

The Sound in My Chest (Is the Beat of Your Heart)

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The Sound in My Chest (Is the Beat of Your Heart)

by [fizzyfics](#)

Summary

“What the fuck are you doing, Hollander?” he demands harshly. “Why are you even here?”

He watches as Hollander flinches and his face falls, a mixture of hurt and confusion so potent that Ilya desperately wishes he could shove the words back in his mouth.

“Where else would I be, Ilya?” Hollander asks quietly, Ilya’s name like a gut punch every time he hears it drop from Hollander’s lips. “You’re my—”

But Ilya cuts him off. He can’t stand Hollander seeing him like this, so vulnerable again, when he already walked away from Ilya once. “I’m not your anything, Hollander. Go back to Rose Landry.”

OR

Ilya wakes up in 2027, living his happily ever after. But his mind thinks it's 2017 and the last time he remembers seeing Shane Hollander was when he walked out of Ilya's house after eating his tuna melt.

Notes

Title from Ben Platt's *Need You Like This*.

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

Ilya Rozanov wakes up in a hospital bed. This is hardly the first time, and very unlikely to be the last, given his lifelong commitment to antagonizing anyone he can on the opposing team—and sometimes his own—during games as a professional hockey player. But it's unusual for him to not remember *why*.

It's also unusual—or really, downright shocking—to see Shane Hollander sitting vigil at his bedside. Ilya might be almost ready to admit to himself that the hook-ups and flirty texts and his need to know where the Metros player is at all times mean more than he's been claiming, but he has no idea if Hollander feels the same. Last time he saw the other man, it had ended in Hollander making the lamest excuse possible and practically fleeing from Ilya's house. And now he's dating Rose fucking Landry. So what the fuck is he doing in the hospital, slumped in the plastic chair next to Ilya's bed? Ilya wants to shake him awake and demand answers, if not for his own satisfaction then for the sake of Hollander's neck, which is bent in a way that makes Ilya wince.

He tries to say Hollander's name, but his throat is dry and his voice doesn't seem to work. He clears his throat and tries again.

"Hollander," he says flatly, suppressing an amused smile when Hollander immediately jolts awake. He looks at Ilya and the relief that floods his features makes Ilya feel like he might cry.

"Ilya." Hollander's voice is gruff, a clear indicator of his own exhaustion, but so full of warmth that Ilya is almost more taken aback by his tone than hearing his first name fall from those perfect lips.

"Hollander, what is happening?" Ilya demands. "I do not remember getting my bell rung."

Hollander's brow furrows and Ilya wants to reach his hand out and smooth a thumb over it.

"Ilya..." Hollander starts, then falters. He seems unsure of what to say. "You weren't hurt playing. You were in a car accident."

"What the fuck," Ilya swears under his breath. Hockey he can understand. It's a contact sport, and sometimes a player gets their shit rocked. But a car crash? It's so...banal. He's almost embarrassed.

He glances at Hollander again, noting that his dark eyes are searching Ilya's face for something. He has no idea whether he finds it. Hollander reaches toward the hospital bed, moving to cover Ilya's hand with one of his own, but Ilya rips his away before they make contact.

"What the fuck are you doing, Hollander?" he demands harshly. "Why are you even here?"

He watches as Hollander flinches and his face falls, a mixture of hurt and confusion so potent that Ilya desperately wishes he could shove the words back in his mouth.

“Where else would I be, Ilya?” Hollander asks quietly, Ilya’s name like a gut punch every time he hears it drop from Hollander’s lips. “You’re my—”

But Ilya cuts him off. He can’t stand Hollander seeing him like this, so vulnerable *again*, when he already walked away from Ilya once. “I’m not your anything, Hollander. Go back to Rose Landry.” He says it without even looking at Hollander, staring instead at where the IV disappears into his right hand.

A sound pulls itself from Hollander’s throat then—hurt? Confusion? Ilya doesn’t know, but he keeps his eyes on the catheter in his hand until Hollander has gotten up and left the room. Once he’s alone, he sags back into the bed, equal parts relieved for the privacy and upset that Hollander is gone.

He can’t understand why Hollander would be here. Last time they were together, Ilya thought maybe there was a shift between them. They had never spent time together after sex. Not much, at least. But last time, Ilya had held Shane during their nap. He hadn’t actually slept because he was equal parts terrified of and desperate for the feeling that wrapping his arms around the other man had evoked in him, but he’d pretended to wake up alongside him.

