

say no to this

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by [sushiwriter](#)

Summary

His father would accuse him of being weak, of letting his heart lead him to stupid places. But for once in his life, Ilya can't bring himself to care about this. He wants Shane. He wants to coax his boyfriend into ordering takeout from that place they like around the corner from Ilya's apartment and cheating on his diet a little. Then he wants to blow him on the couch, and he wants Shane to ride him. They can shower afterwards and put some highlights on the TV before falling asleep and ignoring Shane's alarm the next morning. He wants the peace they had at the cottage during the season, to steal those moments and get to exhale.

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Inspired by this tweet by [@paulasoldestson](#): ilya actually love having a strict boyfriend. like no his bitch do not let him have friends NO he not allowed to be out past 11 and NO U CANNOT SIT HERE!!!

Notes

[this tweet](#) and [this one](#) ("ilya rozanov be like My Boyfriend Said No") by [@paulasoldestson](#) have been living rent free in my mind. Shoutout to them and everyone riffing in the replies

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

Ilya Rozanov has become, well, boring in the last few months. There's not another good word for it. For as much as he makes fun of Shane Hollander for being the prim and pressed poster boy of hockey, he's certainly mellowed out himself since the summer. He's no less fierce on the ice, don't get anyone wrong (least of all Rozanov himself), but something else about him has shifted.

The locker room is abuzz around them as the Bears get ready to celebrate another win. Ilya, however, has all his attention on his phone. His equipment is strewn about in his locker, although less haphazard than usual. It's the little things.

Jane

Congrats on the win.

"This girl really keeps a short leash on you, huh, Roz?" Cliff eyes Ilya who's texting with abandon. Ilya doesn't even look at him, just keeps his gaze on his phone. Each buzz seems to trigger something in him, fingers flying across the screen. He has that look on his face that he gets right before a face-off.

Lily

Tell me I cannot go out.

Jane

Why would I do that.

Go celebrate your win.

Before we destroy you next week 😊

Lily

I do not want to go. Need excuse.

Hollander be uptight girlfriend and say no.

Ilya sighs dramatically, finally deciding to respond to Cliff after a pregnant pause, the other man staring at him incredulously, "Yes, she is well, how do you say?" His face scrunches up as he taps insistently at his phone then looks at Cliff, "Particular. Yes, particular about what I do."

He laughs, "You don't have to do what she says. You're a free man! Besides, we just won, doesn't she want you to celebrate?" He claps Ilya on the back in an attempt to show some camaraderie.

Ilya doesn't move, doesn't react to Cliff, just turns his attention back to his phone as he hums indifferently, shrugging.

Sure, Shane wants him to celebrate, because that means one step closer to another Cup, but there's also still that ever present undercurrent of competition. Ilya likes winning, but he likes winning most of all *against Shane*. He likes winning when it means he gets to do face-offs with his boyfriend, gets to watch Shane in his element. Winning against everyone else, with the exception of maybe Scott Hunter, is a solid tier below.

It's been obvious that Ilya has been seeing *someone* to everyone on the Bears. It's not just the texting, he's first into the locker room after any game, attention always split between checking his notifications and chirping. When they lose he still gives his speeches, pointing out flaws in their plays incisively and without any sugarcoating, but when he's done he pouts at his phone while texting, showering quickly so he can slap the rookies on the back and head out. He isn't shirking his captain duties, there's just something other than hockey occupying his attention on a regular basis.

He's stopped being the first to suggest a club, stopped trying to rally everyone after a particularly hard-fought win. He's less Rozy and more, well, Ilya. If that was a change that could be measured.

Jane

I'm not your girlfriend.

And you know you can just lie right?

Then, after a few moments,

Did you learn the word uptight just for this?

Ilya ignores this last text in favor of his favorite brand of snark.

Lily

Will make me feel better if you say no.

I read the dictionary in spare time after New Yorker.

Cliff watches as Ilya frowns at his phone and keeps texting, keeps watching for replies. Man, this girl runs a tight ship with him.

Ilya Rozanov, known womanizer, once the first to suggest going out whether loss or win, who put his card down after a particularly egregious win and then paid for a round for the whole bar, now stands worrying over a text from a girl. Cliff shoots an exasperated look at another one of their teammates, who chimes in.

