

Solace

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by [NotEvenCloseToStraight](#)

Summary

Ottawa, 2010.

Canada wins the championship, and Shane slips away from the overwhelming celebration for some peace and quiet.

Russia loses, and Ilya runs from his father's furious disappointment to have a panic attack in the stairwell.

Neither boy is really looking for company, but for a tentative few hours in the middle of the night, they find solace, acceptance and a first kiss, first time prelude to something heated and risky in each other's arms.

Ilya leaned in with lips pursed and Shane jerked away, "Whoa! What the hell are you doing?"

"You do not want kiss?" Ilya frowned. "You stare at my mouth all night, same as after draft. I thought you wanted kiss."

"No." Shane's eyes were wide. "That's insane."

"Okay." Ilya stood up, hiding how bad the rejection hurt. "I misunderstand. Sorry. Do not worry, I will not say anything about—"

"Wait." Shane's grabbed Rozanov's arm at the last second, gathering all his courage, "Y-yes."

"Yes." Ilya repeated. "What is yes?"

"I mean yes." Shane pulled him back in slowly, carefully, his heart racing. "Kiss me?"

January 2010

Ottawa, Canada

The party was loud. The championship had been hard won and well earned and the celebration was out of control. The players were cheering, jumping, hugging one another high off the win, the boys were spinning, laughing, shoving one another drunk on the adrenaline, some actually *were* high off smuggled in weed and others actually *were* drunk off punch spiked from not very secret flasks, and the coaches and chaperones were all too busy congratulating each other and themselves to pretend to care.

Champions. Trophy winners. They were at the top of their game and feeling on top of the world, and the fever pitch excitement combined with the delirious exhaustion of a too long, too intense, too physically mentally emotionally grueling few weeks of tournament *shook* the walls of the multipurpose conference room on the basement floor of hotel. The noise was deafening, the chaos of it all dizzying, the crush of people and body heat and clamor of conversation *suffocating* and in the very middle of the room—

—in the very *middle* of the room, team Captain and tournament MVP and all around Canadian Wunderkind Shane Hollander stared down at his glass of electric red punch and tried his fucking hardest not to throw up.

“Hollander! We did it! We fucking did it!” Someone pushed into him, fell into him, grabbed him into a messy, sloppy hug and planted a messy, sloppy kiss on his cheek. Teammate. A buddy. Shane had played with him for years.

“Shane Hollander! Second in the draft son, good for you! You make us all so proud!” Someone shook his hand, squeezed his palm, pounded at his shoulder. A parent. A chaperone. They’d known Shane since he was sixteen.

“Wouldn’t be the player he is without a great coach!” Right in his ear, bellowing over the noise. Shane knew he was supposed to smile, supposed to agree, supposed to pound the no doubt spiked punch and whoop at the top of his lungs and let go — let *loose*— now that the work was over and the tournament was finished and he had another trophy and medal to put in his room.

Instead, “I gotta find the bathroom!” he announced to no one in particular, cos no one fucking cared. They were lost in the party, reveling in the victory, but it was *too much* hammering against Shane’s head, *too much* crushing around his body and his stomach was twisting, head pounding, chest too tight, *holy shit* he had to get out somewhere and get some air.

Out of the multipurpose room and into the hall. Down the hall and right past the bathroom. He ditched the cup of punch in the nearest water fountain and broke into a jog down the generically ugly carpeted corridor and by the time he crashed through the door leading to the stairwell, Shane was *running*. *Gasping*. He yanked at his tie and scrubbed at his face, rolled his shoulders and popped his neck and told himself to breathe. Started up the stairs to get to his fourteenth floor room and told himself to *breathe*. Huffed a self deprecating sort of laugh

because Shane Hollander jogging up fourteen floors worth of stairs instead of partying with his teammates was *exactly* the sort of over dedicated, wet blanket, fitness and work ethic obsessed bullshit everyone expected from him so— so whatever.

When his parents asked sort of sad and sort of resigned about why he hadn't stayed to celebrate with his teammates and revel in the end of his juniors era, when they told him he probably should really definitely enjoy these moments of silliness and fun while he still could cos come fall he'd be playing professional and have to lock in, when his parents couldn't hide how they worried about him *isolating* and clicked their tongues about him avoiding his long time teammates in favor of running stairs alone, Shane would call it a work out. He'd call it dedication. He'd brush it off and wave them away and tell them he might have gotten second at the draft but he was gonna be first in the league, rookie of the year, and to make that happen, he couldn't party, he had to train.

He *certainly* wouldn't tell them how the noisy crowd and pushing unhinged behavior made his skin crawl and lungs seize up and head hurt, *no way*.

There wasn't anything wrong with him. He was just dedicated. Just focused. It was fine. He was fine.

