

## Reflection in Ice Mirrors

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# Reflection in Ice Mirrors

by [NeverReallyOver](#)

## Summary

Ilya notices something is wrong the second Shane steps inside his condo.

It's not so much the fact that he doesn't return Ilya's greeting. Or how he avoids his eyes while stepping inside, already busy taking off his jacket.

It's the lack of a smile on his face. The dark circles underneath his eyes. His bottom lip bitten raw.

They have been together long enough for Ilya to know everything there is to know about Shane. Even now, almost 7 years after they first started this 'thing' between them, he still learns new details.

But if there is one thing Ilya understands all too well, it's that something isn't right when Shane grows quiet.

Or, Shane breaks down after a rough couple of months and Ilya is there to pick up the pieces

## Notes

Helloooo,

Here we go again. These two have taken over my whole life, I love them so much please send help.

I couldn't get this idea out of my head and so I wrote this in like a day. (A record for me, usually it takes me weeks)

Just a heads-up; this fic contains talk about Shane's need for control and his issues with food. There's a moment where he grows dizzy by lack of food, but everything will be explained and nothing will be too graphic.

If you feel like these topics are too sensitive for you please just don't read it, your health always comes first. <3

With that being said, happy reading!

Edit: no AI was used and I never ever will use it!

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

Ilya notices something is wrong the second Shane steps inside his condo.

It's not so much the fact that he doesn't return Ilya's greeting. Or how he avoids his eyes while stepping inside, already busy taking off his jacket.

It's the lack of a smile on his face. The dark circles underneath his eyes. His bottom lip bitten raw.

The small details demand Ilya's attention immediately.

They have been together long enough for Ilya to know everything there is to know about Shane. Even now, almost 7 years after they first started this 'thing' between them, he still learns new details.

But if there is *one* thing Ilya understands all too well, it's that something isn't right when Shane grows quiet.

He closes the door, eyes fixated on the back of Shane's head.

There's something different about him but he can't put his finger on it.

"You must be happy." Ilya offers, breaking the tense silence. "Was good game tonight."

Shane scoffs.

He doesn't turn around on their way towards the living room, takes a seat on the edge of Ilya's couch instead. Ilya slowly makes his way over, keeping a firm eye on Shane. He hates it when there's something unspoken between them. In a way it feels like before, when he didn't know how to express himself properly in English. When language was a too high barrier.

Now it also seems like Shane speaks a language Ilya doesn't understand.

"You won, no?"

Shane shakes his head, fingers twisting in his lap. "By only one goal."

"So?" Ilya shrugs.

"I wasn't- nevermind."

Ilya's fingers twitch with the need to reach out and *touch*. It hurts to see Shane like this, wallowing in something he doesn't want to name. He's stubborn like that. Always keeping to himself because he feels like his problems are a burden on everyone else.

If only he knew that his struggles are Ilya's, too.

They have long passed the 'we-like-each-other-but-are-too-scared-to-mention-it'-phase. Yet Ilya notices that Shane keeps having trouble when it comes to his own problems.

He has no problem comforting Ilya whenever a nightmare happens. He always knows exactly what to say when the shadows inside Ilya's head grow too heavy to carry. He makes sure that Ilya has everything he needs when he's late, stumbling around the bedroom while Shane patiently waits for him, packed bag in hand.

Even the more reasons why he wants to do the same for Shane.

Aside from the fact that he's so in love with him he has a constant fear he'll blurt it out one day when his chest can't contain the feeling any longer.

He approaches Shane slowly with the knowledge it's smarter to thread lightly when he gets like this. The truth will come out eventually, it always does, but Ilya wants to play his cards right. There is no rushing Shane Hollander.

When he's close enough, he steps between Shane's knees and squats down so they come face to face. He waits until Shane looks at him. It takes a minute but then their eyes meet and Ilya feels so full with love he can feel it creep over his face. His mouth curls up in a soft smile before he can stop it.

"You are sad." Not a question, a statement. "Why?"

Shane shakes his head despite sadness being written all over his beautiful face. Ilya reaches out and softly traces the freckles on Shane's face, over the bridge of his nose to underneath his eyes.

