

Many Loved Before Us, I Know That We Are Not New

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Many Loved Before Us, I Know That We Are Not New

by [servetas](#)

Summary

“This is hard to talk about,” is all he says, though he knows it will amount to nothing.

Shane’s fingertips are feather-soft on his chest. “You have to.”

He has to, because Shane and Ilya have this thing, now, this agreement. Nothing is too hard to talk about. Nothing is off limits. They have to be bare, have to surrender the deepest crevice of their soul to one another. And Ilya, for whom this is easier said than done, whose chest carries a perpetual weight, an immovable mass, it’s all worth it – worth the relief smoothing over Shane’s features, the reassurance that he’s not worried anymore, that Ilya can give him this peace, albeit only a fragment of what Shane gives him by just being there when he wakes up. He would never say it, but he thinks that what he has to offer to Shane amounts to nothing – nothing compared to what Shane does, what Shane is, by simply nuzzling into his chest and sighing into his sleep, late at night when all Ilya can do is lay awake and just feel.

“I need more,” Ilya says. “And is nothing you can do. I need you inside me, and it feels terrible.” He swallows, with great difficulty. God. “I need to– I need to eat you.”

or, Ilya never knew love can hurt this good

Notes

this is like tiny but it was in my head and I can't stop thinking about them. We need to become more serious about crying lovesick pathetic shane-worshipping Ilya Rozanov as a nation this is imperative

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

Ilya can never tell whether he's asleep or awake, these days.

When they're lying in bed like this. Shane is on his side, soft breaths and eyelashes brushing the smooth skin that sits taut and rosy on his cheekbones, face peaceful in a way that no one else but Ilya is allowed to see. It almost feels like a dream, Ilya's arm solid around his torso, chin tucked in the safe crevice between Shane's shoulder and neck, nose sneaking in the beautiful scent of Shane's calm with every breath. He's happy. Even with the hollowness of his chest, a confusing pit in his stomach that makes him angry at himself, he's happy.

So, Ilya doesn't know whether he's asleep, or awake. It's all too beautiful, too right. Overwhelmingly so.

"I can feel you staring at me," Shane is mumbling, voice sleepy, lips barely moving in their sleep-swollen state.

Ilya closes his eyes on instinct, but the blow of not being able to trace the strong line of Shane's nose is too much to bear, and he opens them again almost immediately. "You can't feel someone staring at you," is what he says, equally quiet, thinking that if he did anything to disturb the peace in their bedroom – this room, his whole world – something terrible might happen to him. Self-induced, probably. "Is impossible."

"I can feel *you* staring at me," Shane repeats, wiggling in his place so that his back is pressed closer to Ilya's chest – which is impossible, a thought that makes Ilya feel even worse. "*You.*"

"*You* are schizophrenic," Ilya supplies, burrowing his nose into Shane's neck a bit more, allowing himself that much.

"You can't say stuff like that," Shane tells him, but when he turns his head to show Ilya his eyes, they're crinkling at the corners. God, Ilya is hurting. "It's insensitive. What would people think?"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Public Relations," his forehead pushes into Shane's jaw with how deep he wants to dig his nose into Shane's skin. Just inhale him whole until there's nothing left. He wants Shane inside him, intrinsically.

Shane lets him. Ilya knows he has a hard time with it, letting himself be felt – worshipped even, when it comes to Ilya – but he's working on it, and Ilya thought he couldn't love him more, but he keeps being proven wrong. Day in, day out.

But he breaks, eventually. He gently touches Ilya's cheekbone with two calloused fingertips, though the touch is still soft, getting Ilya to rest his cheek on his shoulder and raise his eyes, slightly glassy in a way that he hopes Shane will attribute to how early it is. "Did you sleep at all?" Shane asks him, worried in a way that doesn't make Ilya feel anxious like it once did, like he's doing something wrong – he just feels loved, important, and it hurts just the same.

Still, he swallows, blinking once in preparation. “I don’t know,” he says, exhaling a soft laugh when he takes in the groove between Shane’s eyebrows, the corner of his mouth feeling wobbly as it rises. “You look like I said something bad.”

“Well,” Shane starts, pausing as he situates himself – Ilya feels a lump of panic in his throat at the prospect of Shane moving away, only for a sense of relief to wash over him when they come face to face, Shane letting himself be engulfed in Ilya’s arms, eyes careful, and beautiful, and so deep and brown that Ilya feels like he’s staring right into the sun, “I don’t know. I feel like you haven’t been sleeping much lately.”

Ilya hasn’t looked away from that brown haven. He thinks something dreadful will happen if he does. “I’m not tired or anything,” he supplies, desperate to smooth over that groove, the furrow of Shane’s brow. No dice. “I’m okay.”

Shane doesn’t look convinced. “Would it be worth... I don’t know, I mean, do I snore? Do I take up a lot of space during the night?”