Nine, ten, eleven, floors up and Shane actually started to *feel* fine. The stairwell was soothingly monochromatic and cold enough to be clarifying, easing the clamor in Shane's head until he felt like he could think again. His shoes didn't make any noise on the concrete steps and landing after corner after landing after corner was empty, the doors to the adjoining halls all closed, it was a half hour till midnight so anyone who wasn't partying in celebration was sequestered in their rooms mulling over their loss and packing for the trip home.

It was nice. Peaceful. Space to move and space to breathe and twelve floors up Shane was starting to feel like maybe he wouldn't just collapse face first onto his bed and scream, maybe he'd have the mental energy to watch a movie or read a little bit in his book, or—

Noise in the stairwell up ahead, and Shane slowed at the door for the thirteenth floor landing, paused waiting to see if he heard the noise again, then peeked around the corner *bracing* himself so he could try and be passably polite to whoever had inadvertently interrupted his single minded dash up the stairs.

Ilya Rozanov. It was Ilya *fucking* Rozanov sitting just below the next landing blocking the stairwell with his body turned sideways taking up a whole step, an unlit cigarette in one hand and his phone in the other... and *tears* on his face, reflecting the light from his phone, tracking down his cheek and dripping off his chin, landing wet on the cold concrete below.

Shit. Shane came around the corner cautiously, curiously, fidgeting with the string on his hoodie as he asked, "Rozanov?"

Ilya jumped when someone spoke at him from just a few feet away. He hadn't heard any door open, he hadn't heard any footsteps coming up the stairs and he jumped *cursing* when the empty echoing cold of the stairwell was shattered by the unexpected intruder.

And, “Fuck.” it was Shane Hollander. *Of course* it was Shane Hollander. Mr. MVP, Mr. Beautiful, Mr. Too Damn Distracting For His Own Good. Ilya hadn’t stopped thinking about him for *months*, had taken every chance he got to sit in the stands and watch Hollander play like a love sick fucking *fool*, had just barely managed to convince himself it wasn’t worth the risk of seeking Hollander out to hang in the gym or bait him into an argument or share a fucking water bottle— Ilya had *just* convinced himself to not to any of that and to just sit in his room and pack to leave in the morning.

But then his brother called. Then his dad called. Then the walls closed in and the air went stifling thick and Ilya had fled to the stairwell to panic and pace and breakdown and *of course* it was Shane Hollander who found him at the worst possible moment, of course.

Ilya muttered, “Fuck.” and turned away, scrubbing at his face and sniffing and jamming his phone into his coat pocket, hiding from the gorgeous boy who’d appeared like he’d been summoned from Ilya’s best dreams and worst nightmares all at the same time.

“Hollander. Um—” he swallowed past the lump in his throat, “What— what—”

Ilya dragged a hand over his face and cursed again when the words didn’t work. He was too goddamn shaky to talk. Too fucking rattled to even *breathe*. Grigori had called to scream at him for losing, and the phone call had ended half an hour ago, but Ilya could still hear his father’s raspy voice ringing in his head. He was a disappointment, he was a disgrace, he should be ashamed because *Grigori* was ashamed, *Russia* was ashamed. Ilya was fucking lazy, fucking useless, what an embarrassment, when he came home to Russia he should cover his face and hang his head.

“Hey, what’s going on, man?”

The phone call had ended half an hour ago, and Ilya had been sitting in the stairwell ever since. His butt was numb and his hands were numb, his chest was tight and everything in his head was *too loud, too loud, too loud*, he was a mess.

“Rozanov.” Shane started forward a step and stopped, started to move closer but stopped, one foot hovering awkwardly above the next stair and his hand clasped on the railing. “Are you okay?”

“Yes.” Ilya pressed the heels of his palms into his eyes until stars burst painful behind his lids. “Yes. Fine.”

Rozanov clearly wasn’t fine. Shane didn’t know what to do. They hadn’t said more than two words to each other the entire tournament, Rozanov hadn’t even *looked* at him for more than a half second, or at least not that Shane saw, but now he was sitting slumped there with tears on his face and bouncing his leg all anxious and dragging his hands up and down his thighs the same way *Shane* dragged his hands up and down his thighs when everything was too much in his head and too tight under his skin.

Rozanov clearly wasn’t fine, but Shane wasn’t really sure what the fuck to do about it, or if he should do anything about it or just leave the guy in solitary peace to freak out like Shane had been running up the stairs trying to find enough solitary peace to freak out...

“Um.” he swallowed. “Okay. Do you want me to go? Or. I um. I could... stay?”

“Fuck.” Ilya flexed his hands open and closed, open and closed, tapped his foot and cracked his knuckles against his jaw and hissed out a breath from behind clenched teeth. “I ah— no. Okay. *No*. I am not—” he shook his head hard, closing his eyes tight trying to say it out loud, trying to admit he was *weak* cos there was no sense lying when Hollander was looking right at him, “I am not fine.”

