

When Life Gives You Tattoos

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When Life Gives You Tattoos

by Anonymous

Summary

The third realization hit him when he finally blinked open his eyes to investigate the cause of his misery. He did a double-take because... well, he was pretty sure he didn't have a tattoo last night. Especially not one that read the name of his long-time rival and secret fuck buddy.

Ilya Rozanov.

Shane blinked. What the fuck.

Shane wakes up with Rozanov's name tattooed on his wrist one morning. It only gets worse from there.

Notes

[05.01.26]

I have now finished reading the books (and rewatching the show like a thousand times) and realized that there are some differences between book canon and show canon. This fanfic was written with the show in mind, but after reading the books, I considered changing some stuff but ultimately decided against it. Should I ever write for this fandom again— and I really want to— I will most likely refer to book canon.

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

The first thing Shane noticed when he woke up that morning was the fact that his wrist was itchy. Like itchy as hell. So itchy it was borderline painful. He groaned miserably and scratched at his wrist in a pitiful attempt to stifle the prickling ache.

But it didn't help at all. No amount of violently scratching his skin until he knew it must be painfully red was able to stop the itching sensation. That was the second thing he had noticed that day.

The third realization hit him when he finally blinked open his eyes to investigate the cause of his misery. He did a double-take because... well, he was pretty sure he didn't have a tattoo last night. Especially not one that read the name of his long-time rival and secret fuck buddy.

Ilya Rozanov.

Shane blinked. What the fuck.

He blinked again for measure, and when the daunting words didn't budge at all from his wrists, he hastily fumbled for his phone on the nightstand. He snapped a picture of his wrist and quickly sent it to the devil himself.

Shane quickly typed, *What is the meaning of this?*

The answer was near instant.

Lily: My name?

Lily: My mother gave it to me

Shane rolled his eyes. Rozanov had a terrible habit of purposely being an irritating asshole in the worst possible moments. And this was one of them.

Jane: No. Why is your name on my wrist?

Lily: I don't know

Jane: What do you mean you don't know?

Lily: Means I don't know

Lily: I can ask you the same question

Before Shane could ask Rozanov what he could possibly mean by that, much less tell him off for deliberately acting ignorant of what he so obviously did, another picture appeared on the screen. The picture shut him up really quick.

There, on Ronazov's wrist, written in neat, black letters, was his own name: *Shane Hollander.*

What the fuck.

He transcribed his thoughts into text.

Jane: What the fuck.

Lily: Insanity

Lily: It's bad you curse outside of fucking

Lily: What is the meaning of this?

Shane had half the mind to echo Rozanov's sarcastic texts back to him, but Scott Hunter's voice echoed inside his head, telling him that he was starting to sound just like Rozanov, and he decided against it.

Jane: I don't know. That's why I'm asking you

Lily: Well I don't know

Lily: Maybe it's late April Fool joke

"It's October," Shane scoffed to his screen, though it came out like a whine.

He shut his phone. It was clear that Rozanov wouldn't tell him the reason why he thought it would be such a good idea to write their full government names on each other's wrists any time soon. But perhaps there was no real reason. Perhaps it was just one of Rozanov's many whims that took him and told him that it would be so funny if he took a sharpie and left his name on Shane's body.

As if Shane wasn't already marked by Rozanov enough as it was.

But Shane supposed he should be grateful. Actually thinking about it, he got off quite lucky. It could've been so much worse. Like a penis on his wrist—no, actually that would be easier to explain than Rozanov's name on his wrist. What about a penis on his forehead? Or the worst of them all, Rozanov's name on his forehead? He shuddered at the thought. Good thing it was his day off today. Maybe Rozanov had been merciful with his prank, after all.

Still, Shane had expected that Rozanov would at least admit to the prank; proud asshole that he was.

He scrubbed— or more like attempted to scrub off Rozanov's name from his wrist in the shower, but what did it do? Absolutely nothing. The black letters refused to leave his skin. They were bold and persistent— like the asshole who wrote them on his skin in the first place.