And he’d played at domesticity, like an idiot, lured into a false sense of security that maybe the fact that his favorite hook-up was turning into something more. Not just in his own mind, but in the space they shared. He’d been scared shitless by the implications and, yes, he knows that they can’t be together for real. But he thought they could have a night of tuning out all the reasons why it wouldn’t work and let themselves be...more. Just for tuna melts and a night of sleeping together, in both senses of the word.

Hollander had left, though. Ran without a backwards glance and barely looked at Ilya even when they played against each other the next day. Ilya’s stupid brain had let him say Hollander’s first name as he shuddered through his orgasm, revealing too much of himself to Hollander and scaring him away. Not that Ilya blamed him. Even without the complicating factors of playing for the MLH, Ilya wasn’t worth the hassle he presented to Hollander. But he hadn’t thought Hollander would bolt quite so obviously.

Ilya shakes his head, trying to clear his thoughts, trying to pull them away from Shane Hollander.

“Knock, knock,” comes a voice and Ilya grunts to acknowledge the presence in the doorway: a doctor, he guesses, based on the sage green scrubs and the white coat.

As the doctor comes into the room, Ilya sees that she’s tall. Taller than him, maybe, with dark hair and dark eyes. She’s holding a laptop, which she sets on the table that hovers over Ilya’s feet. “Hello, Mr. Rozanov,” she says.

“Ilya,” he corrects her quickly.

She nods. “I’m Dr. Diaz. How are we feeling?”

Ilya grunts again and takes stock of his body. His head hurts, he definitely has some bruised ribs, and it feels like he might have a cut on his collarbone.

“I have been worse,” he answers honestly. Dr. Diaz smiles in response, and her eyes are kind.

“A car is nothing compared to Ryan Price,” she observes good-naturedly, and Ilya grins. “I’d like to ask some questions to make sure everything is good with your head. You do have a nasty concussion, but scans ruled out anything more serious.”

Ilya nods. “Okay.”

“What is your full name?” she starts.

“Ilya Rozanov,” he intones, unable to keep his tongue from slipping into the way he’s always said it—not the anglicized bullshit he hears from hockey announcers.

“Where do you live?” Dr. Diaz asks, even as she’s typing something into her notes.

“Boston,” Ilya answers quickly. After a beat, he adds, “Except in summer. Summers I go back to Russia.”

Dr. Diaz nods and types again. “Okay, great,” she smiles at him again, but it doesn’t reach her eyes this time. “One last question for you, Ilya. What year is it?”

Ilya almost laughs in her face at the question. Instead, he cocks an eyebrow at her as he replies, “2017.”

Her face stays carefully neutral, but her typing seems to go on far longer than necessary to spell out the four numbers of the year. Maybe she’s spelling out each number. That feels unnecessary and Ilya almost tells her so, but then she’s done typing and is looking at him very intently, so he keeps his mouth shut.

“Ilya,” she says, so gently that he’s suddenly afraid the car crash he can’t remember gave him terminal cancer. “You seem to have lost some of your memory as a result of this concussion.”

Ilya’s heart rate picks up and the monitor behind his head beeps rapidly. “What do you mean?” he asks. “How much?”

“About a decade,” Dr. Diaz informs him, wincing sympathetically.

His brow furrows. “Decade? What is decade?” His mind casts around for the meaning before it finally materializes. “Ten *years*?”

Dr. Diaz nods. “Yes, ten years. This is almost certainly temporary, considering the only physiological factor is your concussion. But unfortunately, we simply can’t always predict how brains will act. We’ll make sure you come in for check-ups and we’ll send you home with strict instructions to help your brain rest and heal. Okay?” she smiles kindly at him.

“Okay,” he agrees eventually, because what other choice does he have? He can’t force his brain to heal, and neither can she. “I cannot drive, probably,” he half-asks.

“No, but we’ll make sure you get home safe and sound. I’m going to send Mr. Hollander in. I think he’s probably the best person to fill you in on what’s going on. Nothing specific, but

you need at least a broad-strokes overview of the last ten years, okay?”

Ilya wants to protest. Shane Hollander is the last person he wants to see. He can't even believe that a decade after Hollander walked out on him, on *them* and any possibility of becoming something more, he's still in Ilya's life in any capacity. He nods at the doctor, his thoughts now swirling, and she leaves the room with one last smile.

He's thought a lot about that day in the weeks since. He wonders, briefly, how often he's thought about it in the years his memory has erased. But for him, now, Hollander fled a month ago. And Ilya supposes, with the safety of knowing that there is more time between him and that moment, even if he doesn't feel it, that he can finally admit to himself why it hurt so badly.