"Roz, c'mon, you gotta go out with us!" Others chime in, someone even yelling from the showers.

Ilya responds by waving his hand in the air as if he's waving off a fly. He shouts something unintelligible around where he's got his cross in his mouth. Apparently, there are things more important than getting drunk with his teammates after their victory.

Jane

Fine.

No, you can't go. I don't want you to be in a club with random girls.

Happy?

Something low and pleasant curls at the pit of Ilya's stomach. Even though he had to cajole Shane into saying it, the words are a victory in themselves. He tries to hold his grin at bay as he turns his phone around, the text message selected so it's all Cliff can see.

"She says no, what can I do?" He shrugs, as if it's as inevitable as him scoring sixty goals this season. Ilya will score a record number of goals and his girlfriend says no club, so no club.

"Well, I guess if the woman says no, it's a no." Cliff shrugs, but keeps watching Ilya out of the corner of his eye. Ilya nods in agreement and goes back to texting.

Lily

Yes.

I showed the message to Cliff.

Jane

Jane disliked a message.

The three white dots pop up then disappear; then pop up again. Ilya mouths at his cross absentmindedly waiting for Shane to text again.

Jane

Call me when you get back to the hotel?

Lily

Yes, ma'am

Jane



—

After a hat trick, and then another goal, Ilya can't say no to his teammates. Shane even encourages him to go out, telling him he should have fun. Ilya bitches and moans at him over

text until Shane says he's not responding because he's going to bed. That prompts several more whining texts from Ilya about not getting to say goodnight, so Shane acquiesces saying he'll pick up after Ilya comes home from having fun. Instead of doing that, Ilya sits by the bar, nursing a vodka and moping.

He pays for a round, hoping it'll get everyone drunk enough not to notice he isn't dancing or slamming shots like he usually does. He doesn't want to be doing any of those things, he wants Shane.

His father would accuse him of being weak, of letting his heart lead him to stupid places. But for once in his life, Ilya can't bring himself to care about this. He wants Shane. He wants to coax his boyfriend into ordering takeout from that place they like around the corner from Ilya's apartment and cheating on his diet a little. Then he wants to blow him on the couch, and he wants Shane to ride him. They can shower afterwards and put some highlights on the TV before falling asleep and ignoring Shane's alarm the next morning. He wants the peace they had at the cottage during the season, to steal those moments and get to exhale.

The vision is so clear and so domestic he thinks it might make him physically ill. He sips his vodka again, hoping the burn will soothe some of the aching in his chest.

Someone sidles up to him, a slender arm brushing against his. He turns to face a woman with an angular face and pouty lips. The top she's wearing is low cut, and her collarbones reflect the changing colors of the club lights. She's far too in his personal space for it to be friendly.

She smiles at him. "Ilya Rozanov, right?"

Ilya nods, but doesn't respond verbally. Part of him wants to tell her she can't sit there, that he has a girlfriend, but he doesn't want to deal with the press circus that'll result so he keeps his mouth shut.

Before the cottage, before things had changed with Shane, he might've leapt at the opportunity to sleep with this girl. He might've bought her a drink, flirted some more, then suggested they go back to his. The sex would've been good, because, well, and he would've let her sleep over because he's an asshole not a monster.

And yet, looking at her face under the club lights, all he can see are the ways she isn't a certain hockey player with freckles.

"That was a great game, I'm so impressed you scored four goals." Her fingertips trail lightly down his arm and he stares at her fingernails running over his shirt.

This would be a great opportunity to say something about how it's nothing for him, how it just means he should up the number of goals he's going to score this season, but he doesn't do any of those things. He blinks at her as if her face will suddenly morph into Shane's, and he'll teleport from his place in Montreal to this club in Boston.

The interaction passes with the same detached disinterest as when Ilya watches football. Sure, he could get into it, if he really tried, but he doesn't want to. He has hockey. He has Shane.

His responses are lackluster, and most of her questions fall flat to short answers interrupted by Ilya checking his phone or looking out over the crowd. He knows he's being kind of an asshole, but he's really not interested.

The girl gives up eventually, because even flirting with a star hockey player who could not seem more disinterested loses its spark eventually. Cliff sidles up next to him.