Shane was annoyed yet vaguely impressed at the same time. He had to give it to Rozanov; Russian sharpies were truly something else.

His wrists were itchy again when Shane woke up the next day. He didn't want to take a look, knowing that Rozanov's name was still etched on his skin because he hadn't been able to get

rid of it at all yesterday. But he did it anyway and he did a double-take because... well, there was still black ink on his skin.

It was different from the one from yesterday, however.

Ok.

Shane frowned. Ok?

He sat up and reached for his phone. Judging from the notifications on his screen, it seemed that Rozanov had already beaten him in their unofficial texting race. Damn him.

In the chat, was a picture of Rozanov's wrist. Just like Shane's, the words from yesterday had been replaced by new ones; *Ilya Rozanov? Shane Hollander. I– I wanted to introduce myself.*

Shane felt his face heat at the familiarity of them. He could only imagine how he had sounded back then. Probably like a blushing maiden.

Lily: It's the words you said to me first

Lily: Are you a secret magician?

Lily: It's like magic

Lily: A message from the universe

Surprise washed over Shane, though not for the reason one might think.

Jane: You remember my first words to you?

Lily: Of course

Lily: You not?

Shane's lips twisted because he didn't remember the exact words Rozanov had told him when they first met; whatever memory he had of their actual first meeting was overshadowed by the bitter feeling of loss after their first game against each other.

He decidedly pushed the feeling aside and sent a quick picture of his wrist into the chat.

Jane: Not until now. Your first word to me was Ok

Lily: You break my heart

Lily: But what can I say? You like me straight to the point

Shane rolled his eyes. Unfortunately, Rozanov was right.

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"Is that a tattoo?" Hayden asked when they were changing in the locker room that night.

Immediately, the room broke out in hollers.

"You have a tattoo?"

“No way!”

Shane winced from the sudden loudness. “I was feeling adventurous,” he dryly said, physically avoiding his teammates who were suddenly in his face.

“Isn’t your mom like super strict?”

“Yeah, isn’t she Asian?”

Shane’s face pulled into a frown at those words, but he was unable to tell his teammates off because everyone else kept shouting across the room.

“Hollander, that’s fuckign crazy.”

“Show us! Show us!”

“Okay, okay,” Shane relented with an annoyed sigh. It wasn’t even a real tattoo— not one that he got willingly, anyway— but the sooner he could get his teammates off his back, the better. He set his shirt down on the bench and begrudgingly presented them the singular, straight-to-the-point word on his wrist.

Immediately, his teammates shut up, silently admiring— although, unknowingly to him, they were silently judging— his tattoo.

The prolonged silence made Shane uncomfortable. He awkwardly shuffled his feet. “Well, say something!”

A beat, then awkward coughing. The crowd that had formed around him slowly dissipated, and the people resumed to silently change at their lockers.

Shane frowningly blinked and turned to his own locker, feeling perplexed. Everything was fucking strange.

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After the game, instead of basking in victory with his teammates, Shane opened Google in desperation.

He typed, *Sudden tattoo appearing on skin*

Google told him that sudden tattoos were normally caused by drunk decisions that people did not remember.

Shane cursed because he definitely did not get drunk and totally remembered. He tried again.

He typed, *Sudden tattoo appearing on skin without memory*

Again, Google told him that sudden tattoos were normally caused by drunk decisions that people did not remember.

Okay. Maybe Shane needed to try another angle.

He typed, *Sudden tattoos connected to my hockey rival appearing on my skin without any memories what does this mean*

Google only told him that there were no results found for the search '*Sudden tattoos connected to my hockey rival appearing on my skin without any memories what does this mean*'

Shane clicked his tongue and shut his phone. Google was as much of a help as Rozanov was; none at all.

On the third day, Shane surprisingly woke up perfectly normal; no itching, no tattoo on his wrist, and it was so beautiful that he could cry.

But then he spotted the seemingly endless red thread peaking out from his pinky finger, and he almost really did cry.

The natural conclusion was to try to cut it off, of course. And so he did. But life had a funny way of playing in his face, and cutting the red string off didn't work because the damned thing just had to be indestructible. Of fucking curse.

