,* Ilya wanted to scream. But instead, he kept his tone light and said, “They are cool people. You might have fun.”

Ilya shrugged easily, as if this were a normal thing for him to suggest. “They know you would be in Ottawa for Christmas. We are friends, so I invite you to a party. No big deal.”

Shane’s face scrunched up in confusion, then he shook his head. “Too weird. I don’t think so.”

Ilya had expected the response, but that didn’t mean it hurt any less. For a moment, he just stared at Shane blankly while anger filled his veins at how unbothered Shane looked.

Then, before he said anything he may regret, Ilya stood up and walked out of the living room.

“You can go,” Shane followed him to the kitchen. “It’s fine.”

“Of course, is fine,” Ilya snapped without meaning to. “Great.”

“What’s wrong?” Shane sounded so genuinely clueless about why Ilya might want to meet his friends that it only angered Ilya further.

But Ilya just schooled his face into a neutral expression and shrugged. “It’s nothing. Like you said, is weird if we go together. I will go.”

“You sure there’s nothing else?” Shane pressed, looking at him in concern that made Ilya sigh loudly.

“Da. Yes, I just,” He looked away before he actually told Shane how he felt. “I wanted to be together around my friends at the party.”

Shane let out a confused chuckle as he leaned against the counter. “I thought we were on the same page about this. We don’t do team parties together, and when did Zane Boodram become such a good friend anyway.'”

The question was rhetorical, and the way Shane laughed told Ilya that he wasn’t supposed to take it personally. So, he nodded and laughed along with him.

“Not that good friend,” Ilya agreed half-heartedly. “Like I said, is nothing if we don’t go. Leave it.”

Shane beamed at him, and just like that, the tension between them evaporated, for him at least. Ilya relished the feel of his lips against his as he pressed a chaste kiss before hopping

towards the fridge.

*“Konechno, eto stranno, kogda ya khochu rasskazat’ o nas svoim druz’yam.”*
*(Of course, it’s weird when I want to tell my friends about us.)*

“What did you say?” Shane looked searchingly at his boyfriend, but Ilya just ruffled his hair with a teasing smirk and walked out.

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Ilya stared at the television, but didn't really take in anything about the movie. He had been in the same position for hours now.

Shane had gone out with his teammates. He thought Ilya was going to be at Bood’s party because that was what Ilya had told him he’d be doing.

But, he couldn’t go anywhere. Bood wasn’t his friend. The invitation had probably been sent out of courtesy anyway.

Ilya didn’t want to think like that. He knew his teammates were good people. They liked him. They were friends.

They were friends, *right?*

Ilya groaned and ran his fingers through his hair, frustratedly, tugging at the curls harshly.

He had had a life in Boston. He had friends, a good team- a team that would win. Ilya had been the reason behind those wins.

*You have let Russia down with your performance.*

His father’s words rang in his ears, and he tried to ignore them by gently  tapping his fist against his forehead.

*It’s a shame because you had such promise when you were young.*

Ilya couldn't help but think of what his father would say about him now. Leaving Boston to settle for Ottawa, a team where winning one match was a rarity.

Would his mother also say the same? Ilya always liked to think that his mother would love him regardless of his trophies and success.

He knew she would love him *always*.

She would love him, right?

Ilya wanted to scream, but his throat felt too tight, too dry, too tired to make a sound. He tightened his fingers around the couch, feeling the painful burn in his eyes.

Did Shane think the same? Did he also see Ilya as someone who had potential but wasted it all? He was probably going to get tired of being with Ilya soon.

Ottawa had probably thought that getting Ilya would be an amazing move for them, that Ilya would finally make them win. Maybe they would tire of him soon as well.

Ilya wasn't a good captain anyway. He didn't raise the energy levels in the dressing room, or interact with the new guys.

A good captain would have already gone to Bood's party. A good captain would have hosted the team to make them feel like a family.

*Not a good son.*

*Not a good brother.*

*Not a good player.*

*Not a good captain.*

*Not even a good boyfriend.*

Ilya realised he had been slamming his fist against his forehead too hard and jolted up like the couch burned him.

