

i'd stop the world if it gave us time

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by [justhockey](#)

Summary

“My - it’s my,” Shane pants, his hand flapping like Ilya’s sometimes does when he’s searching for an English translation that he can’t quite remember. Shane’s heart squeezes painfully. “He’s-“

He wants to say *my boyfriend is on that plane*. He wants to cry, and throw things, and scream *the love of my life might be dying while we stand here*. But he doesn’t. He can’t. His voice can’t find the words, can’t find the strength to speak, and even if he could - would he? Would Shane tell the whole world that for him, it has always been Ilya? Will only *ever* be Ilya?

(Or, the plane scene in The Long Game goes a little differently.)

Notes

Title from *Love Someone* by Lukas Graham.

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

Shane is still breathing heavy as he drops down into his stall with his phone in hand. He's stripped down to nothing but his pads and compression tights, he's slick with sweat from a practice where coach ran them ragged, and he's in desperate need of a shower before he drives home.

But first, Ilya.

He's probably still mid-flight, but Shane can barely contain his excitement. His relief. Because in less than two hours Ilya will be in Montreal for their next game against each other, and Shane is going to get seventeen blissful hours with his boyfriend before Ilya leaves for LA and Shane heads out to Washington. He can't fucking wait to see him. To touch him. To just be close enough to breathe in Ilya's scent and luxuriate in his warmth.

He's missed him so much he kind of wants to peel his skin off.

Shane once thought that nothing could be worse than the waiting during those years when he and Ilya danced around the love they'd been carrying for each other. The aching, and the wanting, and the fear. The never knowing when it would end - when Ilya would get tired of him and find someone else. Someone that he was allowed to want...to love. He'd thought that was the peak of his agony.

But now it hurts even worse, somehow. Because he loves Ilya and Ilya loves him, and even though they're not afraid to say it anymore it just feels like they spend more time missing each other than they get to spend loving each other. Being together. Being *home*.

Because that's who Ilya is for Shane: home. The place he always feels like he belongs, even when the rest of the world is messy.

The notifications pop up on his screen one after the other, and Shane doesn't even try to contain his smile. He has to hide so much, but just for a moment he won't hide this: his happiness. Ilya's messages are sentimental, and sappy, and sweet, and Shane aches with all the love he's holding inside of himself. But then there's something else there, too. Something...off. He's not sure why, can't exactly put his finger on it, but Ilya's words just seem so - so *final*.

They almost sound like a goodbye.

"Holy fuck," Comeau splutters, drawing the attention of the whole locker room. "Have you seen this?"

J.J looks over Comeau's shoulder, his mouth dropping slightly as he reads whatever he has pulled up on his phone.

"Fuck," he breathes, his eyes flitting to Shane for a split second before glancing back at the screen. "The Centaurs' team plane is on fire."

There's ice in Shane's veins, barbed wire in his throat, a noose around his neck.

No. No that's not possible.

"Are you sure?" Hayden asks, his voice cautious.

Shane can feel his eyes on him but he can't bear to look up - can't bear to see the sympathy, the fear in his eyes. He looks back to his phone instead, frantically typing an *are you okay?* in response to Ilya's messages. He holds his breath as he waits, and then...the message won't send. He tries again, and again, and again, but the little red error message keeps popping up.

"No," Shane whispers.

Comeau chimes in again, saying, "Apparently one of the rookies was on Instagram live when there was an explosion--"

"-*explosion?*" Shane's voice is broken glass.

"-and then everyone started screaming and it cut off."

Shane gets the sudden, intense feeling that his body has been plunged into ice cold water. The brutal shock, then pins and needles, and then just...nothing. He's numb. Like there's no blood being pumped around his body because his heart is too busy lying on the floor at his feet, still trying to beat in the rhythm of Ilya's name.

"I have to go," he whispers, his voice inaudible over the ruckus in the locker room. "I have to - I have to...*Ilya*."