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"You good, man?" Hayden asked him at breakfast that day.

Shane waved him off, "I'm good."

"Sure," Hayden flatly said. "Let's all be and look miserable as shit and act like we're completely fine."

Shane gave Hayden a look that was supposed to signal him to shut up and leave him alone. Hayden didn't seem to have noticed.

"I find that talking about whatever is bothering me helps. Wanna talk about what's been on your mind?"

Shane chewed at his lip. "It's complicated."

"Hit me."

He relented with a sigh. "Weird things have been happening the past few days." Hayden nodded, encouraging him to continue. "Two days ago, I woke up with a strange tattoo I'm pretty sure I didn't get. Yesterday, I woke up with another tattoo, but it was different from the one from the day before. And today—"

“Wait,” Hayden interrupted him with a raised hand, blinking in confusion. “So you’re saying the ‘Ok’ tattoo wasn’t real?”

Shane’s voice rose in irritation, “Of course it wasn’t real!” Hayden had the nerve to actually look disappointed at that. Shane scoffed, “But that isn’t all. Today I woke up with this.” He showed Hayden his pinky, raising it like one would raise their middle finger.

For a moment, Hayden just flatly stared at the offensive little finger, then slowly moved his gaze away from it to flatly stare at Shane instead. His voice was equally flat, “Today you woke up with your pinky?”

“What?” Shane asked, affronted. He drew back his hand to inspect it himself. The thread was still there. It was gleaming a beautiful ruby shade, shining so brightly in the sunlight as if it was silently insulting him. He looked away from it with an irritated scowl and showed Hayden. “Are you not seeing this?”

Hayden gave him another look. “Seeing what?”

“The thread, Hayden. The thread.”

“What thread?”

“Are you seriously not seeing the red thread that’s magically growing from my pinky and looks like it could reach across the entire country?”

“No,” Hayden said, the flat look on his face unrelenting. “All I’m seeing is the face of sleep deprivation.”

Shane ran a hand through his face and groaned.

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Later, when he watched replays of Rozanov’s game that night, he couldn’t help but notice the way Rozanov looked— for lack of a better word— distracted. In a way Rozanov never was during his games. Every now and then, he would momentarily stare at a space above his hand, blue eyes blown wide, looking terribly confused. Like he couldn’t trust his own eyes. Like he was seeing something he wasn’t supposed to be seeing.

Like Rozanov was also seeing a red thread coming from his pinky.

Shane decided to not think about it.

It kept happening.

Every morning, Shane would wake up in his bed and find another unexplainable thing about himself that would then disappear the next day, just to be replaced by another newer, stranger

thing.

He was cursed. That must be it. That was the only reasonable explanation for all the weird things that have been happening the past few days.

Shane's theory was only further confirmed when he woke up one day with a timer on his wrist that was counting down to an event that would happen in approximately 60 Hours. 60 Hours. Two and a half days. The exact time when his team would be playing against the Boston Raiders. Rozanov's team. Of course.

Shane didn't even flinch when he woke up on doomsday, and the entire world lacked color—literally. From his bedsheets that he knew should be green, to his ceiling that should be brown. Everything was grey.

Everything but the bright morning sky, that is. Shane could make out its beautiful light blue hue when he opened the window that morning. Blue, his favourite color. Reminiscent of the car his mother used to drive when he was just a boy. Or his ice hockey team's colors.

The color of Rozanov's crystalline eyes.

Shane humorlessly laughed at himself, but somehow, the knowledge made it easier for him to go about his day and prepare for his upcoming game that night. Either that or the fact that he knew by now that the curse would be lifted tomorrow.

But curses were unpredictable, it seemed. Because when familiar blue eyes met him across the ice that night, his monotonous grayscale world burst into vibrant colours—literally. Shane could do nothing but quietly curse underneath his helmet. Of fucking course.

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Rozanov was pushed against the wall as soon as he entered Shane's hotel room.

