wrap me up in your love (just don't let me fall)

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/76548966.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV), Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander, Ilya Rozanov, Rose Landry, Miles (Heated Rivalry)
Additional Tags:	Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Episode: s01e04 Rose (Heated Rivalry), Alpha/Beta/Omega Dynamics, Alpha Ilya Rozanov, Omega Shane Hollander, Angst, Hurt/Comfort, Emotional Hurt/Comfort, Caretaking, Mating Cycles/In Heat, Non-Consensual Drug Use, Explicit Sexual Content, Shower Sex, POV Alternating, Alpha/Omega, Omega Verse, Protective Ilya Rozanov
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of Eye of the Storm
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-27 Words: 12,072 Chapters: 1/1

wrap me up in your love (just don't let me fall)

by writerbri

Summary

"Someone did this to me."

Ilya can only nod, knowing that there's not much else to say. What comfort can he offer, when he can only imagine the turmoil that Shane must feel?

"You're safe now," he offers, hoping that it can offer some measure of solace.

Shane's eyes flit back to him, wide and swallowed up by a tangle of emotions.

"I always was," he says, his voice hushed. "You were there."

• • • • •

Shane is drugged by heat inducers at the club, and Ilya is there to help him through it.

Notes

I've had this fic in the works since episode 4 came out, and I really hope that at least someone likes it. I've been writing and rewriting it over and over again. I'm not going to lie that it deals with a fairly heavy topic. Please read the tags before reading the fic. You can also read the disclaimer below for a little more details if you don't mind mild spoilers.

Title: Eye of the Storm - Ivy & Gold

▶ **Disclaimer (Mild Spoilers)**

See the end of the work for more notes

It happens slowly. So slowly that it takes some time before he even notices and even when he does, he dismisses it easily. The club is hot, the drinks are strong, and he played not two hours ago. Anyone would get a little overheated, and the slightest haze clouding the edges of his mind has to be from the alcohol.

His heart is beating much quicker than it should, but he tells himself that it's Rose. Her body pressed close as they dance. The scent of her perfume. Her soft skin on his.

It doesn't have anything to do with *him*. It can't.

It never even occurs to Shane that it could be something else. Not until the floor seems to suddenly shift beneath him, sending him staggering to the side. The thudding music drowns out Rose's gasp as her hands clutch at him, even though she's far too small to share his weight. His drink slips from his hand, spilling out on the floor as he fights to regain his balance. Rose's eyes are wide and worried even as Miles laughs and teases Shane for being a lightweight, nudging at his shoulder.

He must be.

He never drinks.

Shane twists away from them, their touch suddenly unbearable. He feels trapped by every dancing body surrounding him, every scent somehow growing stronger by the second. He can't breathe here. He can barely even *think*, feeling his panic grow and grow until Rose's hand wraps around his arm and she tugs him through the crowd with purpose.

He follows her, his feet dragging more than they should, all the way back to their table. Shane lurches forward and sinks onto the booth, his stomach churning and a deeply unpleasant warmth slithering through him as he buries his face in his hands.

Rose's hand rubs at his back gently and cold guilt washes over him as he finds himself longing for a different touch.

Shane can't forget that *he* is still there, somewhere, if he hasn't already left with the pretty blonde. He's struck by a sudden anguish at the mere thought, his breath catching as tears sting at his eyes. It isn't his right to feel this way, Shane knows that. He tries to stop, but he feels ensnared in an impossible, unbearable spiral. The longer Rose touches him, the worse it seems to get. Shane has to fight the awful urge to push her hand away, agitation and desperation filling him in equal measure.

Desperation for *what*, he doesn't know.

"Here you go, handsome," Miles's voice just barely reaches him as something cold is pressed into his hand.

Shane drinks greedily, the chill of water offering a brief distraction. Rose's hand finds his cheek once he sets the empty glass aside, tilting his face to meeting her gaze. There's a furrow in her brow and her eyes are searching his own. He tips his face into her touch instead

of away, trying to force himself to find it soothing. It doesn't work, and he doesn't understand why his frustration is building.

"Focus on me, Shane," Rose says, giving his cheek a light tap.

Shane blinks the haze from his vision, not realizing that he was drifting.

“Am I drunk?” he asks, his own voice distant to his ears.

He doesn’t think so. He’s been drunk before, and it felt nothing like this. He's not slurring his speech or overwhelmed by the usual nausea he feels when he drinks too much. There’s just a growing need spreading through every inch of him, quietly aching for something that he can’t even name. If he didn’t know any better, he would think that he was in–

Shane shakes his head, refusing to even let the thought take root. There’s no reason to consider it, because it’s impossible.

But Rose must wonder too, because she leans in close and trusts the music to mask her words.

“Did you take your suppressants?” she murmurs in his ear.

He nods without hesitation. It isn’t even a question because Shane is on the strongest suppressants available, stronger than most specialists recommend, and he never misses a dose. Not only would he be in a world of trouble with the league if he acted so carelessly, but he would lose every inch of ground he managed to gain as one of the only omegas in professional hockey and the only captain at that.

“That can’t be it,” he mumbles, reaching up to rub at his eyes.

There’s an ache building in his head, and he feels his hands trembling. It’s all too much. Shane feels a frantic urge to be anywhere but here. Pheromones are bleeding into the air around him, thick and pungent and impossible to ignore. His suppressants usually help, but it's as if he didn't take them at all. It's overwhelming and sickening all at once, and Shane would already be running for the door if he thought he could rely on his legs to carry his weight.

Rose’s hand is blessedly cool as it presses to his forehead, but that’s all the relief it brings. There’s nothing it can do for the unrelenting need deep in his bones.

It isn’t the touch he craves.

Her eyes betray her doubt, and she casts a wary glance in Miles’s direction. Shane doesn’t bother to pay attention, his eyes fluttering shut as he tries to breathe through the panic that’s slowly creeping in.

You know what this is, his mind tells him. He tries not to listen, determined that his denial can win out.

Before Rose or Miles can say anything else, Shane feels it.

There’s no explanation for it. He just knows exactly which direction to turn his head, sensing the approach of the only person in the world who can steal the breath from his lungs with a single look. Shane slowly lifts his head, opening his eyes with some effort, and he’s there. Standing not five feet away with a stormy expression in his eyes and a tight clench to his jaw. No one else by his side. No dancing blonde or drunken teammates. Just him.

Ilya.

It isn’t something he can begin to explain. The club is a chaotic blend of scents, thrown out carelessly by alphas and omegas trying to get laid. No one would expect or even believe that a single one could be picked out from the rest.

Not even Ilya, until it happens.

He’s on the verge of leaving the club when a singular scent stops him in his tracks. It's all too familiar. Sweet cream and rich plum interwoven with spiced vanilla. A scent he's lost himself in countless times.

There’s no mistaking it as it drifts through the air, far stronger than it ought to be and tinged with a bitter edge that redirects his path on sheer instinct. Ilya doesn’t bother feigning remorse to anyone he pushes out of his way, his mind on one track alone right to the source of that scent. All the way to two figures hovering around a table, exchanging uncertain looks over a slumped form.

Ilya stops short as the scent grows more caustic with fear and panic, and there’s a need deep within in him to make it right just as Shane lifts his head and those dark, beautiful, miserable eyes find his own.

Rose Landry swiftly moves out of the way as Ilya draws nearer, knowing without a doubt that something is terribly wrong.