"I'm not sad."

"Liar." Ilya can't help but frown. They promised not to lie to each other a long time ago. It hurts that Shane discards their promise so quickly, despite it being a small lie. "Tell me what is wrong."

Their eyes meet briefly before Shane looks away again. He's biting away at the inside of his cheek, Ilya can see the anxious movement. "Nothing is wrong."

Ilya opens his mouth to argue, an uncomfortable pull low inside his belly, but Shane interrupts him.

"I thought I could choose what we were doing since I've just won. I wasn't really thinking of a therapy session."

His warm hands come up to cradle Ilya's face and his brain flatlines. Maybe he should push the issue some more. But he also knows Shane won't talk until he's ready.

That's why he offers Shane a smile, goes willingly when Shane pulls him closer for a kiss. It's different than their usual, heated, and deep kisses. This one is soft with no rush, sending a surge of affection straight through Ilya's stomach.

"You just said was no big deal." Ilya murmurs against Shane's lips, grinning when he sputters.

"I didn't say that!"

"You did. Said you won by one goal only. Is not special."

Shane yanks Ilya closer by the back of his neck, his other hand twisting in the front of Ilya's shirt. Ilya can't help but laugh. He loves it when Shane gets like this; bratty and pushy, demanding whatever he wants because he knows Ilya will give it to him.

He'll offer him the entire world if he could.

"It doesn't matter because I still won," Shane says, words getting half lost between kisses. He whimpers when Ilya gently bites down on his bottom lip and more heat spikes low in Ilya's belly. His boxers start to feel a little tight. "so *I* get to decide."

Ilya wraps his arms around Shane and pulls him closer until his legs wrap around him. He forces himself to ignore Shane's obvious interest he feels rubbing up against his stomach.

"Oh, so is Mr. Decision-Maker now." Ilya teases, trailing a path of kisses over Shane's face down to his jaw. A gorgeous sound falls from Shane's lips when he tilts his head back, giving Ilya more room to work.

"Shut up."

"I thought you like when I talk."

Shane hums, breathless and oh so beautiful. For a second Ilya forgets that something isn't quite right. That even now, with Shane this close, it's like his body feels the difference. Shane is distracting him and it's working.

They meet in another kiss, this one filthier and with much more intention. Shane paws at Ilya's joggers until he gets a hand inside, swallowing Ilya's moan when his hand find his cock. He works his palm over Ilya's underwear, fingers a bit shaky.

Ilya pulls back enough so he can look at Shane.

A blush kisses the skin where his freckles rest. His eyes soft when he looks at Ilya. Breath a little unsteady. Hair slightly tousled.

Ilya swallows thickly, forces the words down before they can spill.

He's hopelessly, desperately, and deeply in love with the man in front of him yet saying the words out loud is too scary.

"You want me to fuck you?" Ilya asks. Here, with Shane inside his arms, nothing else matters anymore. He doesn't have to pretend with him, doesn't have to put up his walls to make sure nobody can get to him.

Shane leans back an inch, arms thrown over Ilya's shoulders. "Please." Shane answers, voice uncharacteristically timid.

It's unusual for Shane to give in so quickly. Sure, at times he is the pure embodiment of submission and he'll drop to his knees quicker than Ilya can blink, but usually he puts up

more of a fight. In a way it's a little game between them; Ilya will push and Shane will push back until the heat and tension between them snaps into pulsing release.

For Shane to give in so easily is another tell something is wrong.

Ilya doesn't push. Instead he pulls Shane closer for another kiss, pushing his tongue inside Shane's mouth when he opens up oh so beautifully.

They stumble their way towards the bedroom, hands roaming and breath quickening. Ilya stubs his toe against the bed and he curses loudly against Shane's mouth, earning him a laugh so carefree and so *Shane*, he'd stub his toe a thousand times more to hear it again.

Ilya quickly removes his shirt when Shane pulls at it with fumbling hands, a hurried buzz hums underneath his skin. He throws his own shirt carelessly to the side, not one cell inside him caring where it will land. But next is Shane's shirt, the fabric carrying the warmth from his body, and Ilya makes sure to fold the fabric before placing it at the small table next to his closet.