“Okay.” Shane took a hesitant step up. “I could stay. Do you want some company?”

Yes. No. Please. Ilya couldn’t get any words past the panic and nausea lodged in his throat, but he managed to move his feet off the step and scoot sideways so there was room for Hollander to sit by him, or room for Hollander to walk right the fuck past him. Ilya scooted over and stared down at his feet and didn’t know which option was *worse*, which option was *scarier*, he didn’t know if Hollander offering company then taking the space to just keep moving would hurt more than Hollander sitting down and sitting close and staying, Ilya didn’t *know*.

But his heart and soul and body felt so stripped out, bleeding out *raw*, either option would probably leave him bruised in the aftermath, so— so whatever.

“Alright. I’m gonna come sit by you.” Shane climbed the stairs slowly, gave Rozanov plenty of time and plenty of warning to change his mind or brush him off. Rozanov didn’t move and didn’t object, so Shane kept moving up the steps until he could turn and sit down right next to him.

They were big boys, the both of them, very nearly six feet tall each and broad shouldered, heavily muscled. There wasn’t really *room* for them to sit side by side on the step so Shane’s arm bumped into Ilya and Ilya’s leg brushed at Shane and their feet didn’t touch, but their *knees* sure did and when Shane checked in a little awkwardly, “This okay?” Ilya had to dig deep for his self control so his voice wouldn’t wobble audibly affected by it all, “Yes. Is okay.”

“Kay.”

Shane didn’t say anything else. He copied Rozanov’s posture with his arms resting on his knees and head down looking at his feet and just sat there. Just kept the other boy company. The silence stretched long between them, not uncomfortable but surprisingly, genuinely easy. Neither made any mention of all the places they were touching and neither made any effort to create space between themselves, and *no* Shane’s plan after escaping the party hadn’t included hanging out with Rozanov and *no* Ilya hadn’t expected anyone to stumble onto him freaking out, much less Shane Hollander of all fucking people, but *oh* Hollander was warm and solid at his side, steady and calm and quietly *kinder* than anyone had been to Ilya in a really long time so maybe— maybe it was okay to sit there a while.

Eventually Ilya’s hands stopped shaking. At some point his fingers quit trembling. When he could breathe without feeling like his chest was in a vice, he fumbled for the cigarette he’d dropped and lit it up, taking a deep drag and holding it until his lungs ached, then releasing it all in a smoky, cloudy plume.

“Fuck.” he muttered hoarsely, closing his eyes in relief as the nicotine hit his system. “H-holy fuck.”

“Smoking’s bad for you.” Shane regretted the words the very second they left his mouth. He really was a wet blanket, wasn’t he? Didn’t drink, didn’t party, lectured people on smoking when they were sorta kinda obviously freaking out? *Awesome*.

“Yes , but I look cool.” Rozanov took another drag, held the cigarette out offering, “You want to look cool?”

“What?” Shane blinked at him, “What? *No*. I don’t smoke. Cos you know. It’s *bad* for you.”

“Okay.” Ilya wanted to smile the very tiniest bit at Hollander’s huffy little explanation.

He *did* smile the very tiniest bit when Hollander realized, “Oh, you were fucking with me.” and elbowed him lightly in retaliation.

“Yes.” Ilya elbowed him back, left his arm pressed sort of resting against Hollander’s leg. “Fucking with you.”

“So um.” Shane shifted on the cold concrete, not necessarily trying hard to keep their arms touching but not doing much to dislodge them either as he leaned back a little on the step. “Do you feel ready?”

Ilya angled his head to look at him, blue eyes darting over his face.

“To play.” Shane’s eyes dropped to Rozanov’s mouth, the shape of his lips and it took him a half second to *focus* so he could clarify. “You’re first draft pick. They’re expecting a helluva rookie season from you. Are you like– nervous?”

“Mm.” Ilya turned away to exhale another cloud of smoke. “No.”

“Oh.”

Hollander sounded disappointed by the answer. By the *deflection*. Ilya ran his tongue along the inside of his bottom lip and tapped the cigarette on the step, knocking off a little ash before he asked, “You are nervous?”

“I dunno.” Shane frowned down at his feet. “I guess. Yeah. It’s a big deal, right? I don’t want to disappoint my parents. Don’t wanna let Canada down.”

Ilya didn’t answer. Shane went quiet again too, went quiet and stayed quiet for as long as he could manage before trying not to sound too peevish when he commented, “The smoke’s bugging me.”

“This might be hard for golden boy Shane Hollander to understand,” Ilya didn’t want to be mean, not when Hollander was being so goddamn *nice* sitting with him so he didn’t have to come down from his freak out alone, and he grimaced when the words were blunt, stilted and stiff and sounding mean in his thick accent, “Sometimes cigarette is only thing to keep from throwing myself off roof.”

“I guess I understand that.”