It's dangerous. He knows that it is. He would never usually approach Shane like this, no matter his level of distress. Anyone who sees them could make any number of assumptions about the way Ilya looms over him, ducking his head to breathe in his scent now that he’s closer.

It isn’t right, and he can’t put a finger on why.

“What happened?” he demands, his voice just loud enough to carry.

Rose’s eyes are round as they shift from Ilya to Shane and back, and he can only imagine the conclusions she must be drawing.

“We were out there dancing with Miles and he almost fell down,” she says, and there’s no mistaking the concern in her voice. “We thought he just drank too much but this isn’t that. I think…”

She trails off, her eyes flitting around the club. It takes everything in Ilya not to demand an end to her sentence, and it's only the sensation of a too-warm hand wrapping around his wrist that stifles the rumble in his chest. His head snaps to Shane in an instant, taking in his flushed cheeks and the glistening tears in his eyes.

"I took them," Shane says, his voice thin and shaking.

"His suppressants," Rose clarifies, stepping closer to be heard. "I asked and he says he did but–"

But they all know how it looks. The sweat gathering at his temples. The color high in his cheeks. The rapid rise and fall of his chest. The warmth radiating from his skin.

"I swear I took them," Shane says, a tearful hitch in his voice. "I always do."

"I know that," Ilya says, because it isn't a question in his mind.

Shane would never be so reckless. Not with his body and certainly not with his career.

"He must've been dosed," the friend, Miles, speaks up as he steps closer.

Ilya's eyes snap to him, rage already stirring deep in his chest. Whatever Miles sees in his eyes stops him in place before he can get any closer.

"Dosed?" he repeats, barely restraining himself from draping his body over Shane to hide his vulnerable form from every hungry eye in this club.

Moments pass in tense silence, and Ilya's eyes flit between them in a silent demand for an explanation.

"Heat inducers," Rose finally says, an underlying anger in her own voice. "I've heard of it happening in other clubs, but never here. I would have never…"

She trails off, her bottom lip trembling as she glances down at Shane.

"It's as easy as dropping a pill in someone's drink when they're not looking. They're strong as hell, and suppressants don't do shit to help," Miles adds on.

Ilya can't deny that he's heard of such things, but it's nothing he has ever witnessed. The mere thought that someone did this to Shane. That someone *drugged* him…

"He needs to leave," Ilya says, his voice leaving no room for argument.

I need to leave, he does not say. *Before I tear this place apart to find whoever did this*.

Rose looks ready to make it happen, nodding at Miles and reaching over the table to snatch up her tiny purse.

"*No*," Shane says, his voice lined with irritation, as if he didn't hear a word any of them said. "That's not what's happening, okay? I just got… overheated."

Ilya doesn't have time for this. He needs to get Shane out of this club before every person in his vicinity becomes a threat, alpha or not. Bending over and gently gripping his chin, Ilya makes sure that Shane is looking in his eyes and nowhere else before he speaks in a low yet commanding voice.

"You are in heat, Hollander, or close to it," he says, refusing to soften his words when their time is limited. "It is not a choice. You are leaving."

Ilya leaves the rest out, that he will carry him through the door if needed, no matter how much attention he may attract. It must show in his eyes, because Shane relents with a silent, permissive nod. Ilya grasps his arm, hauling him to his feet and wrapping an arm around his waist to steady him.

"There's a back door," Rose says, folding Shane's jacket over her arm. "I use it when there's paparazzi out front. Miles is going to bring the car around."

Nodding at her to lead the way, Ilya guides an unusually clumsy Shane through the crowd and hopes that everyone will be too clouded by lust and alcohol to notice. Their path through the club is quick, and it comes as a relief when Rose pushes the door open to the cool night air. They step out into a narrow alley and Ilya casts his eyes around to make sure they don't have an audience.

Shane shudders at the change in temperature, leaning even more into Ilya's side as if driven by instinct to seek the closest heat source. It takes every bit of Ilya's restraint not to turn his head and press a kiss into his hair, knowing that it's not his place. Not with his girlfriend standing less than two feet away from them, bouncing impatiently in her glittering dress.

"I'm sorry," Shane says, noticeably distressed.

Ilya shushes him, giving his waist a light squeeze.

"Not your fault," he says quietly, the words meant for his ears alone.

Rose must hear anyway, and she glances sidelong at them. There's something in her eyes. A calculating look that sets Ilya even more on edge. He resists the urge to bare his teeth at her, knowing that it isn't his place to decide who does and does not have right to look at Shane in this state.

"I never would have told him to come here if I thought this would happen," she says, her words woven with guilt. "I've been here so many times, and I thought it was safe."

Ilya's instinct is to snap back that it clearly isn't safe, but he knows at heart that it is not her fault.

"Your friend was right. The world knows about Hollander. It was someone's idea of a prank."

Or worse.

Ilya refuses to let that thought linger. If he let himself wonder too long if someone did it to Shane on purpose and with ill intent, it would take more restraint than he possesses not to

turn back and do something about it.

“Where should we go?” Rose asks as headlights wash over them and a dark, sleek Mercedes creeps up to where they stand.

Ilya squints at her, wondering why she is asking him when it's her boyfriend in this state.

"You have apartment?" he says.

Rose shakes her head as Miles climbs out of the car.

"We're staying in a hotel," she says, opening the back door before stepping aside to give him space. “There’s always photographers there.”

Ilya moves carefully, gently lowering Shane into the car. There's no doubt in his mind that their time is limited. Shane's skin is covered by a sheen of sweat and his eyes are clenched shut, his body tight with tension as if he can resist this cruelly induced heat by sheer force of will.

“His home,” he decides, knowing it's the only space where Shane will feel truly safe.

“I haven’t been there,” Rose sighs, combing her fingers through her hair anxiously.

It is an unexpected revelation, but there isn’t time to dwell on it. Closing the door carefully, Ilya makes his mind up in the space of a mere second.

“Keys,” he says, holding his hand out to Miles.

He opens his mouth to argue but Rose cuts him off with a murmur of his name, earning a roll of his eyes before he slaps them into Ilya’s hand. He doesn’t spare either of them another glance, trusting that they can find their way into the car or be left behind as he circles around to the driver’s seat. He really doesn't care either way. Music blares from the radio as soon as he turns it on but Ilya cuts it off quickly as a pained noise reaches his ears from the backseat.

“Hey,” he hears Rose murmur, and Ilya blocks them out entirely as he peels through the streets of Montreal.

No one says a thing, tension thrumming in the car while he weaves his way through traffic to a destination he knows all too well. Ilya doesn’t bother trying to think of an excuse, as they draw nearer to Shane’s building. His only focus is on the scent that grows stronger and stronger with every passing second.

Mine, his body and mind roar in unison.

Ilya clutches the steering wheel in an iron grip, determined to keep a tight rein on the instincts that urge him to lay claim to what has been his so many times. He just has to get Shane to a safe place. Anything beyond that is not his privilege to bear.

The brakes protest loudly as he screeches to a halt outside of a familiar door.

“Is this–”

Ilya doesn’t give Rose a chance to finish, not even bothering to turn off the car before leaping out. Shane’s door is already half open before he can get to it, the proximity to his home undoubtedly driving him to seek comfort there.

“Careful,” Ilya says, catching him as he stumbles from the car.

Shane grips at his shirt, his forehead hot where it presses against his neck. Ilya stills in place, unable to move as Shane breathes him in so near to his mating gland, so close to scenting him. He shifts his attention to the other side of the car, where Rose is climbing out with a curious expression directed their way.