The tips of Shane's ears are pink. "You don't have to do that."

"Yes. You don't like it when I make mess."

Shane avoids Ilya's eyes, arms coming up around his own torso. He looks anxious all of a sudden and Ilya wonders if he did something wrong. He just wanted to help, wanted to show Shane his small quirks are noticed.

Before he can ask, Shane returns into his space. He wraps his arms around Ilya's neck and kisses him with enthusiasm, bodies pressed together from head to toe. Ilya responds in kind, always happy to please his lover. Especially when Shane is brave enough to take the lead like he does right now.

The heat that simmers low in his stomach turns up with every stroke of Shane's tongue against his own, with every brush of his hands over his bare back, with every gentle roll of his hips.

Ilya wraps his arms around Shane's waist and uses his strength to throw Shane on the bed, immediately following by crawling over him. It's no secret that Shane loves it when Ilya takes advantage of his strength. He loves it when Ilya throws him around a bit, bosses him around and puts him exactly where Ilya needs him.

But now he comes face to face with his lover and panic grips his stomach so hard it whitens out his vision.

Shane's eyes are clenched shut. His face white as a sheet while he takes a controlled breath in before releasing it, shaky and wet.

Ilya his hand shakes when he carefully touches Shane's shoulder. "What's wrong?"

"Head rush." Shane's voice trembles when he speaks up. It comes out all soft and just *wrong*, the words making their way inside Ilya's chest where they crush his heart.

Not for the first time does Ilya curse his lack of knowledge about the English vocabulary. The word Shane just said makes no sense to him.

"I- I don't-"

Without opening his eyes Shane wraps his fingers around Ilya's hand still lingering on his shoulder. He frowns when he notices how cold and clammy they feel.

"Dizzy." Shane explains. "It'll pass, just give me a minute."

Ilya stays quiet, suddenly feeling thrown off balance. It all just took such a weird turn of events, so *fast*, Ilya has trouble catching up. Did he accidentally throw Shane too hard, make him hit his head against the headboard?

He isn't familiar with Shane getting dizzy. The whole concept knocked the wind out of him and now, looking down at Shane white as a ghost with sweat pearling along his hairline, he feels like he did when he found his mother. Unresponsive. Body cold when he touched her. Eyes unseeing-

Ilya blinks, forces away the hot tears burning his eyes. This is not the time to panic, Shane needs him. He quietly tells himself this is nothing like the situation with his mother. Shane will be fine in a few minutes. He'll open his eyes again, look at Ilya and smile up at him so lovingly it will force its own form of dizziness onto Ilya.

"Deep breaths." Ilya offers. He presses his free hand against Shane's ribs, softly tracing the skin underneath his thumb.

While Shane focusses on his breathing, Ilya is left with time to take everything in. His eyes flicker over Shane's face down to his shoulders, dusted with freckles Ilya loves so much. They travel lower to monitor Shane's breathing in the fall and rise of his chest.

He frowns and slowly moves his hand over Shane's torso, tracing a path downwards.

Shane lost weight.

And at the feel of it, quiet a bit.

Now feeling even more lost, Ilya shuffles backwards a bit to create some space. He didn't notice it before when they were getting hot and bothered but now he does. From the sharper jut of Shane's collarbone to the dip in his belly.

The noticeable feel of ribs where Ilya traces his fingers.

And the thing is, Shane isn't underweight or anything. He is always in good shape, healthy with muscle at the right places. But now, a few pounds down, it feels like Shane is only a shell of who he is supposed to be.

Anger surges clean through his veins. Anger at himself, at the situation. Because how did he not notice this sooner? He knows about Shane's difficult relationship with food, he *knows* about Shane's deeply sated need for control. He should have noticed sooner.

What kind of partner is he if he doesn't even notice when his lover is struggling?

A small part of him tries to sympathise. They haven't seen each other for a few months aside from the game against each other. Both were too busy traveling to meet up, too far apart. But now here they are, back with each other in Ilya's bed, and all Ilya feels is all-consuming worry.

