

Kiss It Better

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Kiss It Better

by [inexplicablymine](#)

Summary

Clear as day his typed out desperation has an eight letter word underneath its bubble that pops a lead balloon into his stomach.

“we never even kissed.” sits as delivered to one four letter contact that Shane swears should be defined as its own form of curse word in the dictionary.

Or, Shane sends that “we never even kissed.” text after all

Notes

It feels like it's been a year... I am so happy to be back. Fear not my RWRB fans we are still full steam ahead on RWRB fic I hope you will join me on this journey as I become a multifandom writer!

Thank you to the amazing Meg, Bec, Allie, Astrid and Chan for telling me I am not actually crazy and that I should share this with a wider audience.

I had no help with the Russian, apologies if it is clunky!

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

His stomach is perched inside his throat, ready to take a leap out of his body on the off chance his brain can focus on anything long enough for his hands to stop shaking.

The carpet of the elevator blurs in and out of his vision, and he feels like he is moving in a car and stuck permanently to the same spot all at once.

There is the shaky, half typed sentence in a too-short yet too-long text thread blurred between his shattered breath.

“We didn’t even kiss.”

It’s the only thought that’s been running through his brain, stampeding through his body in a damning reminder that he’s only ever been a fuck to Ilya.

He’s only ever been another name at the end of the phone. If Ilya has a fuck in every city, Shane is just Montreal’s hook-up of the month, and it’s not even monthly.

Fuck. It’s been six months, and Shane basically cried on him in the bathroom and begged him to suck his dick.

And now he’s being even more pathetic, fantasizing about a world in which Ilya gives more of a fuck than the one he delivers in the bedroom.

Shane needs to stop. He needs to move on, put this behind him, find some nice girl, and pretend enough that nobody realizes there is something wrong with him.

He can be a hockey robot. He can be boring, fuck maybe boring would be good for a change. The sneaking around and illicit rendezvous are exciting, but the paranoia has settled bone deep into his body. Anticipation for a game never hits the same level of adrenaline rush that comes with a split second room number uttered on ice. The sexting, the innuendo, the Ilya of it all.

He always wonders if it’s going to be different, if one of them is going to put a stop to it, if someone will just —

The elevator jerks to a stop on the ground floor, and Shane’s entire body jolts at the doors opening. He looks down, finally letting his eyes focus on the phone in his hands.

Time stands still and the world falls into itself as every nerve ending in his body lights up with the knowledge that if someone had to pick between fight or flight Shane would always pick freeze.

Ignoring the promise of an escape from yet another bad decision right in front of him, Shane can only gape openly at his phone.

Clear as day, his typed out desperation has an eight letter word underneath its bubble that pops a lead balloon into his stomach.

“We never even kissed.” sits as delivered to one four letter contact that Shane swears should be defined as its own form of curse word in the dictionary.

“Fuck.” Fuck. Fuck. *Fuck.*

How the fuck did he manage to screw this up even further? He couldn’t even get a hookup right. There is a wetness behind his eyes that he can’t acknowledge. Won’t acknowledge.

The screen streaks, and he hastily shoves it into his pocket, furiously wiping away any reminder of the emotions he is not supposed to be having about any of this.

Emotions he can’t have about any of this. He can’t be gay. He can’t find the sex to be more than just a release. He can’t find Ilya to be as ridiculously charming as he is an asshole.

He can’t disappoint his fans. He can’t disappoint Montreal, his parents. Himself. He can’t do this to himself.

He won’t keep doing this to himself.

There’s a rhythm to the way his body forces itself out of the elevator. The same way his feet pound pavement during a run, his ice skates swish across the ice, the same way each foot pushes him out into the hot June air.

He’s not sure how he found himself sitting on a curb on the sidewalk. He isn’t sure he’s had a panic attack this bad in months. He needs to get up and get out of this public space. Sobbing on the sidewalk is not an image he wants to see on Deadspin tomorrow morning.

Pressing his fingers into his eyes until a kaleidoscope bursts underneath the strain of how badly he wants all of this to stop, Shane tries to count his breaths.