These thoughts always drained Ilya, and he hated them. But they were all he had these days, it seemed.

It haunted Ilya- how easily Shane had refused to go out with him. It almost felt like Shane was embarrassed to be seen with him.

Rationally, Ilya knew his boyfriend loved him. Shane would hate himself if he found out how Ilya felt, and that was exactly why Ilya could never tell him.

His sweet little boyfriend. Shane was the sun his world revolved around, and he had already taken too much from him. Shane loved him more than he deserved.

Ilya felt the tears finally fall freely, and he scrambled to wipe them away. A tiny box fell from his side and rolled away from him.

Ilya knelt down to pick up the tiny orange box.

*Tianeptine*

Ilya held his breath as he unscrewed the bottle and took out a single white pill. It was tiny, smaller than the tip of his pinky finger.

And before he knew it, he had swallowed the pill dry.

Ilya knew better. He had seen his mother fading away with these pills. He knew how dangerous they were.

The doctor had been reluctant in handing Ilya these pills, but what more did the doctor know about the medicine than Ilya did?

Maybe this is how it was always supposed to be. Ilya was always more like his mother; his father loved to remind him.

Maybe his father had always known that Ilya wasn't strong enough to resist it.

Ilya had always been his mother's son. He saw it in his father's eyes every day until he got too sick to think about it.

He saw the disappointment in his father's eyes when he didn't return with gold after every game.

Ilya's father would hate him if he saw him now. Why did Ilya even leave Boston?

Hockey was all he ever had. How could he just throw it all away?

He had done it all for his love, his love, who seemed to want less and less of him every day.

Ilya wanted to be with Shane. That's why he had joined the Ottawa Centaurs.

But he wanted to be with Shane outside of these four walls too.

Ilya wanted to hold Shane's hand in concerts. Ilya wanted to kiss Shane under the dim lights of a bar. Ilya wanted to tell his teammates that he was in love with a beautiful person.

Maybe Shane would have liked to hold his hand in public if he had been more successful in his career. Ilya should've known he was nothing without his hockey.

Ilya blinked his eyes drowsily, trying to clear his vision as he reached for the couch, so that he could stand up.

But his hand landed on the dining table, and Ilya realised that he was in the kitchen.

How did he get here? Ilya tried to remember; he rubbed his face tiredly, but froze when he saw his hands covered in blood.

Everything looked blurry, and it felt like he was moving, swaying as the world rotated around him. Ilya groaned and tried to push himself up, but found his hands slipping on the floor.

He looked around, his eyes heavy as he tried to recall how he had gotten there, when he finally saw the empty bottle of pills near his feet.

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"It's not your fault."

But it was his fault. Shane squeezed his eyes shut as he rocked himself on the cold hospital chair.

Shane should have been the one to find his boyfriend. Shane should have taken him to the hospital. Shane should have fucking known that his boyfriend was going to swallow a bottle of antidepressants.

"What h-happened?" Shane's voice broke as he looked up at Troy for answers.

"He was late, didn't reply to any of my texts. So, I went to pick him up, and Anya was barking like crazy. I looked in from the backdoor and Roz was lying on the floor."

Shane's eyesight blurred, and he bit back a sob as his mind filled with visuals of an unconscious Ilya on their cold wooden kitchen floor.

"What was all that blood? Did he get hurt?" Shane shivered as he remembered the red bandages around Ilya's hands he'd seen earlier.

Troy shook his head. "The doctor said they were just flesh wounds. But they're going to keep him under observation to ensure the medicines haven't impacted his heart."

Shane just nodded numbly to his words, his eyes flickering towards the closed door.

“Do you want me to call anyone?” Troy asked, sensing the distress in him. “His family? Are they coming to see him?”

Shane cleared his throat forcefully and shook his head. “There’s no one.”

Dread filled Shane as he realised just how true those words were. Ilya had no family that would come and visit him in the hospital.

Did Ilya have any friends? Why didn't Shane know if he had any friends? Should Shane call Svetlana?