Ilya laughs in a way that makes him feel crazy. In a way that has Shane’s cheeks reddening, in that way that makes Ilya want to bite, to rub his face all over his, to eat him.

“*What?*” Shane says, clearly embarrassed. “I’m just trying to understand, you don’t have to be an asshole about it.”

“My baby,” is all Ilya can say, all he can do alongside kissing all over Shane’s rose-coloured cheeks, over and over and over, because he can’t eat him, he physically can’t, it’s impossible. “My baby,” he says again, fingers touching along the nape of Shane’s neck, digging into his hair, wanting to touch, anywhere, everywhere.

Shane lets him. He’s pliant and soft, and impossibly pink all over, but his face is easy when Ilya stops kissing all over his face to get a look at him, eyes so big, so bright, a clear lake that Ilya wants to swim in.

“You do not take enough space,” Ilya tells him, and the groove is back – Shane’s trying to understand. “I *want* you to take more space. I want you everywhere.”

His throat feels tight. It must show on his face, and Shane must understand that the thin sheen of moisture in his eyes is not due to a lack of sleep, but something else. Something Ilya doesn’t know how to begin to talk about.

“You got me,” Shane’s voice is small, confused but well-meaning. Ilya wants to kiss him again. “You got me everywhere.”

“I don’t. Not the way I want.”

Shane is blinking at him, swollen lips parting, so pretty, so edible. “Is there something wrong?” he asks, in a way that kills him. It kills Ilya, the fact he can hold him like this, be so close that he can hear him even when he’s so quiet. It hurts, and it shouldn’t.

But he wants to kiss that frown right off his face. Has to physically restrain himself not to. “This is hard to talk about,” is all he says, though he knows it will amount to nothing.

Shane’s fingertips are feather-soft on his chest. “You have to.”

He has to, because Shane and Ilya have this thing, now, this agreement. Nothing is too hard to talk about. Nothing is off limits. They have to be bare, have to surrender the deepest crevice of their soul to one another. And Ilya, for whom this is easier said than done, whose chest carries a perpetual weight, an immovable mass, it’s all worth it – worth the relief smoothing over Shane’s features, the reassurance that he’s not worried anymore, that Ilya can give him this peace, albeit only a fragment of what Shane gives him by just being there when he wakes up. He would never say it, but he thinks that what he has to offer to Shane amounts to nothing – nothing compared to what Shane does, what Shane is, by simply nuzzling into his chest and sighing into his sleep, late at night when all Ilya can do is lay awake and just *feel*.

So, he has to. But it doesn’t make it easier.

Inhale. “I need you,” he says, quiet, so quiet that he’s not even sure Shane has heard. Shane, who is looking at him with so much trust, so much devotion that it makes him dizzy with happiness. “I need you everywhere. All the time. And there is nothing you can do about it.”

The groove is gone. “You’ve got me,” Shane says again, a bewildered little smile playing at his lips. He must not understand the severity. “You’ve got me, Ilya.”

“I need more,” Ilya says. “And is nothing you can do. I need you inside me, and it feels terrible.” He swallows, with great difficulty. God. “I need to– I need to eat you.”

Shane bursts into giggles, but it doesn’t make Ilya feel bad, unheard in any way. He knows it’s ridiculous. The sound, so beautiful, makes him feel better, but only marginally.

“I need you closer than is possible to have you, all the time. It hurts that I can’t be closer to you than this.”

His arms around Shane’s back, the way he’s pulled him flush against his chest, serves as punctuation to his point. Shane’s eyes are so bright, so happy. Ilya wants to cry. He’s pretty sure he is.

“Ilya, I don’t know what to say,” Shane stammers, but he’s happy, he’s so happy, and he’s brushing his fingertips over Ilya’s eyes to gather the wetness so softly, so gently that it makes the lump in Ilya’s throat grow thicker. “I’m not sure what to…”

Ilya lets him trail off, watches his wide smile, his beautiful rosy cheeks strain with it. He wants him. He’s got him, but he wants him so badly.

“I would let you,” he says after a beat, his expression almost timid, shy like Ilya hasn’t seen all of him, felt all of him over and over in ways no other person has, and ever will. Even his ears are red – even his ears are beautiful. “Eat me. I think I’d let you eat me, if you wanted.”

Another tear rolls down Ilya’s cheek. “I can’t eat you.”

“But I’d let you.”

“Is not possible for me to eat you,” it almost sounds like Ilya is tearing up because he can’t have Shane for breakfast, lunch, and dinner – and although he is, he feels like he’s not expressing himself properly. He’s not making sense. “Is not something I can do.”

Shane has to bite his lower lip to keep his face from splitting. It looks like a difficult task, what with how wide his smile has gone. “I would like to eat you, too,” he says, voice giddy, high. Ilya loves him. Ilya misses him, and he’s right there, giving him everything, everything. “I love you.”