He never thought that Shane Hollander would be anything more than a rival. When they met that first night for a secret hook-up and Ilya had to pretend he wasn't completely taken in by Hollander's pink cheeks and freckles, he never thought they'd be more than fuck buddies.

But that day, for the first time, he let himself imagine that they might be something else. Something—*more*. He wasn't sure what, still isn't, because...hockey, and his family, and *Russia*. But he stupidly let his guard down just enough for it to sting when Shane—when Hollander was so clearly disgusted by the idea. When he couldn't even look at Ilya after he'd come with *Shane* on his lips.

And then his texts were being ignored. And then, after he finally took the hint and left Hollander alone, he saw the news in the gossip rags: Shane Hollander and Rose Landry, the perfect couple. She was beautiful, of course, but not as beautiful as Hollander. And Ilya's heart had squeezed painfully when he'd seen how happy Hollander looked. He'd realized that what Hollander had with Rose Landry was what he'd wanted all along. Something easy and comfortable. Something he wouldn't have to hide. Something Ilya could never have a hope of offering him.

Now, though. Now, a decade later...Shane Hollander was here, sitting beside Ilya's bed when he woke up in the hospital after a car crash. Ilya can't make sense of it.

He closes his eyes against the onslaught of his thoughts, too tired to try to untangle them. He just wants things to make sense again. And if they can't, he wants to go to sleep until they do.

He isn't sure how long his eyes are closed before he hears someone—Hollander, almost definitely—clear their throat from the end of his bed. He cracks an eye open to glance at the other man, but doesn't acknowledge him beyond that.

“Dr. Diaz said I should tell you some things,” Hollander finally offers. Ilya notices he's fidgeting nervously with his hands, but only when he opens his eyes fully does he realize that he's fiddling with a gold wedding band. It hits him somewhere in his throat. Shane Hollander is *married*.

God, everything he learns makes less and less sense. If Hollander is married—to who? To Rose Landry? To some woman Ilya can't even remember hearing about?—his presence here makes even less sense. And it already makes almost zero sense to Ilya.

“You are married,” he states, rather than acknowledging what Hollander said.

Hollander blinks at him, then glances down to where his hands have stilled their fidgeting. He shoves them into the pockets of his joggers, then nods.

“Yes.” Ilya’s heart aches impossibly more at the confirmation. “That’s one of the things Dr. Diaz wants me to talk to you about.”

Ilya scoffs, wrenching his gaze away from Hollander’s face, half-focusing out the window at the darkening sky instead. “Why the fuck do I need to know that you are married, Hollander?”

He hears a sigh. Hollander walks around the bed and sits in the chair he’d been in when Ilya first woke up. Ilya tries and fails to stop his eyes from darting to look at the other man. When they do, he sees that Hollander is holding his hand out to Ilya. Not like he wants Ilya to grasp it, but like he’s offering something to him.

Ilya looks more closely and sees a ring on Hollander’s palm. He sniffs loudly. Hollander feels the need to give Ilya a fucking close-up of his wedding ring?

“I believe you, Hollander,” he says flatly. “I don’t need to see your stupid wedding ring.”

Hollander sighs loudly, then grabs Ilya’s hand and shoves the ring into his palm. “It’s yours, Rozanov.”

Ilya slowly unfurls his hand to study the band. It’s simple. Gold, with a slight bevel around the edges. He looks at the inner surface and sees three letters engraved there: SKH.

“What is that?” he asks, finally. “What means SKH?”

“Those are my initials. Shane Katsuro Hollander.” Hollander takes his own ring off and shows Ilya the engraving inside it: ИИР. “And those are yours.”

“No,” Ilya shakes his head in confusion. “My middle letter is Г, not И.”

Hollander opens his mouth to explain, but Ilya cuts him off. “Wait. Hold on. This means...we are married?” he asks.

“Yeah, Ilya. We’re married.” The way Hollander is looking at him is so guarded, so defeated, that Ilya’s heart hurts before his mind can even process what this means.

“But...you ran away. What about Rose Landry?” he demands.

Hollander—Shane—his *husband* chuckles a little. “Sorry,” he says quickly. “I know this is a lot. Right now, to you, that’s current. But Rose and I lasted less than two months. She was the one who helped me realize I’m gay, and she’s my best friend, but...we were barely anything then, and we’re definitely not anything now.”

Ilya shakes his head. “I still do not understand. How did this”—he gestures between them—“happen?”

Shane takes a breath. “After Rose and I broke up, you and I...started to see each other again. It was different than before, but, I mean, it was still pretty casual. But, uh,” Shane clears his throat nervously. “Well, your father died.”