Not angry. Not suspicious. Only curious.

“Come on,” he says, pulling away just enough to direct Shane towards the door even as he whines quietly.

He slumps into his side again, forcing Ilya to hold him close as they make their way to the door. Rose waits there, her brow furrowed at the keypad next to the door. Ilya should tell Shane to give her the code, he knows, but the numbers find their way to his lips before he can help it. She hesitates ever so slightly, her frown deepening just before she keys in the code he gives her. A quiet click sounds, and then Rose hauls the door open and steps aside to let them through.

If Ilya were a smarter man, or perhaps a better one, he would let her take it from here. They would struggle to get up the stairs, but they would make it. Shane doesn’t need him to take quite so much of his weight, and his girlfriend can surely handle what is going to be a very difficult night for them both.

Ilya has no part in it.

Yet he cannot bring himself to let go just yet, and he digs in the pockets of Shane’s pants to find his key ring. Rose takes it without hesitation when he holds it out, climbing the steps ahead of them. Miles is nowhere to be seen now, and Ilya suspects that the man is eager to wash his hands of the complicated situation. He’ll have to call a cab to take him back to the hotel, but Ilya needs to see Shane inside and safe before he goes.

He feels a wave of calm once they step inside and the familiar scent of Shane’s home washes over him.

Ilya doesn’t spare Rose a second glance, tugging Shane along until he can gently lower him to the couch. Bringing him here is one thing, but he isn’t about to walk them up to the bedroom where he’s taken Shane apart countless times. Not when he knows what is bound to happen there.

“I should go,” Ilya says, stepping away even as every instinct screams for him to stay.

Shane's eyes lift to his, glassy and pleading, and Ilya bites down the urge to say that it isn't fair to look at him that way.

He did not walk away that day, right into the arms of a beautiful actress. The same woman who stands so near to them now, the scent of Shane lingering on her and the same in reverse. Ilya has already done too much. Revealed too much.

He has to leave now, before it gets worse.

"Wait."

It's Rose Landry's hand that catches his wrist, stopping him from getting far. Ilya doesn't know what to do with that, his eyes flitting over her open expression. There's no anger there, or disgust. No surprise at all, in fact.

Ilya doesn't know what to make of her.

"He needs help," she says.

"Yes, you are here," Ilya says, putting the obvious into words.

"I'm a beta," Rose says, glancing at Shane before looking back at him. "Not exactly what he needs."

Ilya is no fool. He can see where this must be leading.

"He has things," he says dumbly, speaking the first words that come to mind.

Rose's eyebrow lifts into a perfect arch.

"Things?" she repeats.

"Things for omegas, to help with heat," Ilya says, unwilling to describe the many toys that Shane has stashed away in his bedroom for this exact purpose.

Her head tilts to the side, one corner of her mouth lifting in a slight smile that throws him off guard.

"Are we going to pretend like that's something that Ilya Rozanov is supposed know? Just like you somehow know where he lives and exactly how to get into his apartment?"

Ilya blinks down at her, thrown off by her tone as much as the questions she asks. There is an implication in her words, and a true one at that, that should make her angry. Yet she isn't, somehow.

"It should be you," he eventually manages to say.

"I'm not sure I agree," Rose counters.

"Don't I get a choice?"

Their heads turn at once to Shane where he sits, his elbows resting on his knees and his half-lidded eyes fixed on them. He's more aware that Ilya would expect, considering what damage the inducers must be doing to his system. Rose crosses the room as Ilya watches, perching on the edge of the coffee table and reaching out to brush her thumb along his cheek. Shane's eyes flutter shut, his face leaning into her touch. Ilya nearly turns away, but watching them like this almost feels like a necessary punishment. A lesson that he needs to learn.

He never should have come here.

But then…

"I think you already chose," Rose murmurs, her voice just loud enough for Ilya to hear.

Shane's eyes open at that, but he doesn't look at her. Not at first. He seeks out Ilya, his gaze swallowed up by a need that goes beyond whatever physical urges he's experiencing. It lasts only a few seconds, but whatever illusions Ilya had about leaving are long forgotten by the time Shane turns his attention back to Rose and a pained expression steals over his face.

"I'm sorry," he says quietly.

Ilya can only watch, his eyes fixed on Shane's face, as Rose leans in to brush a kiss over his forehead.

"I already kinda knew," she says, drawing away to cup his face in both hands. "I just wasn't sure you did."

Shane's hands lift, wrapping around her wrists as he stares at her fondly. Whatever else she says is whispered in his ear as she tugs him into a hug before rising to her feet, turning to face Ilya. His mind spins at the sudden turn this night has taken, from the emotional blow of seeing Shane across the crowd dancing with his girlfriend to now. Watching their apparent break-up play out right before his eyes.

"Take care of him," Rose says to him, a serious look in her eyes.

He only manages to nod once as she passes him by, inexplicably reaching out to squeeze his arm.

And then they're alone.

Shane holds his breath as Rose's steps fade slowly until the quiet click of the door drives the final nail into the coffin of their short-lived relationship. His mind is a jumble of thoughts, aside from the havoc being wreaked on his body, chaotic and slow moving all at once.

Rose knowing. Rose leaving.

Ilya staying.

Ilya.

Shane can feel the heat settling in, his body aching for what he knows is soon to come. His fingers itch to reach out and touch. The scent of him is a grounding force, cinnamon and sandalwood with something sweet woven through. So near and yet too far away all at once. Shane longs to bury his face in his throat and show him just how greedy he can be.

The small taste of him outside of the car was far from enough.

But Shane can't take for granted the fact that Ilya is still there. Just because he hasn't left yet doesn't mean that he won't, and the last thing that he wants to do is back him into a corner. He'd never forgive himself.

"You don't have to," he says, staring at the ground somewhere near Ilya's feet. "I can do this on my own."

He doesn't quite know how. An average heat is manageable but this... this is something else. Shane realizes that he truly has no idea what to expect. This hasn't ever been a possibility for him.

"Is that what you want?"

Shane's breath catches, remembering nearly those exact words from what seems like a lifetime ago. They were painfully young, unable to anticipate the chain of events they would set off in a handful of minutes under the lukewarm spray in those shitty stadium showers.

"Is what you want?" Ilya asked when Shane suggested that they forget what happened.

He lied then, and Ilya saw right through it.

He could lie again now, but the results would be the same.

As much as he doesn't want to lie, Shane presses his lips together against the honest words that threaten to spill out. It's so tempting to plead for him to stay. The last thing he wants is to be alone right now, but what right does he have to ask Ilya for that? This happened to him, and it's his own problem to solve.

All at once, the cold reality of the situation hits him.

Someone did this to me.

"Hollander?"

They used what I am against me, just to be cruel. Or worse.

It could have been so much worse.

"Look at me," Ilya's voice breaks through the haze clouding his mind, his scent closer now.

He can't.

He's staring at nothing at all, his chest growing tighter and his vision darker with each passing second. Distantly, he feels something touch his hand. A solid grip, familiar and warm. Trembling, tearful gasps reach his ears, and it takes far too long to realize that they're his own.

Gentle fingers brush the back of his neck, and Ilya is there. Their foreheads touch. They're closer than they've been in months.

"Breathe," Ilya murmurs, and Shane has no choice but to do just that.

The black spots in his vision slowly clear as he measures each breath, in through his nose and out through his mouth. Ilya's scent floods his senses, rich and warm and perfect. There was a burnt edge to it before, during the game, growing worse every time he refused to look Shane's way.