"Dude, that was painful to watch."

He defends himself. "I was not mean." As if he ever used to care about being *mean*. Shane really is getting to him.

"No, no, I mean—she was hot, and so clearly into you. What's with you, man?"

Ilya shrugs, irritated all of a sudden. He thinks he gets what Shane feels when he's overstimulated—the lights are too bright and the music is too loud, and his mouth tastes like ash. Not even the good kind, either. He needs a fucking cigarette. Cliff's semi-constant needling about this shit is pissing him off, too. Only Shane gets to do that, and he doesn't because they're boyfriends and why would he bug his boyfriend about sleeping with strangers?

And what, everyone else on the team can find someone and settle down, bore everyone with stories about moving in together and whatnot but Ilya can't? Well, he can't because of the whole gay thing, but that's beside the point with this.

Shoving away from the counter, he abandons his half finished drink and ignores Cliff's exaggerated sigh as he walks off. He closed his tab immediately, knowing he wouldn't want to stay much longer than it took to drink one drink. The vodka was kind of bad anyway.

He exits the club, shoving through the dance floor and wrapping his jacket around himself when he gets outside, ignoring someone calling his name. It could be a fan or Cliff, right now he just wants out.

The rush of cold air brings him back into his body and he shivers despite himself. Not that he'd ever admit it, but Boston does get fucking cold sometimes.

He's stalking off in a random direction, but he's downtown so it really isn't so bad. He'll call a car when he gets to wherever he's apparently going. He doesn't really know where he's going, just that he wants to walk and wants a cigarette, and really wants to hear Shane's voice. But he didn't have fun like he promised and then he feels even worse. Cigarettes it is.

Pausing at a corner store, Ilya pushes in. The door chimes cheerfully at his entrance, and he walks up to the counter. He tries to see if he can hear Shane's voice in his head complaining about him smelling like cigarettes or tasting like one as he buys a pack and a lighter, because he stopped carrying them when he tried to quit the first time.

The self flagellation isn't quite as satisfying as he'd hoped, it doesn't have the same effect as Shane's flat affect suddenly rising in irritation when he goes to shove Ilya off him and tell

him to go brush his teeth or change his shirt. Ilya wants the fight, he realizes, not to argue about anything important with Shane, but just to have something to dig his teeth into.

He's not sure he'd ever admit it out loud the way it actually feels true, but he likes having Shane's ever present commentary and thoughts running in his life. God would hopefully strike him down before he admits it, but he's actually taken some of Shane's (Yuna's?) diet advice. He'll never start on whatever the fuck a probiotic diet is though. But he likes hearing Shane moan about the little things Ilya does, likes working him up about leaving his socks in random places or his clothing missing the hamper just by a bit so they land on the floor instead.

If Shane is mad, it means he *cares*. There's someone constant enough in Ilya's life to know that he has a bad habit of laying in bed for hours when he's got days off, or that if he's really not feeling like it he'll go to bed without washing his face. There's someone around to care that he smokes, if he gets whatever disease cigarettes give you. Someone cares that he lives a long, healthy life.

Ilya grits his teeth when he realizes he has a lump in his throat and he's been standing on this street corner and freezing for several minutes. Pulling out a cig, he sticks it in his mouth. He doesn't light it, not yet.

Instead, he takes a selfie, appropriately blurry for maximum aesthetic effect, and texts it to Shane.

Lily

[Attachment: 1 Image]

Jane

Jane disliked an image.

Ilya, ew.

Lily

Don't I look hot :(

Ilya watches with a twisted satisfaction curling in his chest as the typing bubble pops up again and again. He doesn't light the cigarette. Just lets it sit between his lips, rolling it between his teeth. Part of him should probably regret wasting the money on a pack of cigs he's not going to smoke anyway, but, well, it's probably fine in the grand scheme.

Jane

Yes. Very. Regretfully.

Lily

You regret that your boyfriend is hot?

Jane

I don't like that you look hot with a cigarette in your mouth, Ilya.

He imagines hearing Shane say his name in that slightly disapproving tone he always uses and shivers.

Lily

I will not apologize for being sexy, is my natural state.

He considers his phone for a few moments. He doesn't *actually* want Shane to worry.

I did not light it.