He stands up ready to leave, to get in his car and speed to the airport so he can be there when they land. But then there's a careful hand on his shoulder, and Hayden is suddenly standing in front of him, blocking Shane's view of the rest of their team. Or, more likely, blocking the team's view of Shane.

He tries to shake off Hayden's hand, tries to barge his way past because nothing will stop him from getting there - from getting to Ilya. But Hayden's hand remains firm and steady, holding Shane in place and forcing him to meet his eyes.

"Get dressed, Shane," Hayden tells him quietly. "And then I'll drive you."

He glances down, only then realising he's still wearing his compression tights and pads. He nods his head, takes a breath, and begins to undress frantically. His hands shake so violently that he can barely unstrap his pads, and he ends up yanking at them until they fall away from his body.

It doesn't take him long, and Hayden hurried too, so it's only minutes later that they're all but running out of the locker room, ignoring the curious shouts that follow them out the door. Shane doesn't have time. It doesn't matter what his teammates are thinking or suspecting, not when Ilya could...when he could - *god*, Shane can't even think it.

He bounces his leg, taps his fingers against his phone, keeps his head on a swivel as he looks up into the sky for signs of...anything.

“It’s gonna be okay,” Hayden insists from the driver’s seat of his jeep.

“What if he’s - what if-“

“Stop,” Hayden orders. “Don’t do that to yourself. It’s gonna be fine, yeah? He’ll be okay.”

Shane unlocks his phone with shaking fingers, surpassing the frantic texts from his mom and dad and Rose, heading straight for Ilya’s. His most recent. The last he might ever send.

You are the best thing in my life.

I love you. Always. Maybe from the first time I saw you.

I am thinking only about you right now. A million memories. Thank you for those. Whatever happens, I am with you. Safe in your heart. I believe it.

Something rises inside of Shane. Fear, anger, *grief*; a devastating, gut-wrenching sob that cleaves its way out of his chest and steals all the breath from his lungs. He leans forward, cradling his head in his hands as he tries to remember how to breathe. How to even exist. He feels Hayden’s hand on his back but the touch seems so distant, like Shane is outside of his body.

He fumbles with his phone. Tries to call Ilya again and again to no avail. It only serves to panic Shane more, until he’s almost hyperventilating in the passenger seat of Hayden’s jeep while his best friend tries to calm him down, tries to bring him back to earth.

“We’re nearly there, okay?” Hayden updates him. “It’s okay, Shane. It’s gonna be okay.”

He doesn’t remember parking the car, doesn’t remember the path that Hayden pulls him along through the airport. He remembers the chaos, though. The frantic, panicked airport workers, and distressed passengers, and nosy onlookers trying to get a glimpse of Shane’s worst nightmare. He doesn’t think he’s ever going to forget it.

He doesn’t even know if the plane has landed. If it made it to the airport or if -

“Has the Centaurs’ plane landed?”

Hayden’s voice startles Shane out of his panic spiral, and when he finally looks up from the floor he notes that they’re stopped at a security desk. The guard looks entirely unimpressed and uninterested for about half a second, until he realises who is standing in front of him. They haven’t bothered to try and disguise themselves, the thought honestly hadn’t even crossed Shane’s mind, so now two of Montreal’s most prominent players are standing in the airport asking for updates about Ottawa. About Ilya Rozanov.

“I can’t tell you-“ the guard is just about to say, when there’s suddenly a commotion outside.

Shane turns to peer through the wall of windows that look out over the runway, and his eyes immediately lock on the swarm of emergency vehicles that are speeding off into the distance. Shane’s heart is in his mouth.

“My - it’s my,” Shane pants, his hand flapping like Ilya’s sometimes does when he’s searching for an English translation that he can’t quite remember. Shane’s heart squeezes painfully. “He’s-“

He wants to say *my boyfriend is on that plane*. He wants to cry, and throw things, and scream *the love of my life might be dying while we stand here*. But he doesn’t. He can’t. His voice can’t find the words, can’t find the strength to speak, and even if he could - would he? Would Shane tell the whole world that for him, it has always been Ilya? Will only *ever* be Ilya?