That's gone now.

"Good," Ilya praises, and a wave of want washes over him.

Shane feels like such an idiot then, for ever fooling himself into thinking that what he had with Rose was comparable to this. He likes her, more than almost anyone. He could love her, he knows.

But not like this.

"What do you need?"

You.

Shane swallows the word down before it can escape, still haunted by what happened the last time they were this close.

How he ran, his fear drowning out everything else, leaving Ilya behind in spite of the pain in his eyes. The unspoken plea for him to stay, hidden behind the way he spoke his name. Not Shane. Not again.

Hollander, as if he was trying to fix what wasn't a mistake at all.

Shane would do anything, *give* anything, to go back and do it all differently.

"Shower," he manages to say, knowing that Ilya is waiting for an answer.

He needs to wash it all off. Not just the sweat on his skin or the slick between his thighs, but the lingering scent of every body he brushed in the club. Not knowing if one of them might be *them*. Whoever did this to him.

He needs it gone.

"Okay," Ilya says.

Shane suppresses a whine of protest when he draws away, and Ilya pulls him to his feet before he has the chance to orient himself. He relies on the familiarity of his home to make his way to the stairs. The moment his foot finds the first step, Shane feels Ilya there. A steady presence behind him, a hand hovering over his back as if prepared to catch him if he falls. He can feel the heat of it, even if Ilya isn't touching him.

He wishes he would.

His shirt is the first to go, as soon as he pushes off of the last step. Shane doesn't bother seeking out his hamper, uncharacteristically letting it drop to the ground as he shuffles towards the bathroom. His shaking hands fumble with the button on his pants, his frustration rising as he blinks away the tears that gather in his eyes.

"You need help?" Ilya asks as he reaches the doorway.

Shane just shakes his head, even if he's tempted to let Ilya take over entirely. He doesn't want to have to think anymore, but the prospect of letting go right now is terrifying.

He leaves the door open, unwilling to shut himself away entirely. Ignoring the worsening cramps low in his belly, Shane peels away the rest of his clothes and plunges himself into a too-cold shower. His shivering intensifies almost immediately, but he forces himself to stand under the icy fall of water. Trying to cling to what clarity remains, and hating that he'll lose the battle eventually.

It isn't fair.

Hot tears spill down his cheeks and he clenches his jaw, swallowing thickly against the sob that rises in his throat. He can't let it escape, because then he may never stop.

It's a struggle, forcing himself to focus on the task at hand when his body is crying out for relief. His bath sponge feels like sandpaper on his skin, but he scrubs furiously at every inch of himself. Desperate to erase it all, as if he can somehow reverse what happened to him if he rids himself of every unfamiliar scent.

It doesn't work.

He lasts until he can't take it anymore, shutting off the water and trying to suppress his violent shaking as he dries off.

The cramps are worse now, not just in his low belly but in his muscles too. His teeth ache terribly, and the gland at his throat throbs in time with his heartbeat. Shane can already feel himself growing slick again, and it takes every bit of his willpower not to succumb to another wave of tears. With one hand braced on the wall, he makes his way to the bedroom on unsteady legs.

His clothes are gone from the floor, undoubtedly in his hamper now.

Shane can't deny the wave of affection that washes over him at the realization.

He knows before he reaches the door to his bedroom that Ilya is there. His scent is a beacon, drawing him in. Sure enough, he's sitting on the edge of the bed with one hand planted behind him and the other scrolling through his phone, his legs spread lazily. There's a deep line in his brow and his lips are pressed in a thin line, expressing his deep focus.

He's radiant in the dim lamplight of the room, golden and beautiful and *there*.

A desperate *want* pulls at Shane, one that he feels no matter the state of his body. Heat or not, his desire for this man is irrevocable.

His resolve is weaker than it has ever been, and Shane knows that it isn't just the induced heat. It's the time, and the distance, and the inescapable memory of being in Ilya's home. Sleeping in his bed. Wearing his clothes. Eating food prepared by his hand. It was every bit as perfect as it was terrifying.

Ilya's eyes lift, taking him in slowly. Deliberately. Worried and hungry all at once.

"Internet is not helping," he says, locking his phone and setting it aside. "It will maybe last eight hours, but I don't know."

Eight hours. Shorter than any true heat, but an eternity to him. Shane wishes that he could just go to sleep and wake up when it's over, but that possibility is far out of reach. Ilya's eyes track him as he moves closer, every step a monumental effort. The towel slips low on his hips but he doesn't care. There's no part of him Ilya hasn't seen, and no part of Shane that wants to hide.

It's as easy as breathing, sinking to his knees between Ilya's spread legs. He'd spend hours here, if he could. Head on his thigh, those long fingers in his hair.

Breathing him in.

Worshipping him.

"Hollander," Ilya says, his voice low and reverent.

Shane looks up at him, his eyes heavy-lidded and his lips parted slightly. Every lungful of Ilya's scent tugs him closer and closer to tipping over the edge, headlong into his heat. There's no use fighting it anymore. Not when Ilya is here.

Still here, with him.

For him.

Ilya's hand lifts, his thumb brushing over his jaw only for his eyes to grow wide as an indecipherable word slips out. *Russian*, Shane thinks, and a curse from the sound of it. He wishes he could understand. Could speak it back to him. Ilya would like that. No one else tries.

"You're cold," Ilya says, clearly upset by it.

"Not inside," Shane mumbles.

Inside, he is *burning.* Simmering coals beneath his skin. Heat licking at his core. Warm slick on his thighs.

Ilya pulls him from the floor, his strength never more evident, and Shane doesn't notice or care that his towel falls away entirely as he's hauled into his lap. Warm, callused hands rub insistently at his arms and Shane hums deep in his chest as he buries his face in Ilya's shoulder.

Alpha, his body and mind and heart all sing at once.

"Please," he breathes out, rocking his hips desperately.

Leaning back, Ilya tugs him away from his shoulder and ignores his pitiful noise of protest as he tips his chin up to look in his eyes.

"This is what you want?" he asks, wearing a serious expression.

Shane nods as best he can, rubbing his thumb over one of the buttons on his shirt.

"I always want you," he says, his voice just barely above a whisper.

Ilya blinks, something like surprise and unfiltered want flitting over his face before it settles into a smooth expression again.

"This is you speaking, yes? Not just..."

Shane shakes his head, his hand sliding around the back of his head and his fingers tangling in his hair.

"It's me," he says, leaning in to brush his lips lightly over Ilya's.

It's been too long, and even this brief, chaste kiss feels like every shattered piece of them falling right back into place. It takes no time at all for the kiss to deepen, Ilya's arms wrapping around him and hauling him even closer as their lips meet again and again. Shane reaches between them, refusing to break away for a single moment as he fumbles with Ilya's clothes.

The shirt is an immediate loss, fabric ripping and buttons flying as he tears it away.

Ilya growls low in his chest, sending a flash of searing heat through him, and his hands drift low to knead at his ass.

"Sorry," Shane mumbles against his mouth.

"No you're not."

He isn't.

Ilya's lips find his throat, and Shane tilts his head back and tangles both hands in his hair as every brush of lips and scrape of teeth sends tiny shocks of pleasure throughout his body. A hitched moan falls from his lips when he feels Ilya's fingers dip low, stroking over his hole lightly.

"Please, *please*," he gasps, rocking back against the teasing touch.

"Shh," Ilya hushes him, nipping at his collarbone. "I'll take care of you, Hollander."