“What is the meaning of this?” Shane demanded, forearm pressed against Rozanov's windpipe, who looked down at him with glinting eyes, looking way too amused for his own good.

“Now are you seriously trying to kill me, Hollander?”

Shane clicked his tongue in annoyance and loosened his hold. Rozanov let out a sound of disappointment. Shane ignored him. “Tell me you didn't spend the entirety of today unable to see any color but brown until our game just now.”

“That would be a lie. Only cowards lie.”

“Funny,” Shane flatly said, but the soft frown marring Rozanov's face told him he wasn't particularly amused by this situation, either. “How can you be so fucking calm when we've

literally been hit by an unknown curse?”

Rozanov frowned. “What you mean curse?”

“This!” Shane almost yelled, frantically gesturing to himself and Rozanov. “We wake up with mysterious matching tattoos, strings coming from our fingers and colorblindness! What would you call that if not a curse?”

Rozanov was untouched. “A blessing,” he simply said. Shane felt a pulse under his eye twitch because Rozanov actually sounded completely sane despite his entirely insane words.

“A blessing,” Shane slowly echoed.

“Yes, Hollander. Blessing.” Rozanov met Shane with those intense eyes of his, who slightly staggered back, suddenly feeling little, somehow. “In Russia soulmates are a blessing. Why are you like this? In Canada soulmates are a curse?”

Shane went very, very still. Because that’s what happened when your asshole of a fuckbuddy was implying that the two of you were soulmates; you freeze.

His voice was a disbelieving whisper, “No, that’s not...” He shook his head, shaking off his skittishness and gave Rozanov a serious look. “What do you mean by soulmates?”

Rozanov shrugged. “Soulmates. Mates from the soul. You never heard of them before?”

“Of course I have!” Shane said. “I just— I never thought...”

“Why think? Does Canada have no Google?”

*It does, but it’s fucking useless, apparently,* Shane wanted to say.

“That’s not the point,” is what he said instead because he felt like the rug had been pulled from underneath him, and nothing else would leave his useless mouth. His heart quickened underneath his ribcage, palms dampening with sweat.

Noticing Shane’s growing anxiety, Rozanov reached for him, taking Shane’s face inside his hands. He stroked a soothing thumb just below Shane’s ear and asked, “You didn’t know?”

Shane’s voice was quiet, “No, I didn’t.”

“Does that bother you?”

Shane’s response was instantaneous. “No.” He surprised himself with the conviction he had said those words. No lie could be said with the same swiftness he had denied Rozanov’s implication. And he surprised himself again because he wasn’t scared by the fact at all. Rozanov must notice this, too. He slightly leaned back to meet Shane’s eyes. Shane blinked up at him. “Holy shit. We’re actual soulmates.”

Rozanov grinned. “Seems like it,” he said, peering into Shane’s eyes, his own blues glowing like he could see something others couldn’t, like he found a rare treasure that others spent

their whole lives trying to find. Rozanov looked at him like he was seeing his soul and loved it.

Shane's heart felt incredibly full at that moment, as if it was overflowing but at the same time could never burst. Whatever intricate thoughts he had promptly flew out the window. He grabbed Rozanov by the collar and pulled him down for a searing kiss.

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When Shane woke up the next morning, everything was back to normal; there was no itching on his wrists, no string attached to his pinky, and most importantly, the world was in vibrant colour. So yeah, everything was back to usual.

Everything except for Rozanov's strong arm securely wrapped around his torso, and his warm body pressed against him underneath the sheets. He snuggled against the body behind him, eliciting a rough groan, the muscular arm around him tightening.

Shane smiled to himself. He could wake up like this every day.

## End Notes

Thank you for reading! I honestly didn't expect to write and finish a new fanfic this close before Christmas, but oh well, I also didn't expect to start a new show while studying for my exams and falling in love with said show. Unfortunately, I haven't yet found the time to interact with this fandom and its fan-content, but I hope I can do so soon when I'm free. But for now, Merry Christmas! See you next time.

(If you're one of my few leopika readers, fret not. *Everything with You* will update... at some point.)

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