“I’ll call my parents in the morning.” At least they had his parents. Ilya would like to have them around.

Ilya liked having them around, *right*?

Shane felt like he knew nothing anymore. Did Ilya even like being around him?

“It’s not your fault, y’know?” Troy looked uncomfortable, but looked at Shane directly. “You couldn’t have known this was going to happen.”

Shane wanted to tell him that it was his fault. He should have known Ilya was sad. Ilya was the love of his life, his boyfriend. How had Shane been so blind to his pain?

But before he could say anything, the doctor walked out of the room, and Shane stood up instantly. “How is he now?”

“We have cleared his system of  the medicine. But we cannot say for certain until he has regained full consciousness.”

“Does he have any family that can stay with him for the night? We will have to run some tests once he’s awake; if they come back normal, then we can discharge him.”

“I’ll stay.” Shane stepped forward without hesitating.

The doctor nodded and brought up the clipboard. “And how are you two related?”

The doctor didn’t even look up at the question, but Shane felt like someone had lodged a knife in his throat.

He opened his mouth to answer, but the words were stuck somewhere in his heart. All he could see was Ilya’s face, his forced smile when Shane had told him that Bood probably wasn’t his friend at all.

Did Ilya hate him for that? Did Ilya take those pills thinking that he had no one? Did Shane make him think that way?

“I’ll stay with him.”

The voice interrupted Shane’s thoughts, and he looked up, startled at the words.

“Ilya’s my friend, and we play together for the Centaurs.” Troy stepped forward, filling the silence Shane had left with his thoughts. “He doesn’t have any family in Canada besides his team.”

He turned towards Shane and nodded, probably to assure Shane that his secret was safe. But Shane was done with his stupid secrets and stupid fears.

“Our coach will probably come by in a while. Can they visit to-”

“No, it’s alright,” Shane interrupted firmly. “I am his boyfriend. I’ll stay with him.”

The doctor finally looked up, his eyes flickering between Troy and Shane before he silently nodded and scribbled his name on the clipboard.

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Shane did not move from his bedside that night. He kept sitting on the little plastic chair, his hand holding Ilya’s gently as he watched him sleep.

It felt like Ilya would disappear if Shane looked away. Even a second where he could not see him felt like torture.

Ilya looked exactly how he did two days ago- before Ilya had asked him about the party and before Shane had almost lost him to a bottle of pills.

Had there been no signs?

Shane wondered if he had just missed all the signs.

*“Dorogoy, chto ty zdes’ delayesh’?”*
*(Sweetheart, what are you doing here?)*

Shane’s eyes widened at the gruff voice, and he sat up straighter. Ilya was blinking rapidly, seeming confused at his surroundings.

“Here,” Shane picked a glass of water and lifted the straw to his lips. “Drink some water first.”

Ilya tried to sit up, wincing when he put pressure on his palm and hissed when he looked at the reddening bandage. *"Yebat'."*

"The doctor has instructed not to put any pressure on that hand for a few days, and it'll be fine."

Ilya frowned at him, looking confused as he examined his hand. "How did this happen?"

"Troy said there was broken glass around you," Shane exhaled loudly. "I'm assuming you were trying to grab a glass of water and it slipped."

Ilya snorted amusedly and leaned against the bed. "We come to hospital for this? Stupid Barrett."

"How did Barrett find me?" Ilya thought out loud, slowly trying to recall his memories of the past hour.

Shane did not say anything, distracting himself with the bottles kept on the side-table. He could hear Ilya mumbling something in Russian and felt his eyes burn with what he knew was coming.

"You, uh, took some medicine. You probably weren't feeling well. The medicine caused you to pass out, uh you fainted, and Barrett found you-"

*"Tianeptine."* Ilya's voice sounded flat. "I remember now."

He looked away from Shane like it pained him to look at him. "How many did I take?"

"How many?" Shane repeated in disbelief after him. He had been hoping that it was a mistake; maybe Ilya had taken the pills without looking at them. "You knew? They were, uh, those pills- I don't know, you probably swallowed the whole bottle."