Shane knows that. *Trusts* that. Ilya has never given him a reason to believe otherwise.

True to his words, a finger slowly presses in, coated in slick that eases the way. Shane lets out a moan, dropping his head back as Ilya's tongue flicks over his stiff nipple. It takes no time at all for another finger to join the first, scissoring and stroking and feeding into the desperation that floods every inch of him. Shane doesn't just want more. *Need* isn't even enough to cover the ache that fills him.

He has to have more. He needs to be fucked and filled and *claimed*. There's nothing more vital to him, in that moment. He needs it *now*. He needs it or he'll die, he's certain of it.

"Ilya," he breathes out like a prayer.

A beat of nothing. No movement. No words. Shane isn't even sure they *breathe*.

Then he's spun around, manhandled onto his stomach in a way that absolutely *delights* him. Shane muffles his moan into the mattress, his fingers twisting into the blankets as Ilya drapes over him like the best kind of weighted blanket.

"Say it again," he says, his voice threaded with pure desire.

Shane resists the urge to rock his hips against the bed, feeling Ilya's cock against his ass even through the rough fabric of his jeans.

"Ilya," he says, eager to follow his command.

Lips brush over his shoulder as Ilya says, "Again."

Shane presses his lips together as Ilya rocks against him, a tease and a promise all at once.

"Ilya," he says, nearly a whisper.

The weight of him disappears and even with the rustle of fabric letting him know that Ilya is only undressing, he has to choke back a sob as despair washes over him. Shane doesn't know what to do with it. He knows that it's illogical but he can't even bring himself to turn around, struck by a sudden fear that Ilya is leaving. A bigger part of him knows that he wouldn't do that, even if Shane might deserve it for leaving first. Ilya would never be so cruel.

"I'm here," his voice cuts through it all, blanketing his trembling body again.

Shane goes boneless beneath him out of sheer relief, letting Ilya nudge his thighs apart as he murmurs in Russian. He doesn't even care that he can't understand. The soft, quiet tone of his voice is enough to calm his racing heart.

"Please," he whimpers, gliding to his knees and arching his back with his forehead still pressed to the bed.

"You don't need to beg, solnyshko," Ilya says, peppering kisses along his spine. "I'll give you everything you need."

True to his word, he wastes little time before gripping Shane's hip with one hand, holding him in place as the head of his cock brushes over his hole. Shane's breath stutters in his chest and he hides his face in the crook of his elbow as Ilya slowly sinks into him. It's been far too long, and he's so damn *full* even before Ilya is seated fully inside of him. His body sings with relief as Ilya's hips press flush against his ass, his hand brushing soothingly along his flank.

"Yes?" Ilya asks, a strain to his voice as he holds still to let him adjust.

Shane nods dumbly, his head clouded and his body feeling as if he's moving in slow motion.

"S'good," he slurs as Ilya rocks into him with gentle, shallow thrusts.

He won't last long, he knows that. Ilya's cock alone has him halfway there, and each stroke adds to the exquisite tension building within him. He can only moan, breathless and helpless against the sensations surging through his body. It isn't long before Ilya is fucking into him fully, each thrust deep and merciless, and Shane can only take it. *Revel* in it. Crave more and more and moremore*more*.

Don't stop, he wants to plead. *Never stop. Fuck me harder. Bruise me. Bite me. Mark me. Knot me. Make me yours.*

Time passes slowly, or quickly, or not at all. He has no concept of it, lost in the sensations that Ilya wrings from him with every snap of his hips. It could be minutes or hours or days of this, and he wouldn't know the difference at all.

Shane drifts, his mind a thoughtless haze and his limbs slowly giving way until he sinks down to the bed, trembling too much to hold his own weight, and Ilya follows him down without missing a beat. The friction of the blankets against his cock is almost too much, a desperate sob catching in his throat. Ilya soothes him with quiet murmurs, but it doesn't matter if it's in English or Russian. Shane is too far gone to tell the difference, chasing his release with a single-minded purpose.

Just as he's on the verge of tipping over the edge into utter oblivion, Ilya wraps an arm around his chest and hauls him up effortlessly. Shane cries out at the change in angle, his back flush to Ilya's chest as his hand catches his chin and turns his head, lips coaxing him into a deep kiss even as his thrusts never falter. Shane opens his mouth easily, gripping at Ilya's arm where it's wrapped around him. Reaching back with the other to grasp at Ilya's hair, he finds it in himself to meet him thrust for thrust.

"Come for me," Ilya murmurs against his lips.

It's all the permission Shane needs, his body seizing up and his cock spilling untouched as his orgasm crests over him. It seemingly lasts forever, his vision growing dark as he surrenders himself to wave after wave of pleasure. Ilya fucks him through it all, kissing him fervently and endlessly. It isn't long before he feels a spill of warmth deep inside, and Ilya gently lowers him to the bed as he presses kisses over his sweat-slick skin. They linger there for countless minutes, until Ilya's cock softens and Shane's breathing returns to normal.

"Didn't knot me," he mumbles with just enough presence of mind to feel upset by it.

Ilya pauses before exhaling a quiet sigh.

"Not something I do without permission, Hollander," he says, rolling over on his side and stroking a soothing touch over his back.

Shane feels his lips form a pout, shivering at the sensation of Ilya's come and his own slick leaking out of him. His heat has been sated for now, but he can already tell it won't be long before he's driven to desperation again. Neither of them even bother cleaning up, knowing they'll make a mess of themselves again and again.

"You have it," he says, all too willing to give blanket consent.

Ilya huffs out a quiet laugh, pressing a kiss to his shoulder.

"How do you feel?"

"Better, for now," Shane says, even though the ache within him hasn't abated in the slightest. "Won't last long."

"Okay," Ilya says, flopping onto his back.

Shane watches him as he closes his eyes and stretches his arms over his head, his eyes trace over every inch of him. It somehow feels like years since he's seen him like this, not months. They've had longer stretches between meeting, but it feels different without their usual string of texts. Just day after day of excruciating silence, and Shane knows exactly who is at fault for it.

Shifting onto his side, he moves closer to Ilya and reaches out hesitantly, lightly tracing the prominent vein along his bicep.

"I'm sorry," he says, miserable with remorse.

Ilya makes a questioning noise, turning his head to look at him. Shane can't bring himself to look up at him, his eyes following the path of his finger, back and forth over the same spot.

"It's not your fault, Hollander," Ilya says.

"No, not... not for this," Shane says, closing his eyes and taking a deep breath to fortify his resolve.

He has to say this. Ilya deserves to hear it.

"I'm sorry for leaving, last time," he says, opening his eyes and forcing himself to finally, hesitantly meet Ilya's gaze. It's a struggle, when it's the very last thing that he wants to do. "I freaked out and I ran away, and that wasn't fair of me."

Ilya looks stunned, his lips parting even though he doesn't say a word. Shane suspects that he doesn't know what to say, and it gives him the chance to put more of the thoughts he's rehearsed into words. Curling his hand over his arm, he leans in and brushes a kiss over his shoulder.

"You were perfect," he breathes against his skin.

Another kiss, brushed along his collarbone.

"You gave me your clothes."

Another kiss, open-mouthed on his pec.

"You made food."

Another, so near to his heart.

"You were such a good alpha for me."

A kiss directly over his heart now, as Shane tosses a leg over Ilya's thigh to perch on his lap.

"Perfect," he murmurs, dropping a soft kiss to his lips.

