would you not have survived?

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would you not have survived?

by broccolicheddarchicken

Summary

Shane thought about it, a lot more than he should've. And it showed. It showed in the way he'd begged Ilya to sell his Ducati the summer they got married. It showed in the number of times he'd had to calm his racing mind when Ilya took twenty minutes longer than expected at the grocery store.

It showed in his heaving breaths, now. He was sitting up in his bed, his husband sleeping peacefully next to him, and he felt like he was on the edge of a panic attack.

The plane didn't crash, and Ilya didn't die.

Shane still feels the aftershocks.

Notes

was intended to be much shorter, but it grew past its original scope. title from The 30th by Billie Eilish, no beta.

i hope you enjoy reading this at least half as much as i enjoyed writing it :)

See the end of the work for more notes

Ilya had almost died, but he didn't seem to think about it often. He never brought it up, never mentioned it, rarely talked to Shane about it. He didn't even get antsy when he flew.

Shane thought about it, a lot more than he should've. And it *showed*. It showed in the way he'd begged Ilya to sell his Ducati the summer they got married. It showed in the number of times he'd had to calm his racing mind when Ilya took twenty minutes longer than expected at the grocery store.

It showed in his heaving breaths, now. He was sitting up in his bed, his husband sleeping peacefully next to him, and he felt like he was on the edge of a panic attack.

The dream had passed, obviously. He was awake now. But he could remember every detail of it so vividly. He was on the plane with Ilya, but not *really*, not in the way where he would die too. It was as if he were watching it on TV: a silent, invulnerable observer. The engine went out, and Ilya was screaming, and he could see the anguish on his face, the pain, the terror, clear as day—

Shane felt a single hot tear run down his cheek. He wiped it away quickly, but it was pointless. He couldn't believe he was actually crying over this. He couldn't believe how many times he'd had this fucking dream.

Ilya was *right* there. Even in the darkness, his eyes could make out the movement of his chest rising and falling. He could hear Ilya's soft snores.

There was a world, a universe, where Ilya was *gone*. Where Ilya, stunning and selfless and charming, was turned to nothing but a pile of meat, where he was under the ground, where he was rotting, where he was gone, and Shane was *alone*, Shane was alone and nobody would even know the *hell* he was living through, and this bed would be so cold, so empty, and Ilya would be *nothing*.

Shane's throat was tight. He could feel his heart skipping beats in his chest, could feel the cold sweat on his back. The crying was coming on in earnest now, so he tried to keep it as quiet as possible.

Not quiet enough. He felt the bed move, heard Ilya shifting beside him, and knew he'd fucked up.

"Shane?"

Ilya's voice was roughened and thick with sleep. It took everything Shane had not to lean down and kiss him right then, just for the reminder that he was okay.

"I'm fine. Go back to sleep." His voice was sputtering and weak. Shane was caught.

Ilya sat up. The bed shifted again with the motion, and Shane could barely make out the wild outline of his hair in the darkness. There was an audible *click*, and then the room was filled

with soft orange light. Ilya had turned on his bedside lamp.

Shane blinked a few times to adjust to the new brightness. Ilya was leaned over the side of the bed, the broad expanse of his back flexing as he reached for something on the floor. He sat back up straight, his t-shirt from the day before in his hands.

"Here." Ilya gave him the shirt, and Shane took it gratefully, wiping his face with it. When he was done, he took a moment to just *look* at Ilya, sleep-rumpled and beautiful. His hair was an absolute mess, curls flying in every direction, and Shane had to resist the urge to smooth it down.

Shane very nearly never ran his hands through that hair again. The thought caused a new wave of tears to spill. He looked down into his lap, defeated.

"It's nothing." Shane sniffled. "I'm sorry for waking you, I just—"

He didn't know how to finish that sentence, so he hid his face behind his hands. He didn't want Ilya to see that he was crying over a bad dream like a five-year-old. How embarrassing.