There were a few minutes of silence between them. Not the usual peaceful kind, but a painful silence where neither of them knew how to end it.

"I did not mean to have all," Ilya finally spoke, still avoiding his eyes. "No, I did not even mean to have one."

Shane's vision blurred with tears at how unsure he sounded. "When did you get the pills?"

"Few months ago," Ilya shrugged. "I did not plan to use them. Only kept them to feel okay."

"You kept a bottle of antidepressants with you to feel okay?" Shane choked out, tears streaming down his face openly now. "Why didn't you tell me anything?"

"You were happy," Ilya stretched his uninjured hand to hold Shane's shaking hands. "Your mind wasn't broken like me. Did not want to bother you."

Shane's heart broke into a million pieces.

"I was happy because I have you, Ilya. I love you, you make me happy. You could never bother me, especially not if you were hurting."

Ilya finally looked at him, but it was only for a split second before he nodded and looked away.

"No, no, no," Shane cradled his face and turned it back towards him. "You need to know that I am in love with you, more than anything else in this world."

Ilya's eyes shone with unshed tears, but he blinked them away, and a lone tear trailed down his face.

"Anything?" He whispered. "Would you choose me? If it is between hockey and me?"

Shane froze at the question, entirely unprepared for the turn their conversation had taken.

Ilya studied his face and saw the change in expression, his eyes slowly shutting down his feelings as he took Shane's silence as an answer.

But Shane was quick to recover; he leaned in and pressed their foreheads together. "Of course I would."

There was no change in Ilya's expression, and Shane knew he was fucking this up already.

"Hockey is just what I do, Ilya. Yes, it is pretty important to me, but not more than you. I would be nothing without you."

The light was slowly returning to Ilya's eyes, and Shane felt his voice grow confident. "If it is ever between hockey and you, Ilya Rozanov, I would choose you. Always."

Ilya bit down on his bottom lip so that he wouldn't cry, but the tears fell freely now, and there was nothing that he could do to stop them.

"It took me almost losing you to tell you that you mean the world to me," Shane shook his head. "I am sorry for that, for not saying enough how grateful I am for you."

"Don't be dramatic, sweetheart. You were not about to lose me."

Shane's eyes narrowed into a glare. "Yeah? What did you think was going to happen after swallowing the whole bottle of antidepressants?"

Ilya winced at the reminder and looked away. "I did not want to do this," He whispered in a choked voice. "I swear, have been getting help. I was getting okay. But my brain did not help. It got worse and just happened."

"You've been getting help?" Shane asked in surprise. "That's great, Ilya. Who is it?"

"A therapist. One who speaks Russian. Is good. She has been helpful, I think."

“She speaks Russian? That’s great.”

“Yes. Much easier to talk that way.”

Shane felt the same terrible feeling he always did when he realised that he was yet to learn Russian. It wasn’t like Shane had any difficulty learning new languages. Why did he not learn it sooner?

“How long have you been going?” He asked instead.

“A couple of months.” Ilya shrugged like it was no big deal, but it clearly was.

Shane nodded, wanting to ask why Ilya had never told him about it, but stopped himself.

“It’s really good you are getting help, finding someone you can talk to.”

Ilya tightened his hands around his and brought them to his lips, pressing soft kisses on them. “I have told you things I have not told anyone, Shane. But this is different.”

“Because it’s about me?” Shane asked before he could think about it.

Ilya froze for a second before fixating his eyes on their joined hands and nodding. “Da, we talk a lot about you.”

“But more about me, how I feel not okay most of the time. I think I am like my mother– depressed.”

Shane pulled away to look at him properly. “Did she give you those pills?”

“No,” Ilya shook his head frantically, his golden curls bouncing wildly. “I got them before, from another doctor. He was not my doctor, not very good doctor if he just gave me the pills.”

Shane was about to ask him why he had taken those pills when he saw Ilya hesitating to speak.