Something is definitely not okay and he won't stop until he knows what it is.

Shane pulls him back to the present by blinking his eyes open. Ilya immediately bends closer, brings his hands up to cradle his face. The colour has returned to his cheeks and loosens the worst tension inside Ilya's chest.

"You okay?"

"Yeah." Shane tries to sit up but his arms are too shaky, trembling under his weight. Which isn't even *that* much, Ilya begrudgingly admits. Instead Ilya helps him sit up and supports his back with one hand. Cold dread nips at the back of his neck when he feels the knobs of Shane's spine press against his palm.

"Sorry." Shane's voice is quiet. "I don't know what happened."

*Liar.*

"Wait here."

Ilya practically jogs towards the kitchen where he rips open the fridge to retrieve a can of ginger ale. He notices that his hands shake and before he returns he stops to take a few deep breaths. A restless feeling possesses his limbs, as if he could run for miles without having to take a break once. His heart flutters restlessly behind his ribs, wanting to fix, help, do anything to make this horrible situation go away.

When he returns he finds Shane seated against the headboard, blanket pulled up over his lap. His torso is still on display, a cruel reminder to what Ilya almost didn't see because he was too busy trying to get into Shane's pants.

He curses his own selfishness.

Luckily, Shane doesn't notice. He smiles at Ilya when he hands him the ginger ale, eyes crinkling at the corners and this certain *look* unbearably soft on his face. Ilya feels undeserving of it.

"Sorry." Shane repeats after taking a few sips, whole demeanour suddenly shy again.

Ilya frowns and shakes his head. "Is okay. Not your fault."

"Still. It's not very sexy to almost black out before the fun can even begin."

It's meant as a joke. He knows. Yet the words land all wrong, twist around Ilya's lungs until he can't breathe. Nothing about a reality wherein Shane faints is even remotely funny to him.

Even the possibility of any harm coming Shane's way hurts to think about.

Shane seems to pick up on the heavy tension between them, eyes quickly looking away when Ilya gathered enough strength to look at him again. He hates this version of Shane. The anxious, nervous, shy, insecure version instead of his happy, controlled, perfectly boring, bratty version.

"When was last time you ate?"

The words tumble out of his throat before Ilya can stop them. He's done dancing around the subject. Before, he wanted to give Shane space, offer him the opportunity to bring up what's wrong on his own. But that was before Ilya saw reality, before it almost ripped him open.

Shane turns his head to blink at him, mouth opening around words that won't come.

"What?"

"Did you eat? Before the game."

"I-" Pure panic flickers over Shane's face, his fingers twitch against the can of ginger ale. "No. But I was-"

"What about this morning? You had breakfast?" Ilya tries to keep his voice levelled, steady, but the cracks are showing. The idea of Shane not taking care of himself, of him slowly wasting away, does poor things to his heart.

The silence he gets in return is answer enough.

Shame has risen to Shane's cheeks, heating the skin to a deep red. He averts his eyes, the corner of his mouth twitches.

Ilya reaches out and takes Shane's free hand, curling it around Shane's cold one.

"Hollander. Look at me."

The walls Shane has built up with so much care are slowly crumbling down. Maybe he never expected Ilya to notice something is wrong. Or maybe he didn't expect Ilya to act on it. After all, the only reason they meet up is because of the sex. There's no reason for them to do this, to let emotions get in the way.

Expect that Ilya *wants* emotions to get in their way.

Shane isn't just a fun thing to pass the time.

He is Ilya's entire future.

"*Shane*. Sweetheart. Please look at me."

He does, teary eyes finding Ilya's. His heart breaks at the sight, at seeing Shane visibly bending under the weight of the world. Somehow he always feels like everything is his

responsibility.

"You worry me. You are, how do you say it?" Ilya brushes the back of his finger against Shane's sternum. "Smaller."

A tear drips over Shane's cheek before he brushes it away quickly. The sight tugs painfully at Ilya's heart and he takes over, brushing away another tear that falls from his eyes. It wets the pad of Ilya's thumb, a painful reminder of Shane's pain.