“You... understand.” Ilya turned to look at him *again*, brow furrowed as he looked Hollander over *again*, looked him over *closer*, looked him over like he hadn’t already memorized every single freckle on Hollander’s face that night at the gym after the draft. “Why?”

“I dunno.” Shane shrugged, staring at his feet so he wouldn’t have to look up and see Rozanov staring at him. Eye contact with the mercurial Russian was always a gamble, always a risk, and sitting this close meant the eye contact was damn near nose to nose and *that* was too much the way the party had been too much, too much the way the eye contact and shared water in the gym had been too much in a skin prickling, heart pounding, overheated over *stimulated* sort of way.

“I just mean.” he cleared his throat. “You know. There’s a real thin line between a good day and a bad day. Sometimes the line is whether or not I can get a drink when I want one.”

“Ginger ale is thing keeping you from jumping off roof?” Ilya couldn’t help teasing and when Hollander’s head jerked up, mouth parting in surprise, Ilya tried to shrug it off nonchalant, “You drank ginger ale at draft. I wanted vodka like real man. Noticed, is all.”

“Like a real man. Jesus Christ.” Shane didn’t know what to think about Rozanov paying enough attention to him to know his drink. “You know, you should at least smoke up on the roof. The hotel is non smoking and that includes the stairwells.”

“Boring rules.”

“But still *rules*.” Shane pointed out, and he thought maybe Rozanov did another one of those very tiny smiles about it, like *yeah* he was definitely making fun of Shane but not in a mean way. Not in the exasperated irritable way everyone else usually made fun of him. “If you take the stairs to the top floor, there’s a door that opens to the roof. It’s nice. Quiet. There’s a good view of the city. I’ve been going up there most nights after the games just to uh,” he waved his hand vaguely. “You know. Escape.”

“Escape.” Ilya understood that urge, that need, right down to his bones. “Okay. Is fucking cold, though.”

“Yeah but you’re Russian.” Shane was teasing. *Trying* to tease. “Isn’t this basically summer weather? It’s seven degrees outside, that’s a heatwave for you, right? Downright balmy?”

“You are not funny.” Hollander *was* funny in a deadpan, blunt sort of way. If someone wasn’t paying attention, they’d miss the lift to his lips and the spark in his eyes, but Ilya *was* paying attention and he caught it all. He ashed out his cigarette and stood to his feet, wincing as everything numb and stiff from sitting on the concrete step pulled, then held out his hand to help Hollander up too. “Come on, not-funny boy.”

“Oh.” Shane hesitated. “You want me to come too?”

“Yes.” Ilya curled his fingers motioning for him. “Was your idea. Come.”

“...okay.” Shane took Rozanov’s hand slowly, startling when Rozanov grasped his fingers tight and hauled him right off the step and almost right into his body, face to face and almost nose to nose, feet bumping and knees knocking and *shit*, they were very suddenly very close, very suddenly *way* too close, Shane very suddenly couldn't breathe.

"Shit." he blinked blinked blinked and looked away, ducked his head and dropped Rozanov’s hand and shied from the too close, almost nose to nose eye contact, blushed dark red cos he hadn't been able to hide his reaction in the slightest.

Ilya tilted his head, ducked his head, angled his head trying to catch Hollander’s gaze again and raised his eyebrows, “Roof?”

The big Russian held his hand out again and Shane stared at it, at Rozanov's thick fingers and all the callouses and scars and work carved into the lines of his palm... then took it.

Hollander took Ilya's hand slowly and Ilya reflexively squeezed at him, wound their fingers together and pressed at him, wondered for a half second at just how naturally easily their hands fit together and wondered for half a second if Hollander knew he was smiling staring down at their clasped fingers.

"Yeah." Shane swallowed and nodded and pressed lightly lightly at Rozanov's hand in response. “Y-yeah. I’ll show you. Come on.”

Thirteenth floor, fourteenth floor, fifteenth floor, roof. At some point, some other roof-visitor had left a big rock in the hall so no one would get trapped outside if the auto-locking door swung shut behind them, and Shane let go of Rozanov's hand to nudge the rock into place between the door and the frame the same way he did every single time he snuck away from the noise to get some peace and quiet high above the city lights.

It was damn near midnight and *really* fucking cold outside. Shane zipped up his jacket, Ilya pulled his beanie down further over his ears and they huddled side by side against the huge HVAC unit so the residual heat of the rumbling machinery would ward off the worst of the night chill and keep things bearable. Shane shoved his hands into his pockets and Ilya lit another cigarette, not avoiding holding hands but not-- not trying to hold hands again either, and Shane tilted his head back to look up at the stars in the clear night sky, giving Rozanov a few minutes to smoke in peace before he prodded, “So you’re... not okay.”