He just needs —

“Hollander.” The accent is unmistakable, drawn out vowels, and the lilt to the end of his last name that sounds like it was uttered with a smirk.

Shane blinks away the spots in his vision to see Ilya standing in front of him, his white dress shirt from earlier this evening haphazardly buttoned curls askew.

Shane tries to speak, but the pressure in his rib cage seems to only expand. There is a striking moment where all Shane can think is *not here*. Anywhere but here.

“Hollander, is okay. Breathe, Hollander.”

An impossible task. The world tilts and his vision smudges as the tears he so furiously wiped away earlier strike back with a vengeance.

There is pressure on his shoulder, and then he is looking up into the pale blue eyes of the entire reason he is crying in the first place.

“I c-can’t,” is all he manages to gasp out between rattling inhaleds.

“Yes.” Ilya nods as if announcing it to be true makes any difference. “You breathe right now. Is good, Hollander. Keep breathing.”

Something about Ilya trying to tell him to breathe, as if he doesn’t know how, cracks something open inside him, and the next exhale becomes a huff of laughter.

“Or laugh. Is also good.” Ilya nods along as if he is allowing Shane the opportunity.

The breathing doesn’t come easier. It rattles and shakes, an old car engine being reminded of its purpose to run. Ilya sits with him, one large hand on his shoulder, branding Shane’s body with heat he doesn’t want to think about.

Shane wonders what kind of picture they must make. Two of the world’s greatest hockey players, sitting on the curb, while one has a panic attack. He needs to get off the curb. They are in fucking Vegas, literally anyone can see them.

He struggles to get up and Ilya tries to push him down. Something in his eyes must show how terrified he is because Ilya helps him stumble up from his uncomfortable sprawl, and drags him through whatever side entrance he came out of. He isn’t sure if that would look better or worse for Deadspin, but he can’t think of that now.

Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale.

The world around him comes slowly dragged back into consciousness by the soft tapping of Ilya’s shoe against his own. He’s struck by the reminder of their first All Stars press conference and the small comforts they were able to give each other in public. It’s a sour reminder that they are in public.

“Fuck, I’m sorry I—“ is all Shane gets out before Ilya puts a hand across Shane’s mouth.

“No apology, Hollander. These things happen. Is okay.” Shane tries to say something back, but it’s muffled by the hand clamped across him still.

Shane just rolls his eyes and slumps back against the wall of the back stairwell they have ended up in. This entire evening has been one big fuck up after another. The bathroom confrontation, the begging, the fact that he told Ilya he needed him? Who the fuck did he think he was?

Never mind that he did want Ilya. Never mind that it fucking sucked to not have a string of stupid text messages from Lily in his phone the last six months. Sure, they were usually deranged and overtly inappropriate in polite company, but Shane missed them.

He was fucking worried about Ilya. He wasn’t supposed to worry about Ilya. That wasn’t part of whatever arrangement they’ve been having the past six years.

But maybe Shane wants to change that. Fuck no, he doesn’t. He can’t. Doesn’t matter if he wants it or not.

“Hollander,” Ilya says it softly, and Shane looks up to meet an inscrutable gaze that tells him nothing of what Ilya is feeling.

“We are not in public,” Ilya says next, and Shane just scrunches his face at him. Of course they are in public? They were sprawled across the sidewalk like it was a personal pastime of theirs, and now they are stuck in some stairwell someone could enter at any second.

“Yeah, Rozanov, so?” Shane croaks back.

Ilya leans close, his lips brushing across Shane’s ear, sending a full body shiver down his body.

“So, Hollander, I can’t kiss you if we are in public.”

“Wha—“

“Is what you want, right?” Ilya whispers, his lips meeting Shane’s temple like a prayer.

“I—“ Shane is scrambling for words, but nothing is coming out. He feels ice cold and burning heat all at once.

“It’s not really public,” he mumbles knowing without a doubt if he gives Ilya an inch he will take a mile.