"Thinner." Shane whispers. The can of ginger ale is placed on the nightstand, arms shielding him away from Ilya's prying eyes.

Ilya frowns, tracing the soft skin of Shane's cheek. "Is stupid word, not like you at all."

A weak laugh tumbles from Shane's chest but it doesn't reach his eyes. He looks exhausted all of a sudden, like he suddenly realised that there's someone who noticed the burden he is trying to carry all alone.

"Who says you have to be thinner?" he asks, stumbling a bit over the unfamiliar word.

"It's not like that." Shane shakes his head and snuffles quietly. His eyes are still unbearably sad. "It was just a rough couple of weeks, that's all."

"That is not all. You are sad, Hollander."

Shane falls quiet, averts his gaze again. "Can we please not do this right now?"

"I'm not fucking you when you are sad. So we will talk, da?"

Unfortunately, it doesn't even pull a weak laugh from Shane. He simply shrugs, shoulders sagged down in defeat, eyes teary and mouth wobbly with unspoken grief. The heavy emotions highlight the weight loss on Shane's face where his cheeks have sunken in a bit.

"If you just give me a few minutes I'll be fine. We can just go back to what we were going to do-"

Something tender, deeply planted inside Ilya snaps.

The fact that Shane is still thinking about Ilya when he feels like this, that he believes Ilya will only want him around when they are going to have sex, makes him violently nauseous.

"I don't fucking care about that, Shane! I care about *you*."

He sees the exact moment the words slap Shane right across the face. The loaded truth underneath those words seem to choke Shane and he turns his head away, shoulders shaking as he starts to cry.

Ilya's body moves on instinct, crawling closer until he's seated next to Shane. He wraps his arms around him, pulling without actually forcing him closer. He quietly shushes Shane when

he curls closer, presses his face against Ilya's throat. His tears wet the skin but Ilya makes no move to turn him away.

He'd rather die than let go of the one he loves right now.

"Shh. Please don't cry. Is okay." Ilya edges his voice towards the softer side, gently rocking Shane side to side to help him calm down. He isn't very educated on how to comfort someone but with Shane it comes easy. Instinctively, like breathing.

Like loving Shane.

Eventually Shane calms down enough for the cries to subside to something gentler. A few shuddering breaths, soft sniffles, fingertips pressed against Ilya's chest in search of his heartbeat.

Ilya kisses the top of Shane's head, closing his eyes for a brief moment to take in the way Shane smells. The fresh scent of his shampoo and something sweeter underneath, something purely *Shane*.

"Come on, I make you something to eat. Crying on empty stomach is no good."

This time Shane does huff out a weak laugh, breathing out against Ilya's collarbone. Slowly they untangle, leaving the bed behind in favour of Ilya's spacious kitchen. Before they leave the bedroom he hands Shane his shirt, gladly accepting the soft kiss he receives in return.

While Shane takes a seat at the kitchen island, Ilya rages the kitchen cabinets. There's not much to work with, at least nothing that comes remotely close to Shane's diet, so he'll have to work with whatever he's got. At the end he fixes a quick and easy sandwich, stacking the bread with cheese, ham, slices of tomato and pickles, topping it off with some lettuce.

It's nothing fancy but it will do the trick.

Making sure Shane gets something inside his stomach after a too extended period of time.

He slides the plate with the sandwich over towards Shane and also takes a seat. Shane thanks him quietly before picking up the sandwich and takes a bite, chewing slowly, eyes still a little watery where they focus on the countertop.

Ilya places his hand on Shane's thigh, possessively tracing it over the soft fabric of his joggers. It offers him a weird sense of comfort, a reminder that Shane is right here and isn't going anywhere. Not even at the hands of a stupid dizzy spell.

"You scared me." he confesses, smiling weakly when Shane looks at him.

"Sorry. I didn't mean to."

Ilya nods. He knows, of course he knows. Shane would never do anything to intentionally hurt him. Besides, this whole thing isn't even Shane's fault, despite him believing otherwise.

"Why didn't you eat? Before."