He pauses and watches Ilya’s face. Ilya flinches at the words, but rationally, he’s not surprised that his father didn’t live another ten years considering the condition he was in last time they spoke. He lets all the swirling thoughts around the news drift away and nods at Shane to continue.

He does, with a small sigh. “That was kind of a turning point for us, in some ways. And then some more stuff happened—sorry, I don’t know how much to say. I don’t want to overwhelm you.”

Ilya shakes his head, wordlessly encouraging Shane to go on. “Anyway, eventually, you came to my cottage for two weeks. I think we both knew it was a turning point, and we were both scared shitless. But we made a plan to be together. And that plan worked okay, with some bumps. But we’ve been together since then. And married for almost six years now.”

Embarrassingly, Ilya feels moisture in his eyes. He slips the ring in his hand onto his finger without thinking about it, twisting it as he processes everything. He knows, deep down, that the feelings he’s been scared to admit, even to himself, translate to love. It wasn’t until Shane walked out of Ilya’s house and Ilya saw him with someone else that he even admitted that he had feelings at all. But of course it was love.

He’s been fucked since the first time he saw Shane’s perfect freckles and pink cheeks and deep brown eyes at the International Prospect Cup in 2008. He can’t even pinpoint when he first fell for his rival; he just knows that he loved Shane during a thousand tiny moments. When Shane folded his clothes before they hooked up, and when Shane sucked at sexting, and while Shane tried to chirp at him over their texts during the summers. He loved Shane’s serious face and how he called Ilya an asshole so often, it felt like a term of endearment. He knows he loved Shane through all the thousands of moments that he can’t access, and that’s the thing that makes a tear finally break free and trail down his cheek.

“Ya tebya lyublyu,” he whispers, just to taste the words on his tongue.

Shane’s head jerks up and his breath hitches. His eyes search Ilya’s face. “Ya tozhe tebya lyublyu,” he whispers back. He says it easily. Not unaccented, but with the air of familiarity that only comes with learning a language and using it over time.

“You learned Russian?” Ilya asks, awed, another tear escaping the corner of his eye.

“You taught me. I wanted to be fluent before—” he cuts himself off and looks down.

“Before what, Shane?” Ilya watches Shane’s face, even as his husband—his *husband*—refuses to look up from his lap.

“Before the baby comes,” Shane says softly.

Ilya doesn't have a chance to try to control his face. He can feel the grin stretching his cheeks out. "Baby?" he asks, giddy. "We have baby?"

Shane looks at him with guarded joy. "Not yet, but our surrogate is due next month."

"So soon," Ilya breathes, his eyes feeling moist again. "Is girl? Or boy? Or we don't know?"

Shane laughs at Ilya's excitement and Ilya can physically see some of the tension leaving his body. "A girl."

Ilya gasps softly. "I've always wanted a daughter."

"I know," Shane smiles.

"Do we have name for her?" Ilya presses. Shane nods, but doesn't tell him the name. "Well?" he demands impatiently.

"Katya Suzume."

"Katya Suzume," Ilya repeats, rolling the syllables around in his mouth.

"You seem disappointed," Shane says after a beat passes. Ilya shakes his head quickly.

"No. Not...disappointed," he says, but doesn't know how to explain his reaction.

"You thought it would be Irina," Shane says.

Ilya nods slowly, realizing that's exactly what it is. "Yes. I always imagined if I have daughter...I name her Irina."

"We thought about it," Shane says. "But—" he cuts himself off and runs a hand through his hair.

"But?" Ilya repeats, his eyebrows raised. Shane's face scrunches in concentration and it's the most adorable thing Ilya's ever seen.

"Your initials," Shane says on a heavy exhale, clearly making a decision. "On my ring. You said they were wrong, right?"

It's so far from what Ilya expected that his thoughts spin for a moment.

"Right," he agrees, though he's not sure why they're discussing *his* name.

"When we got married, it was easy for either of us to change our names as part of our marriage license. Any part of it, weirdly. So you changed your middle name to Irinovich."

Ilya's breath catches. His father is gone, and his grief will be complicated when he dares to parse through that loss (again, he supposes). But his name being entirely devoid of his father's presence heals something within him. *Ilya, son of Irina*. He casts his eyes upward, searching for something to say.

“Irinovich,” he repeats. “And so baby...our baby...will be Katya Suzume what? Hollander?”

“Hollander-Rozanov,” Shane corrects. “Obviously.”

“Obviously,” Ilya agrees with an eye roll that he only half means. “You must always be first, da?”