Jane

Did you buy cigarettes just to send me a selfie?

Yes? Or, no. Maybe. He's not actually sure. And trying to sort through it is threatening to give him a headache.

Lily

Which answer gets me that ass.

Jane



Call me when you get home. Then we'll see.

And Ilya just grins like a madman as he orders a car because he has a feeling that's code for getting to see Shane flushed and naked over video call tonight.

—

Ilya doesn't even ask Shane this time. He's tired; he got checked into the boards in the second quarter and it hurt like fuck. His ribs are probably bruised despite his insistence that he's fine. But they won, so the locker room is alive. One of the rookies scored two goals so there's talk of all the rounds being in multiples of two, to celebrate.

"Roz, you comin'?" The rookie's face is hopeful, eyes excited.

It's a new thing, people asking if he's going. After he started saying no, started saying his girlfriend said no. He secretly revels in it, loves that he has someone to ask. It makes him feel grounded like nothing else, like Shane keeps him tethered to the world and he'll always be

able to find his way home, even if he were blind. He's started leaning into it whenever someone chirps him about her having him on a short leash, grinning maniacally.

He almost feels bad, looking at how excited the rookie is, but his ribs hurt and he wants to call Shane and get babied over the phone. Something about groaning to Shane about how he's in pain, getting to let his guard down for even a few minutes before they go back to their usual banter is more healing than any medicine could be. He wants to text Yuna and see if she noticed that he was favoring the opposite side, if any of his plays were off. He wants to go home.

Ilya grimaces, trying to paint something like regret on his face. It's unclear if he's successful. "Girlfriend wants me to call her when I get home, I cannot keep her up late."

"Oh come on, Roz, you haven't gone out in weeks," Someone shouts, "We won! You earned it. You can call her tomorrow morning."

He works to sound put out instead of revealing the secret delight he gets from pissing Shane off by buying him things he pretends not to like. "Then she will be mad at me, not answer my calls, I have to send flowers, expensive gifts." He calls back.

"She's got you by the fuckin' balls man." Cliff chuckles, shaking his head.

Ilya shrugs, ignoring the urge to hit Cliff, unlocking his phone so he can check if Shane's texted him. There's a text in their groupchat with Yuna and David, congratulations on his win and a question about whether he talked to the team doctor about that hit. There's nothing from Shane himself yet, though, which isn't so surprising, the Voyageurs have their own game tomorrow against New York so Shane's probably studying. Self-imposed, of course.

Ignoring the shouts of his teammates, Ilya goes to shower, hoping to see a text from Shane when he gets back. It's funny, how he used to try and tell himself he didn't care if Shane would text him or respond or if he would respond curtly. Now, he lets himself long to hear from Shane because there's none of the uncertainty. He's waiting to hear from his *boyfriend*, not just Shane Hollander who he fucked every couple of weeks or months in random hotels and cities.

Ilya changes quickly when he's done, but not before lathering some lotion on his arms and legs. Shane bought it for him shortly before they left the cottage, and Ilya was very pleased that now he got to smell like Shane. Cliff, also back from his shower, stares at him like he's got two heads as Ilya rubs some face moisturizer. It's a Korean one, also from Shane.

Ilya continues to ignore him, because of course he does, because he doesn't want to give in to the bait, just wants to go home. He grabs his phone from above his head, slapping inside the locker a few times to locate it.

Jane

Nice win :)

Ilya fights the smile that threatens to spread over his face. He can see Shane's little smile in his head from the emoji between the two of them, can picture the way his eyes sparkle just a bit when he looks at Ilya. That's just for him. Shane also replied in their groupchat, assuring his mom that Ilya knows when to be seen by medical professionals. Ilya shoots off a text in response to Yuna, reassuring her that he spoke with their doctor and that the prescription is rest and regular painkillers. Not serious enough for her to worry.

Lily

Did you see my Rozanov?

Did it twice.

Jane

They zoomed in on someone crying after lol.

Lily

My skills bring the crowd to tears.

Shane doesn't respond immediately, so Ilya busies himself with attempting to tidy his locker and throwing the worst offenders in his duffel so he can take them home. Shane really is influencing him, he thinks, surprised but not upset. His locker's never been clean.