“You need to know that I did not take the medicine because of you. Too many things in my mind at once, I was not in good place, da? You do not blame yourself for it.”

Shame filled Shane as Ilya read him like an open book.

“But, I did cause it. You wanted me to go out with your friends, and I told you no, and I said so many stupid things. I pushed you over the edge with that-”

“You did nothing,” Ilya interrupted him sternly. “Galina told me not to be alone when I felt, uh dark. I did not listen. Should not have lied to you about going to the party.”

“I just feel alone.” He said honestly. “I don’t have friends. I don’t tell people about my boyfriend. I don’t do anything, my whole life feels empty.”

“I am scared my father will be right.” It looked as if it physically pained Ilya to admit that.

*I am scared I will be like my mother.*

Shane couldn’t help himself anymore; he leaned in and pressed their lips together in a soft kiss.

“You are so loved, Ilya.” Shane combed his fingers through his curls and pushed them away from his face. “Troy Barrett cried outside when the doctors took you inside. He was waiting with me the whole time, and even said he’d stay with you. Your coach, Wiebe, came down to meet you earlier. My parents are on her way already.”

“I am so sorry for trying to tell you that Bood isn’t your friend. I didn’t know you felt this way,” He apologised sincerely. “If it helps, Bood has called you about seventeen times since yesterday.”

Ilya rolled his eyes, some of his original light finally returning to his eyes.

“Of course, he misses me. I am the star of his stupid party.”

Shane cracked a smile despite the gloomy environment and stole another quick kiss.

“I am going to host a dinner this week. I checked with your coach, and he said your schedule is clear. We’re going to call all your friends, Wyatt, Bood, Troy, Harris, everyone you want.”

Ilya immediately shook his head. “You don’t have to do that. I know you want to wait.”

“I want to wait before we tell everyone,” Shane nodded. “But they are your friends. I don’t want you to have to hide from your friends.”

Ilya slowly nodded, a small smile on his lips as he leaned in to press his nose against Shane’s neck. “Thank you.”

Shane kissed his head and wrapped his arms around him. “No, Ilya, thank you.”

“I know I don’t say it enough, but you have done a lot for us to stay together. You’ve given up so much, and I don’t appreciate it nearly enough.”

“I would give up more,” Ilya said simply. “Anything for you.”

“I don’t want you to give up anything for me that’ll make you unhappy,” Shane shook his head. “If it makes you feel better, you can move back to Boston. I’m sure they’ll be happy, we will manage some-”

“Shane, *moya lyubov’,* I love Ottawa. My team is great, and I have a great time with your family. Don’t tell him, but I love being with Wiebe too. I would not want to go far to Boston again.”

“Yeah?” Relief filled Shane’s heart. “You like Ottawa?”

He did not want to say it out loud but he was scared Ilya was going to resent him for making him move to Ottawa. The past few hours had been scary in a way he could have never thought was possible. He had imagined their entire relationship crumbling down because he had been ignorant to Ilya's unhappiness.

“Is your city, no?” Ilya winked at him. “How could I not like?”

Shane rolled his eyes and pulled him in for another kiss. “Just tell me if you ever feel this way, okay? We are a team, Ilya, we are going to figure it out together.”

Ilya nodded. “Yes, I know, I will let you know if I ever feel like shit.”

Shane’s lips quirked up in a smirk. “Yes, whenever you feel like shit. We should have a codeword for it, like I don’t know, maybe cloudy.”

“Cloudy?” Ilya repeated after him in an unsure tone.

Shane nodded enthusiastically. “Just tell me that it’s cloudy, and I’ll get it. No need to find big complicated words.”

“Hey,” Ilya sounded almost offended. “I can use big words; my English is getting better.”

“But, cloudy is good word.” He agreed. “Except if it is really cloudy outside, then you will be confused.”

Shane couldn’t help it; he cupped Ilya’s jaw and kissed him again. “God, I love you so much, Ilya. I hope you know that.”

Ilya didn’t say anything, but he didn’t pull away either. Shane could feel him smile against his lips as they deepened the kiss, and he knew they would be okay.

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