"Hey," Ilya said, and Shane didn't respond. Then Ilya's hands were over his, gently pulling them down. Shane turned his head so they were looking at each other, finding that Ilya's expression was soft. He looked tired and concerned. Whatever residual sleepiness he'd been carrying even a few moments ago, his worry had seemingly erased it.

Those hazel eyes. Shane hated the way Ilya was looking at him—that gentle, earnest expression that always made him feel like his every thought was exposed for his husband to pick at.

"You have nothing to be sorry for," Ilya said. "What's wrong?"

Shane sniffled and looked away again. He could feel tears and snot on his face; he couldn't imagine he looked at all attractive right then. "It's nothing, I just had a weird dream."

"Is not nothing. If it was nothing, you wouldn't be crying right now."

Ilya put one of his palms on Shane's cheek, warm and reassuring, and Shane couldn't help but tip his head into it. He reached up with one hand and grabbed on to Ilya's forearm. *He's right here. He's okay, and he's right here, and you're married, and he loves you.*

Shane shut his eyes before he allowed the confession to pass his lips. "I had that dream about the plane again."

"Oh, *Shane*."

No further explanation was required. Shane heard Ilya exhale above him, and then he was being gently tugged into his husband's chest. He went willingly, letting Ilya wrap his arms around him, letting Ilya tuck his head under his jaw.

Ilya was *warm* and *strong* and very, very alive.

Shane just hated how that dream made him imagine a world where he *wasn't*.

They stayed like that for a long moment, Ilya holding him and Shane breathing against his neck. Shane was sick of that one point in time carrying so much weight in his life—yes, it was scary, but it was *over*. They were together. Ilya was fine. Why couldn't he just get over it?

"Was it the same as last time?"

Shane nodded. He let his frustration show in his voice. "It's so fucking stupid. I shouldn't be thinking about it."

Ilya smoothed a hand over Shane's hair. "I do not like the way you're talking right now."

The firmness caught Shane off guard. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that it is okay, and not stupid. To still think about it." Ilya swallowed. Shane could feel the motion against his temple. "I still think about it."

"But you don't get worried when we fly."

"No," Ilya said, and didn't elaborate.

Another moment of quiet passed.

"The flying doesn't scare me either," Shane said. Maybe because it needed to be said, maybe because he couldn't bear the silence. "But I keep thinking about our life together. How wonderful it is, and… and how we almost didn't have it. Do you ever—"

"Every day." Shane didn't even mind the interruption. Ilya *hadn't* forgotten about it. It did affect him, too. Shane was surprised by how validating it felt to know he wasn't the only one haunted by that goddamn plane.

"Me too." The words were coming in a tumble, now, and he couldn't stop them. "Every time you're out of my sight, it's like I'm holding my breath until you come back."

"*Sweetheart*." Ilya's grip around him tightened. Shane, who was too far gone to be embarrassed, clung openly to his husband. It was very possible he whimpered.

There he was—safe and small and swallowed up by Ilya's arms, his body, his embrace. This was how it was meant to be. Now and forever. The plane didn't crash.

It took Shane a while to speak again, barely whispering. "I know I can't, like, lock you up forever in the cottage or whatever. That would be ridiculous. But sometimes I want to. I think about reading those *messages*, and how that could've been the last thing you ever said to me."

"It wasn't."

"I know, but it could've been," Shane said. "And we were fighting! And it was such a stupid fight. If I hadn't been such an idiot…"

Ilya shook his head. "Was years ago. And it wasn't all your fault. I wasn't telling you anything was wrong, and you can't read minds."

"I should be able to read yours."

Ilya leaned back slightly so they could see each other, and smiled at him. "Okay. What am I thinking right now?"

The attempt to lighten the mood was blatant. Shane took Ilya up on it. "You're thinking that your husband looks really weird with his face all wet."

The line worked: Ilya laughed and kissed Shane's tear-stained cheek. "Oh, no. You look fine. This is not even close to the grossest I have seen you."

Shane wiped his face with Ilya's t-shirt some more. The comment piqued his curiosity. "What was the grossest?"