He tries to be as indulgent as possible before he high tails it out of the arena, chatting with the rookies who make one more attempt to get him to stay. He promises their doctor on site that he'll ice his ribs and take some painkillers, that he'll take it easy tonight and text with an update tomorrow. He even stops to sign some jerseys and take pictures when a few fans spot him in the parking lot. A kid, maybe twelve, stares at Ilya with wide eyes as he signs a jersey with a flourish.

Ilya knows there'll probably be pictures all over social media later tonight of this, and decides he doesn't care if this ruins his "image" or whatever. He indulges the crowd for as long as he can stand to before he's waving bye and a couple of security guards step in front of him so he can leave.

Before he drives off, Ilya checks his phone but there still isn't anything from Shane. He decides he'll just call him when he gets home if he doesn't hear anything else.

Five minutes out from home, Ilya's phone buzzes and he glances over to see the beginning of a text from Shane. He knows better than to text and drive so he swallows the urge to check the message and drives a little faster. There's another text when he pulls into his garage, and this one he checks after turning the car off.

Jane

Why am I hearing rumors that you have a girlfriend who controls you and tells you what to do.

J.J. just said someone told him you haven't gone out in weeks.

Ilya laughs under his breath as he responds and drags himself out of the car. Fuck, his ribs do hurt. He wants vodka, a painkiller, and to call Shane. Maybe not in that order or all at once. He responds while forcing himself to start a load of laundry and placing an order for an egregious amount of food. He imagines Shane nagging him for all the excess sodium as he pays. It's a nice thought.

Lily

She plays for other team, you do not know her.

J.J. should gossip less and practice more.

He knows Shane is probably huffing at the cheap shot at J.J. The man has never been anything but nice to Ilya despite it all, but Ilya can't help it.

Jane

Ilya I'm serious.

If Shane was here Ilya would respond by saying he was serious too. Would crowd into Shane's space and push him around a little, just the way they both like it.

Incoming call from Jane

"Ilya." Shane sounds exasperated, but Ilya takes it in stride, sitting down on the couch to wait for his food to be delivered.

"Shane." Ilya mocks.

Shane is quiet for a moment, and he waits. Knows he has something on his mind. While he waits, he turns on the TV, highlights from the game immediately coming on. He still needs to ask Yuna about his plays specifically.

Shane sighs, and continues, "I don't want you to not do the things you like to do because of me."

Ilya flops down on his back, staring at the ceiling. "I am not," he starts, then trails off.

What good explanation does he have, really, other than that Shane makes him feel quiet. Makes him feel like he doesn't have to chase random thrills and nights getting too drunk with his teammates. Once he learned that he could quiet his brain, could quell the ever present need to push himself and seek risk because it made him feel alive, he wanted all of it he could get.

"I am not doing things because I do not want to. You are a good excuse." He tries.

Shane barks a laugh at that, "I'm a good excuse?"

Ilya hates English at all times, but when he gets frustrated, he hates it even more. He slings an arm over his face as if covering his eyes will make admitting this easier. “If I say *I* do not want to go, teammates will annoy me and say, Roz, you have to go. If I say *girlfriend* says no, they laugh and chirp, but I get to go home and call you. No pushing.”

“Oh.”

Ilya pushes his luck, “I say girlfriend wants to call me at 11 because she goes to bed early, I get to go home from club at 10:30.”

“Sorry I need a good night’s rest after a game and on a regular basis.” Shane huffs, then retreats and his voice on his next words is too soft for the chirp in a way that makes Ilya’s chest squeeze, “Who are you and what have you done with Ilya Rozanov, huh?”

Ilya hums in response, “I am me that doesn’t have to chase risk or danger to feel alive.” It’s vulnerable, it’s more than he wants to say about himself, but this is Shane and he clings to the moment when Shane made them promise to try and be honest about everything they were feeling after the cottage. Then, because he’s still himself, and he’d rather hear Shane laugh, “Or you are just rubbing off on me. I cleaned my locker today after the game.”

“Rubbing off on you,” Shane laughs, before he says, “Well, good, I’ve seen the pictures of your locker on the Bears socials.”

“Ah, you use Instagram now, Hollander?”

“No,” Shane says a little too quickly, “I just—someone showed it to me.”