He hears the blare of another siren outside. Another emergency vehicle rushing to join the fray.

Yes.

The answer is *yes*.

If Ilya makes it - if he’s okay - then Shane will scream it from the rooftops. He will never spend another second hiding this.

“Our friends are on that plane,” Hayden explains, flashing his NHL ID card like it’s some sort of top level security clearance.

And maybe the guard is a fan, or maybe he sees the terror written into the lines of Shane’s face, or maybe he’s just shit at his job, but he lets them go either way, so Shane doesn’t care about the specifics. He doesn’t care about anything else except being there when that plane lands. Because it will. It will land safe and sound, and Ilya will be fine, and they’re going to live happily ever after. It’s the only option that Shane will entertain. The only truth he’ll let himself believe in.

He’d never lift the cup again. He’d give up hockey entirely and move to some country that’s never even heard of the game. He’d never lace up his skates again. He’d do anything, *everything*, just to keep Ilya. To get more time for them. Just to get one more moment with him, after wasting so much time being afraid to love each other.

He’d stop the world - freeze it in this moment forever - just so he never has to know what a life without Ilya looks like.

Shane promises all of these things to a God he doesn’t believe in as Hayden drags them through the airport.

He doesn’t know what Hayden does or says - what strings he pulls, or promises he makes, or threats he doles out - but Shane doesn’t care. He lets himself be guided along, not paying any attention to where they’re going or who Hayden is talking to; the only thing Shane can think about is Ilya. Getting to see him again, touch him, hold him and never let him go. It’s the only thing he cares about. The only thing in this entire world that will ever matter this much to him.

The plane is already on the ground by the time Shane and Hayden are ushered onto the runway. They’re in a cordoned-off area far enough away from all the action, where the

passengers are to be directed once they de-board the plane. The plane that is currently surrounded by ambulances, and police cars, and fire trucks spraying water onto a smoking engine that's still glowing red from the heat of the fire.

The waiting feels eternal.

It's worse than all the waiting he did back when he and Ilya were too scared to call this what it is...what it's *always* been. Worse than waiting to hear from him after a bad hit sends him down the tunnel. Worse than waiting to see him again after back to back road trips, and too much time, and too many weeks apart.

It's an agony that burrows its way beneath Shane's skin, and through his muscle, and right down into his bones. It carves him open, hollows him out, makes a home for itself in the deepest parts of Shane. It's potent and visceral, an all encompassing fear that everything could be about to change. Because if Ilya isn't okay - if Ilya *dies* - then Shane will die too.

He holds his breath and waits. And waits. And waits.

The first person off the plane is some rookie that Shane barely recognises. Then Haas next, and Bood and Barrett, and then the entire roster of Centaurs players. One by one they clamber down the plane's stairs on shaky legs, their faces clearly ashen and afraid even from so far away. Shane can't bring himself to care, not until he sees -

Ilya.

He looks more afraid than Shane has ever seen him.

And so Shane doesn't think, doesn't consider his actions or their consequences, he just *does*.

He takes off at a sprint, tearing across the runway, weaving between the emergency personnel like they're not even there. His eyes are locked on Ilya so he gets to witness the exact moment Ilya catches sight of him - he gets to watch his eyes widen, and his lips mouth Shane's name, and his arms come up just in time for Shane's body to collide with his.

He feels like a puppet whose strings have been cut as he collapses against Ilya.

Shane can't believe he's real - can't believe he's actually touching him. He locks his arms around Ilya's neck, pressing their cheeks together as Ilya's arms wind around Shane like a safety harness. Like a cage he never wants to escape from. Shane breathes in deep, smells smoke and engine oil and *IlyaIlyaIlya*.