“No.” it was easier to admit the second time. Easier to confess after Hollander had seen him upset and hadn’t turned away disgusted or laughed at him or walked away and left Ilya alone. Easier to be honest after Hollander had sat close in the stairs and held his hand up the steps and was sitting close again against the heating unit.

“No.” he said again. “We lost. I lost. My Papa is,” Ilya cleared his throat past another wave of nausea as his dad's voice echoed noisy again through his mind. “Angry. Ashamed. I let him down and let Russia down. Is embarrassing. He is *embarrassed* about me.”

“That’s a dumb reason for him to be mad, though.” Shane maybe inched his foot a little bit closer to Rozanov. “I’m just better than you, that’s not your fault. Not really.”

“Fuck you.” Ilya smiled and maybe inched his foot a little bit closer to Hollander, too. “No, is just,” the smile fell away. “Normal. He is always this. He has high ah—” he snapped his fingers trying to find the word. “Like. Dreams. Wishes. For me, but he wishes for himself too.”

“You mean expectations?” Shane ventured. “When people expect us to be some insane level of perfect and then get mad when we *aren’t* that perfect. They take it really fucking personal that we don’t live up to *their* hopes and dreams, even though they were never this good, never had this much pressure, they have no fucking clue what it’s like to be us.”

“Yes.” Ilya nodded shortly. “Expectations. Yes.” English was hard and being heard was a *relief*, being understood by Shane Hollander was a real *specific* relief that made Ilya's breath catch and his headache ease and his heart pitter patter *hopeful*. “You know the same? You feel,” he rolled his shoulders miming a weight on them. “Is heavy. On shoulders.”

“Yeah.” Shane laughed quiet and commiserating and melancholy. “My Mom, you know she means well. But every single second of the day she’s talking about how it’s a big deal to be *me*. How I have a responsibility to break barriers and open doors and trailblaze so other kids like me can watch hockey and know they can do it too. And I get it,” he sighed. “I get it and it’s important but sometimes it’s like... sometimes it’s like everyone wants me to succeed for their own reasons and nobody gives a shit about what *I* actually want.”

“Hm.” Ilya flicked some ash away. “I know what you want. What you wanted. You *wanted* first draft pick.”

“I did.” Shane rolled his eyes at him. “I *did* want to be first draft pick.”

“Is lonely at top.” Ilya said then, careful with his words so the bluntly clipped syllables didn’t sound rude when *really* he was trying to be funny, trying to be maybe a little bit *flirty* since Hollander kept moving in and in closer and closer until they were touching again. “Is nice to have someone here with me. You. Even if you are second best.”

“Asshole.” Shane bit back a wide smile. “Yeah, no, I get it. It’s nice to have you sitting up here on top of the roof with me, even though you’re *definitely* not as good as me.”

A quick glance sideways proved Rozanov was smiling too, almost grinning really and Shane had to breathe breathe breathe *quick* through his heart doing something flip floppy in his chest before he managed, “I don’t know, you know. I just wanna play hockey. No expectations except my own. No standards except the team and my coach. I want to win, obviously, but more than that I just wanna get on the ice and do what I love.”

“Me too.” Ilya nodded. “Just want to play. Nothing else. Everything else sucks. Is all so much bullshit.”

“Exactly.”

“Hm.” Ilya flicked the rest of his cigarette away, then wiped his mouth and turned to Hollander, “Okay. Enough talking. Come here.”

“What are you– whoa *hey!*” Shane jerked away when Rozanov moved in quick and close with his lips pursed like he was leaning in for a *kiss*. “What the hell are you doing?!”

“What?” Ilya frowned at him. “You do not want kiss?”

“*What?!*” Shane’s voice cracked *frazzled*. “What, n-no! No! I don’t want– why would you think–!”

“You are staring at my mouth all night.” he pointed out. “Same as after draft, in gym. I thought–”

“Jesus *fuck*, Rozanov.” Shane knew he sounded terrified. Hell, he probably *looked* terrified. It was one thing to sit next to Rozanov and comfort him, maybe to hold hands as a--a *reassurance* thing because like-- like *maybe* Rozanov could have gotten lost on the way to the roof and holding hands made sure he didn’t do that, right? It was one thing to hang out on the roof under the stars and laugh together, it was one thing for Shane to have replayed the night at the gym in his head on repeat for months, but it was a whole *other* thing for Rozanov to try and kiss him, right? That wasn’t okay, *right?* It wasn’t okay...

...oh holy shit, was that sort of thing *okay?*

“Okay, I misunderstand.” Ilya tried to shrug it off, scratching at his chin and tugging at his earlobe and shaking his head trying not to take it so fucking *personal* that Hollander was apparently disgusted by the idea. By *him*. “Is fine. Sorry.”

He stood up, abruptly disenchanted with the starry night sky and view of the city lights. “Do not worry Hollander, I will not say anything about–”

“Fuck.” Shane clamped his hand onto Rozanov’s arm to– to *what?* To stop him from leaving? To try and explain why he was abruptly panicking and maybe apologize for being rude? *Fuck*.