“You’re the one who suggested we be Hollander-Rozanov. It’s not my fault it sounds better,” Shane says with a smug look on his face, one shoulder rising in a shrug.

“We?” Ilya asks, his eyebrows shooting up to his hairline. “I am Hollander-Rozanov, too?”

“Only off the ice,” Shane clarifies, as if that makes it better. Although, if he’s honest with himself, it does. He likes that they’re still Hollander and Rozanov when they play each other. And that they can still chirp each other with their surnames when the mood strikes.

He looks at Shane, their smiles mirroring on their faces, and finally gives himself permission to really take him in. His hair is longer than in Ilya’s memory, curling around his ears and brushing his shoulders. His freckles still stand out against his cheeks and in constellations across his nose, but Ilya sees the passage of time on his face, now that he’s looking. Wrinkles like hairline fractures hide in the corners of his eyes, an exhibit of the happiness he’s put on display his whole life. His eyes are the same dark brown they’ve always been, but Ilya can tell he’s been crying by the pink along his waterline.

He has a sudden need to have Shane close to him. He scoots over on his bed, trying to free up as much of it as he can.

“Come here,” he demands, patting the bed with his left hand, the gold band catching the light.

Shane shoots him a questioning look. “Ilya...”

He clearly doesn’t have a real reason to protest, so Ilya ignores him and jerks his head in a silent command. Shane gives him a small, involuntary smile and carefully climbs onto the hospital bed next to Ilya. He sits stiffly, clearly unsure how to act, until Ilya loops his arm around Shane’s neck and settles them into each other.

“I am sorry,” he says quietly after a moment, “that I do not remember our life together.”

Shane’s breath hitches before he moves his arm to offer his hand, waiting for Ilya to carefully place his own IV-laden hand into it. “The doctor thinks you’ll get it back,” he whispers.

“I hope so, but...” Ilya trails off with a small shrug.

“But what?”

“I don’t need it. Not really. Would be nice to remember the last few years, but I have more than I ever thought I could. I kind of feel like I woke up in a dream.” He shrugs again, as if Shane doesn’t know him well enough to see through that, and forces himself to look at his husband’s face.

Shane's eyes are welling with tears, but he looks awed. Like he can't believe his good luck. "You're fine with going from tuna melts to married-with-a-baby in, what? A month?" he asks incredulously.

"Yes," Ilya says simply. "I love you. I want babies. All is good."

Shane laughs, then, bright and unabashed and wet with tears, and Ilya's own face pulls into a broad smile to match.

"I love you, too." Shane says it like it's simple. To him, Ilya supposes, it is.

"Maybe we speed-run relationship," Ilya jokes. "Do everything we did over the last ten years before baby comes."

"Okay," Shane agrees earnestly. "I'd do it all again."

Ilya grins widely, feeling more at peace and happier than he would have thought possible. He feels all the ways his body remembers the changes of the ten years he lost: his smiles come easier, his shoulders are looser, his chest is lighter.

"Can I kiss you?" he asks softly. His gaze darts between Shane's eyes and his perfect, plump lips as Shane smiles softly and nods just enough for Ilya to see it.

Ilya leans in, capturing Shane's mouth. He pours everything he doesn't know how to say into the kiss; love, disbelief, pure unadulterated joy. Shane kisses him back with such obvious relief and adoration that Ilya feels his throat tighten around the threat of tears. He deepens the kiss, the hand still looped around Shane's neck coming up to stroke the sensitive skin behind his ear.

Shane makes a small noise in the back of his throat and pulls away just enough to lean their foreheads together. "I'm sorry," he whispers into the space between them. Ilya pulls back further, searching Shane's face for clues of what he did wrong, but Shane keeps speaking before he can ask.

"I know, for me, it was a long time ago, but you don't remember my apology for walking out that day. So I'm sorry. You didn't deserve it. I was just freaking out and I had a lot I needed to deal with before I could admit how I felt."

Ilya smiles softly at this beautiful man, leaning back in to touch their foreheads together. "Is okay," he promises. "It all worked out, da?"

"Da," Shane agrees, angling for a kiss. Ilya happily leans in and grants it to him.

"Moy muzh," he says. It feels surreal that his life has changed so much that he can *have* a husband, let alone that he's married to Shane. He thinks he might need to remind himself every moment of the day for a while before it really sinks in.

"Tvoy muzh," Shane replies, and somehow Ilya hears their whole future in those two words.

End Notes

Ya (tozhe) tebya lyublyu: I love you (too).

Moy/Tvoy muzh: My/Your husband.

I don't speak Russian OR have any medical background so pls suspend your reality just a smidge tysm.

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