Sitting back, Shane runs his hands over his broad chest with a deep-seated satisfaction unfurling within him as Ilya's scent softens. He stares up at Shane with something like awe, his lips parted slightly and his eyes wide and filled with such unabashed tenderness that it almost hurts to look at him.

"Thank you," Ilya says, his voice just barely above a whisper, betraying just how much he needed to hear that.

Reaching up, Shane brushes a light touch over his cheek and down his jaw, then to his perfect lips. He traces the shape of them reverently, and his breath catches as Ilya presses the smallest of kisses to his thumb. He can smell the sweet spike in his own scent, his low belly clenching with desire. Delving his fingers into those golden curls, he drags Ilya up to his waiting mouth and coaxes him into a deep, consuming kiss. It lasts and lasts, their lips meeting again and again until they're breathless and panting. Even then, they can't bring themselves to stop.

"Like this," Shane pleads, his lips brushing Ilya's with every word. "Please, I want–"

Shane cuts off with a sharp intake of breath as Ilya drops his head, kissing and nipping at his throat. His hands cradle his alpha's head, stroking his hair with every brush of his lips.

"Tell me," Ilya breathes into his skin, refusing to tear himself away.

"I wanna stay like this," Shane confesses, breathless and needy. "Wanna ride you."

With a low groan deep in his chest, Ilya grasps his hips to pull him even closer.

"Do it," he says, brushing his lips over Shane's swollen, throbbing mating gland. "Take all you need, moyo serdtse."

Shane muffles a whimper into Ilya's shoulder, reaching between them to stroke his cock, lining it up with fumbling movements. Pure relief sweeps through him as he sinks down, small noises slipping out that are quickly swallowed when Ilya lifts his head and crushes their lips together, licking into his mouth and thoroughly claiming him.

"That's it," Ilya says as Shane finds a rhythm, chasing his pleasure.

More words spill out. Russian and English blended together. Praising him. Urging him on. Telling him to take and take and take.

And he does, fucking himself on Ilya's cock with insatiable hunger for more. Slowly sating the heat simmering with his core, and resisting the wholly consuming urge to sink his teeth where Ilya's scent is most potent. Shane reaches for the headboard instead, his hands aching with his white knuckled grip. He can feel the base of Ilya's cock growing thicker, and his low belly clenches with the anticipation of taking his knot.

Ilya hands never settle, touching him everywhere. Kneading at his pecs and pinching at his nipples, his eyes flashing with satisfaction at the hitched moans he pulls from Shane's throat. He grips his hips tightly enough that Shane all but pants at the thought of the inevitable bruises he'll leave behind. Two fingers push into his mouth, moving in and out lazily and sending his eyes rolling back in his head.

"Good," Ilya says, the praise building from a pleased rumble in his chest as Shane sucks on his fingers.

His vision blurs, his mind whiting out at the simplest of praise. Shane isn't fully aware of his body giving way, his face burying in Ilya's throat as he collapses with a quiet whine, Ilya still buried deep inside of him. He still aches for more, but there's something else tugging him. An inescapable need to get as close as possible. If he could carve himself a space in Ilya's chest right next to his heart, if it were possible, Shane isn't entirely sure he wouldn't do just that.

"Hollander?" Ilya says, his voice strained as he curls his fingers in Shane's hair and gives a light tug.

Shane feels a sudden, wretched despair sweep through him.

"No," he whimpers without meaning to, his voice thready and trembling. "Not that, please."

Ilya makes a helpless noise of confusion, stroking a hand soothingly down his back.

"I don't–"

Shane swallows against the lump rising in his throat, desperate for Ilya to get it.

"Please not that. Not Hollander. *Please*."

He can only pray that Ilya will understand, entirely too affected to say anything else. Shane feels him move, turning his face into his hair and inhaling deeply.

Then...

"Shane," he breathes, quiet and uncertain.

The effect is instantaneous. Shane surges up to kiss him, muffling Ilya's answering moan as he clenches around him and rolls his hips. They're nearly frantic now, their mutual craving taking over. Ilya's hands dig into his ass as he plants his feet and thrusts up into him and Shane clutches at his shoulders, peppering open-mouthed, lingering kisses over his face and neck.

"Knot me," he begs, his lips pressed the hollow of Ilya's throat. "Please *please*, Ilya. I need... I need it. I need *you*."

Ilya grips his thigh and wraps his other arm around his waist, flipping them over effortlessly with his cock still deep inside of him. An electric swell of desire floods Shane at the move and he pulls his knees to his chest, his fingers digging into his thighs.

"Fuck," Ilya groans, pulling back to gaze down at Shane with open admiration and scorching hunger in his eyes.

His hands knock Shane's away, folding him even more as his hips snap at an almost brutal pace. Shane grasps at the pillow beneath his head, turning his face to the side and moaning helplessly as his body is wracked with endless, searing pleasure. His lips are moving but he has no true grasp on the words that slip free. Reckless, supplicant babbles that work to drive Ilya into a near frenzy.

"Again," Shane pleads, reaching out blindly to stroke his cheek, his thumb brushing over Ilya's lips. "Again, say it. Please..."

"Shane," Ilya says, whispered in awe.

He unravels in an instant, tossing his head back and succumbing to the euphoria that ripples through him. Ilya fucks him through it, each stroke sending him higher and higher until he's almost certain that he'll shatter into a million pieces, tears streaming down his face. Ilya's knot catches as Shane clenches around him, sending another wave of pleasure through him and a guttural cry rips from his chest as Ilya comes deep inside with a blistering curse.

"*Fuck*, solnyshko," Ilya groans, nuzzling into his throat.

Shane can barely breathe, his entire being alight with satisfaction and reveling in every second of this. He lets himself be maneuvered until Ilya is on his back again, wrapping Shane in his arms with his head on his chest. Minutes pass in content silence, Shane's fingers stroking nonsense patterns over Ilya's chest as he does the same on Shane's back. It takes

some time for Ilya's cock to slip out of him, but neither of them move at all even when they're able.

Not when this feels utterly perfect.

"Thank you," Shane hums at some point, turning his head to brush a kiss over Ilya's heart.

Ilya lets out a quiet laugh, stroking his hair.

"For what?"

Shane nuzzles closer, feeling a swell of emotions with all that he wants to say.

"Everything," he says, his voice cracking on the word. "For staying. For helping me. For not... for not hating me."

"I couldn't," Ilya says quickly, the words too heartfelt not to be true. "Not ever."

Shane nods, because he knew that already.

"Thank you," he whispers again.

He feels Ilya's lips press to the top of his head, a silent acknowledgement. Not only of his words, but of how far they've come.

A night that began with such blistering hurt after months of tormenting silence turning into *this* is nothing short of a miracle. Shane thinks that should be a comfort, and it *is*. They found their way back to each other. It's a good thing.

But that it happened because of *this*...

Anger fills him in an instant. Not aimed at Ilya. Not even at himself.

It's *them.*

A faceless figure. A shadow in the club. A pill in a drink. His mind circles back to his earlier thought. How much worse it could have been. If Ilya hadn't been there. If Shane had gone to the bathroom instead of the booth with Rose and Miles. If someone else found him like this. Someone willing to use their alpha designation in the worst possible way.

Someone entirely unlike Ilya.

Shane feels sick and furious and, worse than anything, he feels *helpless*. He does all he can to make himself strong. He sticks to his workout regimen and he follows his diet and he takes his fucking suppressants at the same damn time every day. That someone could so effortlessly make him weak, after all he's done to strengthen himself. To *prove* himself. To make himself safe in this world that looks down on him for something he can't fucking help.