“You are stalking me on Instagram? Should I be scared you will find where I live?” Ilya’s heart starts beating slightly faster, the way it gets when the tenor of their conversation turns.

“Fuck off, Rozanov,” Shane says too quickly, “Mom made me redownload it for a Reebok thing and I saw it.”

An honest to god giggle escapes Ilya, “I thought someone sent it to you.”

There’s an exaggerated sigh on the other end, and Ilya turns to look at the TV. They sit quietly for a minute and he watches the first of the rookie’s two goals. It really was a good goal. He’s very promising.

“I’m sorry about your ribs.” Shane says softly, breaking the silence. “Are you in a lot of pain?”

Ilya’s chest clenches, and it has nothing to do with the way he slammed into the boards several hours ago now. Known, thought of, cared for, *loved*.

It's always a heated locker room after a win against Montreal. There's a buzz in the room that sustains everyone in the comedown from the adrenaline of the game itself, the entire team is itching to drink, to go out, to really celebrate. The feeling is nothing short of exuberant.

This one had been a close one, too. Won in overtime by a single goal, made by Ilya. What a way to go out against his number one rival and against Boston's longtime enemy. Even with his now-characteristic tendency to skip out on clubbing, his teammates think Rozanov will make an exception for this.

Except he's doing his usual post-game routine of texting fervently. If anything, it seems to be heightened by the win, a sharp smile curling the edges of his lips. The buzzes are barely audible over the din of the locker room but they're there, persistent and regular.

At one point, Ilya barks a sharp laugh, throwing his head back. His thumbs fly across the screen to respond.

Next to him, Cliff watches his face carefully. He's not reading Ilya's texts, he has absolutely zero desire to know what Ilya says to his girlfriend after winning a game like this. There's a strong assumption it's explicit and probably disgusting. No thanks.

Then, after watching Ilya smile and his face flush slightly, something clicks in the back of Cliff's mind. "Roz, you like it. You really like it."

Ilya doesn't tear his gaze away from his phone. "I like what?" It buzzes again and he reads the message intently.

Leaning against his locker, Cliff gestures vaguely at Ilya's phone and the way he's staring at it like it owes him money. "You like that this girl tells you what to do."

At this, Ilya does look up at him. His lips flatten into a thin line, but the way his expression changes can't do much to hide the sparkle in his eye. "I am Russian man, she does not tell me anything."

Someone laughs somewhere else in the locker room and Cliff rolls his eyes, "Dude, you keep agreeing when someone says she has you on a short leash and the other day you straight up said she said no so you couldn't go out with us."

Ilya, for his part, feels slightly caught. It's one thing to admit to Shane that he likes feeling yanked around a little in his life, likes a reminder that Shane is around and cares enough to bitch him out for something. "Is a suggestion." Ilya shrugs. "She suggests, I agree." He grins but doesn't address the leash comment.

Cliff throws his hands up in mock defeat, "Man you're not tied down, you can do what you like. I'm just saying there's no ring on your finger."

Ilya makes a face, "Ring on my finger?"

"Yeah man, like, you're not married."

He considers this for a moment. Then, decides to throw caution to the wind. “If I want to marry her, does this count?”

Someone whoops excitedly at the comment. There are clearly a lot of people watching the interaction now, so Cliff backpedals a little bit. “Jeez, Roz, I didn’t realize it was that serious, my bad.” He pats him on the back, hand heavy, “In that case you’d better listen. Happy wife, happy life.”

Ilya considers him carefully, lips parted, before saying, “Yes, happy wife, happy life. I think she will like this.”

This pulls a startled laugh from Cliff, who decides to indulge his captain, “She probably will, man. Enjoy your evening after letting her know she has that in her arsenal.”

Lily

Are you happy?

Jane

??

That you won?

No, I’m pissed.

Lily

Cliff says happy wife happy life.

Jane

Jane disliked a message.

Am I the wife in this situation.

Lily

Yes.

Obviously.

Jane

I am a happy BOYFRIEND.

Lily

You cannot change the phrase, happy WIFE happy life.

Answer is yes. So happy life.

Jane

Choosing to ignore this.

Let's get takeout and then you can see how many times you can make me finish in an hour.

Because you won.

End Notes

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