"Remember when you were very sick two years ago and I had to clean your puke out of the bathroom wastebasket?"

"Ilya!" Shane's face got hot. "That wasn't my fault."

"And neither is this, but you asked."

Shane sniffed a few more times. His crying had mostly subsided, and now he had that empty, tired, hiccupy feeling that came after. He wanted to go back to sleep, but he wasn't sure he'd be able to if he tried right now.

Instead, he looked up.

"I'm so glad I have you, Ilya. I'm so glad you're okay."

Ilya reached up and gently ran his knuckles along Shane's cheekbone. "Me too." He kissed Shane's forehead. "You are the best thing I have. Always."

Shane nodded slowly. "You're the best thing I have, too."

The concern hadn't left Ilya's face. He took both of Shane's hands in his.

"You know, this is what I prayed for."

Shane inhaled sharply, then hiccuped, mostly from the surprise of Ilya's words. "What?"

"On the plane. I prayed that I would get the chance to love you properly, and now I have it. It puts things in perspective, I think. How little most things matter. I could put up with anything, as long as I have you."

How did Ilya just *say* things like that?

Then again, Shane basically felt the same. That was why he proposed. He wasn't sure how to express that feeling without just spitting back what Ilya had just said, though, so he went for something simpler: "I love you so much."

The corner of Ilya's mouth turned up in a smile. "I love you too."

Shane finally cracked. He looped his arms around Ilya's neck and pressed their mouths together. The kiss was slow and deep and tender in a way Shane was addicted to, one he could've indulged in for hours, were Ilya to permit it.

When he pulled back, it was slow. He looked up at Ilya and knew his gaze must have been soft by the hint of flush on Ilya's cheeks. It wasn't every day that he made Ilya blush, he had to savor it.

"Come on," Ilya said. "We are going to the living room."

"What?"

"We're going to watch that TV show you were talking about yesterday."

"Oh. Okay." Shane vaguely remembered mentioning the show—some new medical drama that one of Rose's former co-stars had the lead role in. He wouldn't normally be one to watch TV so late, but he still didn't think he could fall back asleep right then. Mindlessly, he reached up and smoothed a few of the wild flyaways in Ilya's hair. Ilya smiled and exhaled sharply through his nose, like he was amused.

"What?"

Ilya shook his head a little and looked down. "You are very sweet sometimes, that's all."

They went to the living room together, pausing in the hallway to kiss again, and got comfy on the couch. It was raining outside, fat droplets pelting against the floor-to-ceiling windows. Shane could feel the warmth of Ilya's body next to him. He tucked his feet under his legs and pulled a blanket they kept on the couch over himself, then snuggled up to Ilya's side.

Ilya, for his part, observed the entire process. "Are you nesting?"

"Shut up."

Anya chose that moment to stir in her little bed by the fireplace—Shane didn't know if it was the rain or the talking that had woken her. She lifted her head, yawned, noticed that her dads were up and about, then immediately got up. Her little paws tapped against the floor as she ran over to the couch, and jumped into Shane's lap.

"Oh, hi." Shane ran his hands over her body as she wiggled in excitement, ecstatic for the attention. "Yes, hello. Settle down."

Anya did not settle down. She kept begging for attention that she already had.

"You're very demanding, you know that? Just like your papa."

"I'm not demanding!"

"Hush. Put on the show."

For once in his life, Ilya obeyed. He put on the first episode of the TV show, and Anya eventually curled up against Shane. The show might've been terrible, or it might've been great—Shane barely watched. Instead, he focused on Ilya's smell, masculine and familiar and homey. He focused on the rise and fall of Ilya's ribs as he breathed, the catch of warm hair under his palm when he put his hand on Ilya's chest.

Ilya was right there, and he was *his*, and they were together.

Finally, curled up on the couch with his head on his husband's shoulder and a dog in his lap, Shane was able to fall back asleep.

End Notes

Thank you so much for reading! Every single kudos and comment is so so very appreciated :)

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