All of it gone in a single night.

The shift is sudden. Shane is warm and lax in his arm one moment, then stiff as a board in the next. Ilya doesn't know what happened, and his heart drops the longer it lasts.

"Shane?" he says, lifting his head as much as he can with Shane a heavy but welcome weight blanketed over him.

No response. It's as if he doesn't hear Ilya at all.

Ilya sits up, finding it almost too easy to bring Shane with him. Only when they're face to face does he see that his face is drained of color and his expression is entirely blank, his eyes unfocused and his breathing ragged.

"Shane," Ilya says again, giving him a little shake.

As suddenly as he'd gone quiet, Shane's eyes seem to finally focus on him. They grow bright with unshed tears all too quickly, his bottom lip trembling ever so slightly. Ilya doesn't understand the rapid shift in mood until he finally speaks in a voice just barely above a whisper.

"Why did this happen to me?"

A wave of anger washes over Ilya at once, the helplessness in Shane's smaller than usual voice throwing his protective instincts into overdrive. He wants nothing more than to gather him in his arms and hide him away from the crueler side of this world. Not that Shane needs him to, but because Ilya would do anything to never see this vulnerable, wounded look in his eyes.

"I don't know," he says, his voice tight with barely restrained fury.

Shane turns his head, swiping furiously at a tear that dares to slip down his cheek.

"Someone did this to me."

Ilya can only nod, knowing that there's not much else to say. What comfort can he offer, when he can only imagine the turmoil that Shane must feel?

"You're safe now," he offers, hoping that it can offer some measure of solace.

Shane's eyes flit back to him, wide and swallowed up by an unquestionable tangle of emotions.

"I always was," he says, his voice still hushed. "You were there."

The faith in his words strikes deep at something within Ilya. *Deep* within him, where he treasures every memory of his mother and stashes away every memory of Shane. A place that is hidden and safe and *his*.

Ilya brushes a thumb over Shane's cheek, tracing the beautiful scattering of freckles there even as his hand trembles with all he holds back. It's something he needs, maybe as much as Shane. A reminder that he isn't a brute simply because he is an alpha. He wants to believe

that he is nothing like his father or brother. They would see him as weak, for not taking care of the problem.

But Ilya knows that his place is here, not out hunting down a faceless monster through the streets of Montreal.

That does not mean that Shane does not deserve justice, if it's what he wants.

"We can go to the police, if that is what you want," he offers.

Shane's expression shutters, his head shaking before Ilya can even finish his sentence.

"No," he says abruptly.

Ilya sees the flare of terror in his eyes. The way his shoulders drop and his arms wrap around himself as if he's trying to hold it all together. He sees him retreating, and he hates it.

"Okay," he says easily, because it's not his decision to make.

But Shane is still caught up in his mind, his eyes shifting frantically. Ilya wishes that he could take it back, if only to erase the sour panic infusing Shane's scent.

"I can't. I... I know what would happen. I wouldn't be Shane Hollander, Captain of the Montreal Voyageurs. Not anymore. I'd be that hockey player that got fucking roofied. It wouldn't matter what else happened. That I didn't get..." Shane trails off, shaking his head. "It wouldn't matter. Everyone would look at me and that's all they'd see. I can't let this person ruin my entire fucking life. Maybe that makes me a coward. I-I guess it does. But I can't, okay? I *can't*."

"Okay," Ilya repeats, cupping the back of his neck and pressing their foreheads. "That's okay."

Shane slumps, the fight draining out of him in an instant.

"I'm so tired."

Ilya understands, feeling more than a little weary himself. With all else that's happened, it's surprisingly easy to remember that they played in a game earlier this same night. It's a miracle they haven't collapsed yet.

"We can sleep?" he offers.

Shane seems to consider it before he shakes his head slowly.

"Not yet," he says, curling his hands over Ilya's shoulders. "Need a shower."

It takes less than a full second to make up his mind, drawing a sharp gasp out of Shane as he climbs out of the bed without letting him go. He wraps around Ilya as he stands, gripping him tight.

"What are you doing?" Shane asked, his voice breathless and betraying the smallest hint of laughter.

His scent sweetens with it, and Ilya would do anything to keep it that way.

"You said shower," he says, striding out of the bedroom with very little effort.

Shane shudders in his arms, tucking his face into Ilya's neck as he crosses the hallway to the bathroom.

"You're insane," he murmurs against his skin.

"I'm being a good alpha," Ilya corrects him. "'Thank you, Ilya.' 'What a great alpha you are, Ilya.' 'No one else can compare, Ilya.' "

"You're an asshole," Shane laughs fully this time.

Ilya savors the sound of it as he nudges the door open with his foot, careful to avoid the puddles left behind. He'd be content to hold on like this until his arms fail him but Shane slips out of his hold, finding his feet and meeting Ilya's gaze with amusement dancing in his dark, tired eyes. His hand lifts, molding over Ilya's cheek with his thumb brushing over his lips lightly.

"You're a good man, Ilya," he says, his voice soft. "And a good alpha."

The words seep beneath his skin, warm and beautiful and healing in a way. A lump rises in his throat, but he tries to swallow it down as he tips his face into Shane's touch, hoping the gesture can make up for the words he can't yet say. Turning his head, he presses a light kiss to Shane's palm before wrapping his fingers gently around his wrist, guiding him toward the shower.

He turns the water on, testing it until he deems it warm enough. Only then does he steer Shane beneath the spray, following him in when he glances back with a pleading look in his eyes.

"Let me," Ilya says when Shane reaches for the soap, taking it from his hand.

He pours it out into his hand, ignoring the sponge hanging from a hook on the wall. It may not be the most effective method of cleaning, but Ilya treasures every contented purr and blissed-out sigh that slips from Shane's lips as he washes him by hand. Ilya doesn't fail to notice how his cock hardens, the aroma of his slick filling the steam-filled shower so beautifully.

Lowering to his knees as he braces Shane against the wall of the shower, Ilya takes his time rubbing the soap into his thighs and calves, massaging away the soreness he knows is there. Shane's fingers slide into his wet curls as he presses a kiss to his hip, nuzzling there as the soap washes down the drain.

"Okay?" he says, tipping his chin to look up at him.

Shane hums his agreement, nodding his head with his eyes closed serenely. Ilya takes a moment to admire him like this before he kisses his way to his pretty, flushed cock. A hitched moan fills the air as he swirls his tongue around the head before letting it fill his mouth slowly. Ilya knows he could get him off quickly, but that's the last thing he wants. He takes his time instead, holding Shane's hips down as he sucks him slowly, as if he's indulging in his favorite meal.

"Ilya," Shane whines, his fingers slipping through his wet hair as he grasps for him desperately.

Wrapping a hand around his thigh, Ilya lifts Shane's leg to rest on his shoulder, giving him a moment to steady himself before his fingers drift up and up until he's teasing at his hole. An answering whimper is all he needs, pressing two fingers inside at once. Shane drops his head back, exposing his throat with a strangled sigh of his name.

"So good," he babbles as Ilya takes him deep, swallowing around his cock and stroking that spot inside of him that brings him closer and closer to the edge. "So... so good for me–*fuck,* Ilya–taking care of me. *Alpha*."