“Is okay to want, Hollander.” Ilya pauses, “You tell me what you want.” Ilya presses his nose against Shane’s cheek, and Shane can feel every exhale as Ilya breathes. Every hitch of breath and the soft warmth as it passes across his face. It’s more intimate than he expects.

“Rozanov, we—“

“No we.” Ilya pulls their faces towards one another until they are nose to nose. Shane should be thinking about so much right now. But the only thing he can think of is the five points of contact in the pads of Ilya’s fingers as they grip at his chin.

“What do you want, Hollander. Tell me.”

“Nothing I —“

“Lie.”

Shane can feel his own mouth click shut against Ilya’s hand.

“Hollander, you text me what you want after we finish. I don’t like unfinished business. So,” Ilya punctuates his following five words by pulling Shane closer with each utterance. An emphasis that Shane will never get out of his head in all future private thoughts.

“Tell. Me. What. You. Want.”

“*You*” Shane mumbles into his hand, hoping that Ilya’s fingers are enough to muffle his words. It’s all Shane can think of, but he knows that’s not what Ilya means. He knows it’s not the time or place, he knows it’s not the right thing to say. He swallows down a confession he’s not really sure he understands himself and utters out the two syllables that he knows Ilya is asking for.

“A kiss.”

Ilya nods as if accepting a piece of constructive criticism from a teammate.

“You ask Hollander. I don’t like to disappoint.”

The touch of lips shouldn’t be unexpected. Shane thinks it might be heat and fury. The frustration of the day in its entirety sits heavy atop his shoulders and all he wants more than anything is something gentle and soothing.

The hand gripping his chin softens and Shane leans into it. There is a barely there brush of lips against his and Shane aches for more. Ilya is giving him a hint of what he really wants.

“Please.” Shane whispers out.

It’s all Ilya needs.

There is a soft sigh and their mouths meet again fully this time and Shane sinks into the kiss. No revelation is made at the tender care that Ilya treats him with. Fireworks don’t explode behind his vision. There is nothing horny about the tenderhearted touch and it terrifies him.

His hands find purchase in Ilyas’ curls, and he pushes himself into the kiss because if it’s the last thing he does, at least he gets this.

It’s not anything like he expects. It’s coming home.

Oh.

It’s coming home to Ilya.

Oh.

And Shane doesn’t know what to do with that.

How do you come home to someone whom you only see a few times a year? Who fucks you good and then says goodbye in the same breath.

Ilya can’t be home for Shane. A person isn’t a fucking home. Fuck. Too much. Way too much. Shane needs this to stop now.

He abruptly pulls out of the kiss and opens his eyes to find Ilya already searching his own.

“Can’t disappoint you, Hollander,” Ilya whispers like it is a secret.

“Почему это обязательно должен быть ты? Почему ты такой идеальный?” (*Why does it have to be you? Why are you so perfect? It’s fucking awful.*)

“What’d you say?” He slurs, almost drunk from the kiss.

“Just called you fucking awful.”

Shane rears back, but Ilya grasps at him.

“Next time, don’t wait until we are finished to ask what you want. Good boys ask. You are my good boy, are you not, Hollander?”

Ilya pats his face and then extracts himself from the entanglement of limbs they have created from the last few minutes of whatever the fuck this was.

He brushes himself off and nods as if satisfied with the encounter before he saunters back out the side entrance of the hotel without looking back.

Ilya leaves him leaning against the stairwell, feeling whiplash from the last fifteen minutes.

It’s all he can think about, though, as he slips into bed that night.

Ilya said *next time*.

End Notes

Sooooo how are we feeling?

If you would like more Heated Rivalry fic, or my RWRB fic updates you can subscribe to me as an author and get fic directly to your inbox! (please do!)

I am but a trash racoon and collect your comments and kudos like my perfect little treasures thank you for joining me into this new fandom I am so excited to be here!

if you would like to talk to me on other socials [Twitter](#) and recently resurrected [Tumblr](#) as well as newly joined [Bluesky](#)!

A new Pomodoro Method chapter is coming!!!

See you soon,

Love,
Beas

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