“Hollander.” Ilya didn’t look at him, *couldn’t* look at him as he half heartedly tried to shake his arm loose. “Is nothing. I misunderstand. Don’t–”

“Yes!” Shane blurted out loud and breathless and so nervous he was *shaking* with it. “I mean– um–”

“Yes.” Ilya didn’t move. Didn’t breathe. “What is yes?”

“I mean yes.” Shane whispered with his heart lodged in his throat and his stomach swooping. “K-kiss me?”

Ilya sat back against the heating unit again, cautious and careful and checking in, “Yes, you want kiss?”

“Yes I want,” Shane wet his lips and barely got the words out. “You? I want you.”

“Fuck.” Ilya exhaled and, “*Fuck*.” Shane echoed, then gathered all his courage and *lunged* forward to kiss Rozanov before he lost his nerve and chickened out.

Or maybe *Ilya* lurched in to grab Hollander up tight and kiss him before the moment passed and they both realized it was all a very bad idea.

Someone moved, they *both* moved and they crashed into one another with a messy, clumsy kiss, noses bumping and teeth clacking and it *wasn't* a good first kiss. It was *not* a good first kiss, not by Ilya's standards who had kissed dozens of boys and girls because he thought it was fun and not even by Shane's standards who had only kissed two girls and hadn't been very impressed with either attempt.

It wasn't a good first kiss, but Ilya grabbed for Shane's chin, grabbed at his chin and directed him turning the *right way* and Shane's brain short circuited *empty* when the grip at his jaw and strong fingers sweeping at his throat felt like maybe he should settle down and just *obey*, and their next kiss locked in *perfect*.

"Roz—" The rest garbled into a twist of tongue. All Shane could think feel taste was *Rozanov* and when he tried to put it into words, Ilya shoved his tongue past his parted lips so Shane let it go into a ragged, needy *moan*.

"Too many clothes." Ilya wrenched away from the filthy wet kiss to try and get at Hollander's throat, plucking and pulling at the coat collar and the hoodie so he could dig his teeth into Hollander's neck. "Should have stayed inside. Been naked."

"F-fuck yeah, p-probably." Shane craned his neck into the slick heat of Rozanov's mouth, scooting closer, scooting closer, stuttering and stammering through a bite at the hinge of his jaw and trying to get *closer* until he finally just sat up on his knees so he could brace his hands at Rozanov's legs, at his hips, so he could fumble at the bulky jacket and get under the puffy material to get to *skin*.

"*Hollander*." The shock of hands at his bare stomach made Ilya groan and the delighted, awestruck noise Hollander made at feeling Ilya's abdomen tense and flex under grabby, greedy touches made him groan all over again. "Come here, up here."

Shane fell forward into another sucking, searing kiss, leaning in and in teetering on his knees with his hands shoved under Rozanov's jacket and nails scratching down his stomach, and Ilya cursed at the drag of teeth along his bottom lip, then planted both his hands at Hollander's ass and *yanked* him onto his lap, grabbed at Hollander's thighs and *dragged* him in to straddle him.

"Holy shit." Shane's eyes rolled back when Rozanov closed a hand at his neck and pressed experimental for a dizzying few seconds. He barely had time to realize *oh that was good* and *oh Rozanov could definitely hold him tighter like that* before Rozanov was ripping the zipper of his coat down and grabbing at his chest through the hoodie, groping over his pecs and gripping at his waist, palming at his ass and thrusting up underneath him and, "Oh *fuck*, Rozanov!" Shane's head dropped back, mouth open panting into the cold night air when Rozanov rubbed himself hard and thick against his rear.

"Like this." Ilya hooked his fingers into Hollander's belt loops and urged him, "Hollander, like *this*, come on." rutting into the curve of his ass until Hollander nodded and shuddered and ground down against him, spreading his knees and settling his weight— "*Shit*, Rozanov

am I too heavy?” and Ilya laughed a little bit delirious, “Fuck no, get all the way on me. Sit. *Sit.*” – and they both groaned *loud* when Shane dropped all the way down sitting heavy on him.

“We gotta be quiet.” Shane babbled as they moved together. “Fuck, Rozanov we gotta– we c-can’t–”

“Then shut up.” Ilya grabbed a handful of Hollander’s hair and pulled hard, jerked forward to cover the startled noise with an open mouthed, messy kiss. He swallowed whatever else Hollander was going to say and used the momentary distraction to get his other hand down at Hollander’s crotch, fumbling with the button clasp and zipper fly for an impatient few attempts before giving up and just curling his fingers along the hard cock outlined in the tight pants, palming and pressing and *rubbing* as Hollander whimpered against his tongue and pushed jerkily into each touch. His legs were trembling where they were locked at Ilya’s hips and the pet of Hollander’s hands and fingers under Ilya’s shirt turned sharp, fingernails scraping at Ilya’s stomach, teeth dragging at Ilya’s tongue and bottom lip as his breath got choppy and loud.