Something deeply primal takes hold of him the instant that he hears that word from Shane's lips. Ilya surges up, catching his chin in one hand and all but devouring his mouth in a ruthless kiss, swallowing up Shane's surprised moan. It takes no time at all for his knees to weaken and Ilya catches him easily, spinning him around to face the shower wall. Nudging his feet apart, Ilya ruts against his ass as he catches his earlobe in his teeth, tugging lightly just to hear more of those beautiful noises slip from his perfect lips.

"*Omega*," he murmurs.

"Oh God," Shane moans, shuddering in his arms.

With one hand gripping his hip, Ilya uses the other to guide his cock until it catches on his hole, driving in with one smooth thrust and tearing a hoarse, guttural cry from deep in Shane's throat.

"Yes?" Ilya says, brushing his lips over the back of his neck as he relishes in the slick heat surrounding his cock.

Shane nods frantically, working his hips back as much as he can.

"Fuck me," he pleads.

Ilya does, taking him apart with deep, relentless thrusts. His own pleasure is a distant priority, compared to how intense his focus is on Shane. Every debauched moan and breathless whine that Ilya earns ignites him, and he is determined to wring every drop of pleasure from his omega that he can.

Words of praise fall like rain from his lips, Russian and English braided together in whispered reverence.

There's no pleasure more euphoric than Shane falling apart around him, bringing Ilya to the brink of his own pleasure and tipping him over the edge when Shane's trembling cry of his name echoes in the small space surrounding them.

Ilya wisely doesn't knot him, even when Shane whines in protest as he pulls out of him. Keeping both arms wrapped around him, he tugs Shane beneath the still-warm water and turns him gently to face him. He steadies him, his forehead resting on Ilya's shoulder, and retrieves more soap to wash away the new slick and come dripping down his thighs. Shane's body is languid with exhaustion, and Ilya can't deny that he isn't too far behind him.

"A little longer," he promises, earning a sleepy hum in return as he turns the water off.

Ilya leaves him sitting on the closed toilet once they're dried off, assuring him that he'll be back before slipping from the bathroom. He doesn't bother wrapping himself in a towel or finding his clothes, retrieving new sheets from the closet full of linens before returning to the bedroom to strip the bed down. The air is full of their combined scents, and Ilya can do nothing about the deep seated satisfaction he feels.

It's how it should be, he thinks as he comes back from putting the soiled blankets in the washer.

Just as he's starting to remake the bed, Shane drifts into the room, mindless of his own nudity.

"You should be resting," Ilya says, looking up with a frown as he tucks a corner of the bottom sheet beneath the mattress.

Shane shoots him an irritated look, but Ilya feels more charmed than chastised by it.

"It'll go faster," he mutters, mirroring Ilya's movements on the other side of the bed.

He's not wrong. It takes almost no time at all to get it done between them. What Ilya doesn't expect is Shane's indignant expression as he stares down at the neatly made up bed.

"Is something wrong?" Ilya asks, driven by the urge to make it right.

Shane glances at him, his expression softening ever so slightly before he shakes his head. But there's something his eyes. An unspoken need.

"What is it?" he asks, stepping around the bed to close the distance between them.

Shaking his head again, Shane ducks his head in an effort to hide. Ilya doesn't let him get away with it, tucking his fingers beneath his chin and lifting it gently.

"Tell me, please."

With his teeth sunk into his kiss-swollen bottom lip, Shane doesn't answer for a long few seconds until his shoulders drop and a heavy sigh puffs from his nose.

"It's not right," he mumbles.

"What isn't?"

Shane gestures with one hand and Ilya glances from him to the bed and back.

"What can I do?" he asks, wondering if the pile of pillows he tossed into the corner is somehow integral to the bed.

"Nothing," Shane shuffles past him and sits on the bed, his brow still deeply furrowed.

"Shane," Ilya sighs, stepping up and crouching in front of him, his hands resting on his knees. "There has to be something I can do."

Shane hesitates before reaching out to slide his fingers into Ilya's damp, curling hair.

"A nest," he admits, a flush blooming in his cheeks. "I want a nest, okay? Even though I know I don't need one. It'll only be a few more hours before I'm done with this, and I don't need a fucking nest to make it through. So can we please go to sleep?"

Ilya blinks up at him, trying to wrap his mind around the hastily blurted words. He has no idea what goes into the making of a nest, other than an abundance of blankets. That he can do, recalling the pile he saw in the linen closet. Rising to his feet, he slips from the room to grab as many as he can. Shane is nearly pouting by the time he returns, but his eyes light up ever so slightly when he sees the pile in Ilya's arms.

"Is enough?" he asks, dropping them on the end of the bed.

Shane peers over the pile, yet something in the language of his body is still resistant.

"Shane, it's okay," Ilya says, reaching out to brush a light touch over his jaw.

Those eyes lift to meet his, wide and imploring and slightly teary.

"You can have what you want, even if you don't think you need it."

Shane swallows hard, nodding once and looking back at the blankets. Ilya is content to watch, a small smile tugging at his lips as he observes the process. There's no pattern to any of it, that he can tell. Shane picks through the pile one blanket at a time, brushing a hand over it and holding it to his nose to breathe in deeply before deciding whether to keep it on the bed or toss it in the direction of the door with an expression of derision. By the time he's done, there's a pile of blankets covering the bed.

Yet he still doesn't look fully satisfied.

"What is it?"

Shane glances at him warily, seeming to weigh his next words before speaking quietly.

"Can I have your shirt?"

Ilya's breath catches, elation blooming in his chest as he glances around until he sees it crumpled on the ground. There's no doubt in his mind that it's unfixable, as he holds it up and sees the tears in the fabric.

"This was designer," he says, though the crooked grin on his face betrays how little he cares about that.

Shane reaches out for it, a small smile tugging at his own lips.

"It's pretty ugly," he says, pulling the shirt to his chest as if he's afraid Ilya will take it back. "You should be thanking me for destroying it."

Ilya gasps in mock offense and Shane's smile grows, his body relaxing into the pile of the blankets with Ilya's shirt finding a place on his pillow. It's a relief, watching the tension drain from him in a matter of seconds. Ilya isn't sure what to do until Shane's eyes drift open and he fixes him with a look.

"Come on," he says, holding his hand out.

"You are sure?" Ilya asks, taken aback by the invitation.

Nodding his head, Shane wiggles his fingers in a silent command. There's no question of following it, and Ilya finds himself carefully climbing into his nest, something that he's never done before. He's been with omegas in the past, but never like this. Never in their nest.

"Thank you," he says, lying on his side facing Shane. "For trusting me with this."

Shane smiles at him sleepily, reaching out to take hold of his hand only to settle it over his heart, intertwined with his own. It's up to Ilya to move some of the blankets to cover them, as much as he can with the use of only one hand.

"Will you stay?" Shane asks once he's done, his eyes already falling shut.

Ilya hesitates, not because he doesn't want to, but the memory of the last time either of them asked that is fresh in his mind.

"Yes," he answers after a long few seconds pass. "As long as you want me."

Shane lets out a content noise, rolling over on his side and bringing Ilya with him.

"Thank you, Ilya," he murmurs, bringing their lips up to brush a kiss over his knuckles.

A deep breath in, and then a kiss to the back of his shoulder.

"You're welcome, Shane."

End Notes

I hope that you enjoyed the fic. Please drop a comment if you did!

I'm not done playing around in this universe. As you can tell, I intend to make it into a series of fics.

Russian Translations:
- **solnyshko:** little sun, or sunshine
- **moyo serdtse:** my heart (thank you to the commenter who corrected me on this ❤️)

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!