The sob that has been lodged in his chest breaks free the moment he hears Ilya whisper, "*Shane.*"

"I thought you - I thought that-"

"I am okay," Ilya promises, his lips caressing the curve of Shane's cheekbone as he speaks. "I promise I am okay. I am right here, moya lyubov."

“I was so scared,” Shane confesses, and his voice breaks, and he presses himself impossibly closer. “I thought I was going to lose you.”

“Sweetheart,” Ilya groans, his voice thick with emotion as he rubs his hands up and down Shane’s back to try and soothe him. “I am safe. I am here.”

“You can’t leave me.”

The words spill from Shane’s mouth as he pulls back to look at Ilya. They’re vulnerable and frightened, but they’re honest. Real. Ilya can’t ever leave him, because Shane would cease to exist. There is no him without Ilya.

He brings his hands forward so he can hold Ilya’s face between them - Ilya’s beautiful, devastating face. And Shane knows where they are, knows that they’ve probably got hundreds of people watching them, but he simply doesn’t care. Nothing matters more than *this*, more than Shane and Ilya and the way that they love each other.

“You can’t *ever* leave me,” Shane whispers again.

And then he closes the distance between them and kisses his boyfriend. He kisses him and kisses him, and Ilya kisses back. Soft and slow, and filled to the brim with all the words they’re too fragile to say right now - all the love that they can’t contain inside of them.

There’s murmuring around them, people talking and speculating and, no doubt, judging, but Shane just doesn’t care. How could he care about something as trivial as other people’s opinions, when he came so close to losing the love of his life?

And if the way Ilya is holding onto him is anything to go by, then he doesn’t care all that much either. He squeezes Shane so tightly that he can barely breathe, and Shane can feel the panicked rise and fall of Ilya’s chest against his own.

“I love you, solnyshko,” Ilya murmurs against Shane’s lips. “I am so sorry you were frightened.”

“I love you, too,” Shane replies. “So much.”

So much more than he ever thought would be possible, and so much more than he knows what to do with. There isn’t enough room for it inside his heart; he’s overflowing with all the love he carries for Ilya Rozanov and the life that they have fought for. Maybe it’s a good thing that everyone is going to know now, because Shane might have exploded if he’d kept it locked inside of him for much longer. Maybe it’s good that they won’t have to hide anymore.

Because even though everything is going to change now, at least he’s doing it with Ilya by his side. At least he doesn’t have to face a world without him.

“Well you two sure know how to make a scene.”

Hayden’s voice breaks the little bubble they’d been floating inside of, and Shane can’t help but burrow his face into Ilya’s neck in an attempt to hide. In an attempt to steal just another

few moments alone, before every detail of their life together is splashed across the tabloids. Though that feels like a small price to pay for this moment right here.

“Rozanov,” Hayden greets him, and his tone is more polite than Shane thinks he’s ever heard directed at Ilya.

“Pike.”

“Glad you’re alive.”

“Really?” Ilya asks, and Shane doesn’t need to see his face to know that he’s got a single eyebrow raised in disbelief.

Shane can almost hear Hayden shrug as he says, “Felt like the right thing to say.”

Ilya snorts, and Hayden chuckles, and Shane burrows even further into Ilya’s chest. He’s not ready for teasing about this yet. In fact, he doesn’t think he ever will be. He and Ilya will be old and grey, with kids and grandkids and a house full of dogs, and he still won’t want to joke about this moment. He’ll never forget it for as long as he lives, but he doesn’t ever want to have to remember it either.

“Let’s go home, Shane,” Ilya says, his voice fraying at the edges.

Shane takes another minute just to feel Ilya’s heart beating against his own, and then he pulls back, looks his boyfriend in the eyes, and kisses him once more.

“Yeah, let’s go home.”

They can face the rest of the world tomorrow, but right now there is only them. And that is all that will ever matter to Shane.

End Notes

please ignore the ridiculously relaxed airport security and slightly ooc shane, thank you<3

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