“Gonna cum.” Shane whispered like he couldn’t believe it. “G-gonna cum!” he moaned desperate and needy, humping up into Rozanov’s hand and the pressure over his cock. “*Fuck* Rozanov, please–please–!”

“*Fuckkkkk Hollander...*” Ilya growled out when he felt Hollander’s cock throb spilling under his hand, soaking the dark pants and seeping through wet against his palm. Hollander collapsed onto him choking on a plea for Ilya to “Don’t stop, don’t stop, Rozanov, s-so good, fuck. Keep doing that, k-keep doing that–” so Ilya kept stroking over him, cursing the zipper and buttons and material keeping him from knowing what Hollander *really* felt like, but not letting up digging his fingers at the outline of Hollander’s cock and rubbing his thumb firm over the wet patch at the tip until Hollander was twitching away and flinching over-sensitive.

“Holy shit.” Shane pushed his face into Rozanov’s shoulder, a whole body tremor shaking him right down to his core. “Holy shit, Roz. I can’t believe we did that, can’t believe I just--”

“Okay but I need you now.” Another time, some fucking insanely hypothetical *next* time, Ilya would have been happy to hold Hollander on his lap until he stopped shaking, would have been thrilled to take his time fucking basking in the heat of each breath and the brush of a dozen little kisses at his throat as Hollander mumbled incoherent but satisfied against his neck.

But right then, “*Need* you.” Ilya grabbed for Hollander’s hand and shoved it down the front of his sweats. “Right there, *yes*—!” Ilya’s head cracked on the heating unit when Hollander’s strong fingers closed around his cock. “Like that. Fuck.”

“Oh my god, Rozanov...” Shane whispered still dazed and still shaky and wholly stunned by just how *heavy* Rozanov was in his hand. He was thick and long and Shane hadn’t ever touched another cock except his own and he gasped loud when he swiped his thumb over the blunt head and Rozanov blurted a curse at the same time a line of precome leaked all over Shane’s fingers.

“I’ve never done this?” he tried to apologize as he stroked at him clumsily. They were plastered too close together with too many clothes on for him to get Rozanov’s pants down and out of the way, so Shane could only get to a few inches and he curled his fingers around the width of him as best he could, thumbing at the leaking slit and jerking his hand fast trying to make it good. “Rozy, I’ve never um– I haven’t-”

“No, no is good, is good, come here.” Ilya grabbed him into another kiss, filthy and deep and fucking his tongue through Hollander’s mouth as he closed his hand over Hollander’s fingers and showed him how to touch him, lifting up into each down stroke so make it last longer. “*Da* like that, Hollander, good job, *fuck*, is good.”

Rozanov trailed off into rapid fire Russian and Shane bent in to suck a line of kisses at his throat, at his earlobe, licking and biting and *shuddering* when Rozanov’s deep voice bottomed out ragged, the stream of words cracking and hitching as Shane pulled over his cock fast and firm and twisting his wrist at the tip the way Rozanov had showed him.

“*Hollander.*” Ilya grabbed at Hollander’s hair, at his broad shoulders and bulky arms, held tight at the dip of his waist and dug bruising into his hips and muscled thighs, biting into the side of his cheek so he wouldn’t yell as he came spurting into Hollander’s palm, spilling messy over his knuckles and dripping onto his hand, matting into the hair at his stomach.

“What the fuck, that was so hot.” Rozanov’s lips were lax, his mouth open loose as he tried to get his breath back, but Shane didn’t care. He caught Rozanov’s mouth and covered him in a long kiss, shaking his head when Rozanov tried to mumble what sounded like an apology for the *mess* and sliding his clean hand under the beanie to tangle his fingers into Rozanov’s curls, stroking lightly over the slowly softening cock and open mouth inhaling the smell of sex and sweat and spend for as long as he could before the moment cooled and the night air rushed back in and the *reality* of what they’d just done started to sink in.

Then, *midnight*.

The alarms on both their phones went off, jangly and intrusive and *shattering* the sex drunk solace of their rooftop hideaway.

Curfew.

“Fuck.” Shane jumped. Cursed. “Shit. is it already–”

“Midnight.” Ilya nodded slowly, hands loose at Hollander’s hips and eyes careful tracking over his face, cataloging the freckles and long lashes and the flush beneath his flawless skin... and not seeing a single ounce of regret *anywhere* on Hollander's prettily fucked out expression.

“We are Cinderella.” he said softly, smiling a little so Hollander knew *he* didn’t regret it either. “Midnight and is real life. Back to work.”

“Yeah.” Shane said just as softly, nodding just as slowly, his fingers tightening briefly in Rozanov’s hair before he forced himself to let go. “Back to work.”