Shane puts the sandwich down, fingers tracing the edge of his plate for a minute. Ilya recognises it as a nervous tick, something he does when the conversation grows serious or he doesn't feel comfortable.

"It wasn't on purpose." Shane sighs, deep and heavy. "I just, the past few months have been so hard. We lost in Nashville, then in Florida. We would've lost in Los Angeles too if it wasn't for Hayden making that last shot. My head just couldn't keep up."

Ilya stays quiet now that Shane is finally opening up. The best thing to do is let him get it out, not interrupt him, and offer quiet support. That's why he hums to show he is listening and squeezes Shane's thigh.

Shane continues, voice a tad shakier. His eyes grow wet, too.

"No matter what I did, it seemed like it wasn't enough. We lost, again and again, and I noticed the team grew frustrated as well. I'm their captain, I should be able to-" His breath gets cut off momentarily, a lone tear falling. Shane looks so devastated, like every single grain of hope is drained from his system.

Ilya bends closer and presses a kiss against his head, urging him to go on.

"It kept me up, I tried to come up with so many different strategies but they were never enough. I felt so stupid every time we stepped off the ice, like I failed everyone. I was never good enough."

This time Ilya can't help himself. A wounded sound leaves his chest and he shakes his head, peppering kisses over Shane's temple. "Dlya menya ty — vso, chto mne nuzhno."

*To me, you are enough.*

Shane smiles wetly, obviously not understanding what Ilya just said. But hopefully he understands the sentiment of the words, understands what the underlying meaning of it is.

Ilya switches back to English. "So you stop eating?"

Shane nods. "Not on purpose. But everything became so much bigger than me and I felt like everything was slipping between my fingers. I lost control of so much, so I fell back to my control on food. Because that's the way I've always done it."

In a strange way, it makes sense.

Of course Ilya isn't happy with this turn of events. He knows how thin and dangerous the line can be between 'sensible control over food intake' and 'refusing to eat because that's the only thing I can control'.

But a small part of him recognises that this situation leans more towards the first option. And in this case, that's the safest option out there.

Ilya thumbs over the corner of Shane's mouth, gifting him a small smile when he turns to look at him. "You were hungry before games, no?"

"Sometimes. But usually I'd get so anxious I couldn't keep anything down. It just messed with my head."

"So that is why you are sad. Because you lost few times." Ilya pushes the sandwich closer while they talk, quietly celebrating when Shane picks it up again to take small bites.

Shane shrugs, a tad shy. The worst seems to have passed though, Ilya can tell by the way he carries himself. Now that the truth is out, his body looks looser, lighter. A faint blush sits high on his cheekbones, his breathing is calm, eyes tired but not so unhappy anymore.

"I guess it was just everything that kept piling up. And we didn't get a chance to meet for a while, so I didn't know who to talk to."

The confession settles deep inside Ilya's chest, right where his heart beats. For Shane to admit he missed Ilya, even wanted to talk to him when things grew difficult, means more to him than any trophy could.

He wraps an arm around Shane, squeezes his hip. "Next time you call me, yes? Even middle of night, I don't care."

It won't fix the issue. At least not at once.

There will be more days where Shane will feel powerless, as if a higher power is out to get him. But now Ilya knows and he plans on keeping a closer eye on things. He won't let this happen again, next time he will be there to shield Shane from the worst.

Shane smiles up at him, soft and with something unspoken in his eyes. There's something he wants to say, Ilya can tell, but he seems to decide otherwise. Instead he nods, comes willingly when Ilya reels him in for a kiss. Shane kisses him like he tries to press the unspoken words against Ilya's lips, and for a brief, hopeful second Ilya genuinely believes they're the same words he keeps from Shane all the same.

Still, this probably wouldn't be the right moment to tell Shane he loves him.

There will be another, more fitting moment in the future. He's sure of that.

They pull back and Ilya cradles Shane's face, thumbs brushing the gorgeous line of Shane's freckles.

"Okay?"

Shane nods, hands curling around Ilya's where he's holding him.

"Okay."

## End Notes

Thank you very much for reading!

Kudos and comments make my heart very happy. <3

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