He needs to tell him. He needs to know. “I miss you all the time,” Ilya presses their foreheads together, needing to be close, closer than close, the tips of their noses touching. “I miss you when I’m in the bed and you’re in the kitchen. I miss you when I’m holding you. I miss you right now– My baby, my baby...”

Shane is shushing him, soothing and anchoring, his arms coming up to engulf his head, fingers running through his hair, smoothing over his scalp like he’s trying to feel his brain. He burrows his nose into the side of Shane’s neck again, inhaling deeply, letting his scent anchor him, convincing himself Shane is right there, that he’s close enough, as close as he can have him.

“I’d let you live in my skin, if I could,” Shane murmurs, a promise spoken against his hair – but Ilya misses his face, misses looking at it like it’s been years since he last did. “I promise. I promise I would.”

“I love you,” Ilya says in reply, because it’s all he can say. It’s all he can think about. “I’m sorry for being stupid.”

“Stop that,” Shane tells him, his arms so tight around Ilya’s neck, his head, that Ilya can only hope he will suffocate with his last inhale being Shane’s scent, a beautiful death. “I love you. Don’t say that about yourself. It hurts me.”

“Боже мой...” Ilya whimpers, because he’s so full of love that it hurts, it hurts in a way that feels better than anything he’s ever felt before, better than anything he hasn’t – no drug in the world, no achievement can ever replicate the beauty of this agony that he feels in Shane’s arms. “Я тебя люблю,” he mumbles, lips flush against Shane’s neck, wanting to engrave the words into Shane’s skin. “Я тебя люблю,” he says again, kissing, over and over, everywhere he can reach. *I love you, I love you, I love you.*

He feels Shane’s shuddery breath against his shoulder, warm, making his skin tingle. “Say I’m your baby,” Shane whispers – Ilya knows he’s got his eyes closed, his lips slightly parted as he accepts Ilya’s kisses, he knows everything about Shane, knows everything Shane *is*.

“You’re my baby,” Ilya kisses the jut of his jaw, his earlobe. “You’re my baby,” he kisses his cheek, his eyelid, his eyebrow.

Shane’s face is the image of pure bliss. Anyone else might have thought he was asleep – but not Ilya. Ilya knows him. “Say it in Russian,” Shane says – even quieter, if that was possible.

“Ты мой малыш,” Ilya does not hesitate for a second, because Shane’s asked something of him – but it doesn’t sound quite right, not as perfect as this moment. “Ты мой родной,” he says instead, and this time he feels a sense of relief, so he keeps saying it, so that the words penetrate Shane’s skull. “Ты мой родной, ты мой родной...” a kiss on his neck, his throat, his chin, his philtrum.

Bliss is not even the word. Shane looks like Ilya is touching his very soul, smoothing it over in his hands, ironing over every crease. “Fuck, I love you,” he whispers, and now his own eyes are wet, in the way that makes Ilya’s heart feel constrained, weighed down with love and awe and admiration and so much gratitude. These are the moments that make Ilya feel religious, truly one with God. “Fuck. Ilya.”

“Now you know,” Ilya is smiling, despite it all – because he knows Shane gets it. Relief washes over him in a crashing wave. “Now you get it. Do you get it?”

“Fuck, Ilya,” is all Shane can say before he’s kissing him, hard and desperate, tongue licking over the roof of his mouth like he really *is* trying to eat him, like he’s trying to climb into his mouth and let Ilya eat swallow him whole. A surrender. When he pulls away, it looks like it hurts, like he wants to dive right back in, “I love you. It hurts. Is it supposed to hurt?” he asks, blinking earnestly, and Ilya melts, a puddle in the sheets they picked together in Nova Scotia.

“I think so,” Ilya tells him, rubbing smooth circles into Shane’s cheeks with both his thumbs, then smoothing back the sides of his eyes, damp and warm. “It has to.”

Ilya is aware that everyone must feel like they are inventing love when they are in this deep. He’s aware that many have loved before them, that many have expressed the sentiment much better than he ever has, than he ever can. And sadly, deep inside, he knows there’s someone out there who must be able to give Shane exactly everything he deserves, show him love the way he is supposed to be shown.

But he doubts anybody has ever felt this way before. And selfishly, he knows he’d sooner die than let Shane be loved by someone else, be felt so intrinsically by anyone other than him – the thought makes him sick, makes him pull Shane even tighter, in a way that he’s sure must be constricting his breathing in some way. But he can’t stop. He doesn’t want to.

“Thank you,” Shane is whispering, leaving a trail of kisses on Ilya’s shoulder. “Thank you for letting me love you.” And the doubt vanishes.

End Notes

thank you for reading!!!

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