They peeled apart and tried to put themselves back together in silence, turning off the curfew reminders and grimacing through adjusting clothing, shivering when midnight seemed to drop the already cold temperatures right towards *frigid* and hurrying towards the propped open door and the waiting warmth inside.

All too soon they were back in the stairwell, back at the door for the fourteenth floor and Shane's room, only a few stairs and a landing away from the Russian team's block of rooms on the thirteenth, and as Shane reached for the doorknob, he tried to smile like his entire sense of self and sexuality hadn't just been turned inside out by the guy who was supposed to be his mortal enemy- all time nemesis- arch *rival* for the foreseeable future in their MLH careers.

"So. I guess I'll see you next season?"

Ilya smiled too, sniffed and scratched at his nose like it wasn't killing him to let Hollander walk away without one last kiss. "See you next season."

July

By July, Shane had more or less managed to put January and the hotel and Rozanov out of his mind.

He couldn't escape Rozanov *completely*, of course. Both their names were everywhere as the highly anticipated up and coming rookies for the new season, any interview or story that mentioned Shane had to mention Rozanov and any that mentioned Rozanov had to mention Shane, stats were being compared and records being revisited— he couldn't *completely* escape any mention of Rozanov, but by July Shane had more or less managed to not think about the guy unprompted.

More or— or *less*. Because Shane had replayed what happened at the hotel an embarrassing amount of times. He'd hadlain in bed and thought through every second he remembered from the night of the draft and then through every second of their conversation on the roof. He'd gotten distracted mid run, mid bike ride, mid workout when a mental picture of blue eyes first shiny with tears then lit hot and *needy* flashed through his head. A pretty blond girl winked at him, "Good *job*, Hollander." after he won a local shot accuracy competition and Shane had to sit down and breathe a couple times because after he'd heard those same words *growled* in Rozanov's thick accent, nothing else even came close.

The girl had thought Shane was blushing cos of her, and had slipped a note with her number into his hand.

Shane hadn't called. Hadn't thought too much or too long about why he had no interest in calling. He went right back to working out, to training, to prepping for the season and more or less *not* thinking about Rozanov.

Nope.

...*nope*.

“Shane honey, I just got a call from the guys at CCM.” Yuna Hollander tapped her ear and motioned to Shane so he’d take his headphones out and pause the treadmill for a minute. “They want you to fly to Toronto this week instead of next week for that commercial.”

“Okay.” Shane twisted the cap off his water bottle and took a long drink. “Did they say why?”

“Uh yeah, actually.” She laughed a little. “Weirdest thing, they want you to do the whole thing with *Ilya Rozanov*. Isn’t that crazy? They think it’s a great idea to put you two on the ice in front of the camera and really dial into all that tension and heat and media coverage about your rivalry.”

Yuna frowned when Shane *choked* on the next swallow of water, spluttering and spitting and coughing all over the treadmill and all over himself. “Shane?”

“I’m fine. Just. You know. Messed up breathing.” Shane braced his hands on the treadmill bars and screwed his eyes shut. “That’s— yeah. Okay. Commercial with Rozanov. When um- - when do we have to leave?”

"Two days." she opened the travel app on her phone to get their flights switched. "I'll take care of the flights, you go get started on laundry so you can pack."

"Sure. Yeah. Thanks, Mom."

Yuna left the in-home gym, muttering under her breath about last minute schedule changes and how Shane didn't need fucking Rozanov to promote anything, the companies and brands were going to find out soon enough that Shane Hollander alone would be an advertising powerhouse for them.

Shane waited until she was all the way gone, then pressed a hand to his stomach as it *rioted* with enough butterflies to make him dizzy, and laughed a little bit excited, laughed a little bit terrified.

He'd more or less managed to not think about Rozanov too much for the last six months, but *oh fuck*.

Oh fuck.

Fic Notes

*Absolutely obsessed with these boy having a *moment* before their first time, a sort of liminal space freeze frame few hours between what their lives had been at seventeen and what their lives and careers will be within six months. Right here they are just eighteen, practically still kids, scared of what's coming and trying not to buckle under the weight of expectations and wholly aware that the only person who would possibly understand is the same person they're supposed to consider their rival.*

Can't stop thinking about how this prelude would affect their canon relationship, like specifically how Ilya is so confident coming on to Shane post commercial, how Shane asks if they need to talk before hooking up, how their conversation about expectations reframes the "Shane Hollander will you disappoint them" chirp.

Just. Idk. I love them. Nobody make fun of me if I come back for a chapter two, my chronic inability to write one shots without expanding the verse is already the bane (blessing??) of my existence.

Thanks for reading!

Find me on tumblr [@not-close-to-straight](#) for behind the scenes writing process/head canon stuff, snippets of upcoming fics, and general fandom nonsense.

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