

Tea, A Drink With Jam

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Tea, A Drink With Jam

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Summary

Ilya plays through a worsening fever, then learns to let Shane take care of him.

Notes

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

Ilya's limbs were made of lead, he was sure of it. He felt slow, sluggish, and tired, like he was skating with weights on his back. His stick felt heavy and awkward. The lights of the rink were too bright, the crowd too loud. He had a pain in his head that radiated down to his teeth. But if they won tonight, they were guaranteed a playoff spot. He wasn't going to let himself be scratched for a little fatigue.

By the end of the second period, he couldn't deny that it was more than a little fatigue. He'd almost tripped over the boards entering the ice. His passes were off the mark. He'd hit the post twice.

"You okay, Rozanov?" Marlow asked.

"Yes, yes, fine," Ilya answered, trying to will away the headache that continued to pound behind his eyes.

"Because you look sick," Marlow continued.

"Marlow, if I tell you to shut the fuck up, will you do it? Or are you incapable of closing your mouth?" Ilya asked. He wouldn't say he hated Marlow; he just had never entirely forgiven him for giving Shane a concussion and breaking his collarbone. For almost giving Ilya a heart attack that day.

He was starting to fade with five minutes left in the game. He could barely skate, and he was trembling, his skin covered in goosebumps under his pads.

He made one final push towards the puck skimming along the boards, letting himself glide so his legs didn't have to work so hard. One minute he was flying, and the next he was falling, slammed into the boards by Scott Hunter and hitting the ground.

He growled in frustration, doing his best to stand and get back to the bench quickly. He could feel Marlow looking at him, but ignored him.

He had a sliver of energy left for his post-win speech, and then he was stripping and showering as quickly as he could. Press was a nightmare, the lights bright and the voices loud.

“Ilya?” he heard as he finally stumbled through his apartment door. Shane had a few days off and had come to stay with him.

“Shane,” he answered. He tried to make it sound normal, but he knew it came out more like a whine.

Shane looked at him and frowned. “What’s wrong?”

“Nothing,” Ilya said, too quickly.

“You didn’t look like yourself tonight,” Shane tried. He stepped forward and kissed Ilya’s forehead. “You’re warm.”

“Just from shower,” Ilya replied. He placed kisses down Shane’s neck, letting his fingertips skim down Shane’s arms.

Shane felt the faint tremor in Ilya’s body and shook his head. “I’m getting the thermometer,” he said, separating them.

“Russians do not get sick,” Ilya called after him.

“Open,” Shane commanded, returning with the thermometer.

“This is *nemuzhnyy*,” Ilya groused.

“I don’t know what that means, but just put this in your mouth,” Shane replied.

“I could put something else in my mouth,” Ilya said, but the effect was ruined by the way he covered his eyes with his hand, trying to block out the light of the room.

Shane sighed and shoved the thermometer under Ilya’s tongue. “You have a fever,” he said after it beeped.

“Okay. I take medicine, we fuck, yes?”

“*Ilya*,” Shane said. “What is with you?”

“Nothing is ‘with me,’ Hollander.”

Shane shook his head. “Don’t.”

“I don’t understand. Is just fever. I take medicine and it will go away. No big deal.”

“You need to rest,” Shane said.

“Is not plague, Shane,” Ilya snapped, untwisting the cap on the Tylenol bottle and washing two pills down with water.

“Ilya, seriously, stop. Just come to bed.”

Ilya shook his head. “I will sleep in guest room. This way I don’t wake you up.”

It took Shane until Ilya was a few steps down the hall to actually move. “Wait, Ilya, hold on,” he said, grabbing Ilya’s arm. “Seriously, what’s going on? You want to sleep in the guest room?”

Ilya shrugged. “Is just easier. That way I don’t bother you.”

Shane’s brows scrunched together. “You’re not *bothering* me, Ilya. I’m trying to take care of you.”

Ilya moved his arm out of Shane’s hold. “I don’t need taking care of.”

“Hey, it’s okay,” Shane said quietly. “I know you don’t *need* taking care of. But I want to.”

Ilya frowned. “But...I take care of you.”

Shane nodded. “Yeah, you do. And you do such a good job. You take such good care of me, baby. That doesn’t mean you don’t get to be cared for too.”

Ilya scratched absently at the back of his neck. “No one has....No one has done that in long time.”

“I know,” Shane soothed. “That doesn’t mean you don’t deserve it.”

“Shane,” Ilya choked.

“It’s okay,” Shane whispered, wrapping Ilya in an embrace. “I’ve got you.” He could feel that Ilya was still tense. “Let go, *mon amour*. You’re safe.”

Ilya struggled for a few seconds, then sobbed against Shane’s neck, the weight of being really alone while supporting everybody else finally making itself known in a place where Ilya could finally acknowledge it. His arms wrapped tightly around Shane’s shoulders as Shane made little shushing noises in his ear.

Finally, Ilya’s body started to go limp. His face felt hot and sticky with the remnants of tears. Shane scooped him up, urging Ilya to wrap his legs around Shane’s waist, and carried him to the bedroom.

Shane laid Ilya on the bed, and Ilya began to shiver. “Shh,” Shane soothed. He pulled the blankets up around Ilya’s shoulders. “I’ll get you a sweatshirt. And you need some Gatorade to stay hydrated. I’ll be right back, okay, *chéri*?”

“Okay,” Ilya said into the pillow.

Shane soon returned with a bottle of Gatorade and the softest sweatshirt he could find in Ilya’s closet. “Here we go,” Shane said, helping Ilya sit up and put on the sweatshirt. He then handed Ilya the bottle of Gatorade, and Ilya drank a bit before setting it on the nightstand.

Ilya squeezed his eyes shut, his headache still persistent behind his eyes. “Shane,” he whispered. “Hurts.”

Shane slipped into bed beside him. “Your head?”

Ilya nodded. “Head. Muscles. I think my skin hurts.”

Shane kissed his forehead. “Come on, let’s lie down,” he said, guiding Ilya to lie next to him. “Try to sleep.”

Ilya closed his eyes, and despite how uncomfortable he was, he was also exhausted, and he fell asleep quickly.

Ilya woke up and glanced at the clock: 2 AM. He whined quietly and rolled over, trying to get comfortable. He was cold and achy, and his sleep so far had been restless. He grunted as he stretched his legs out, pulling the bedding tighter around himself as he trembled.

“Ilya?” Shane mumbled.

“Is okay, *luchik*,” Ilya said.

Shane pushed himself up on his elbow. “You feeling okay?”

“Yes, just—*ah*. Just cold. Cannot get comfortable.”

“Oh, my baby,” Shane replied. “What do you need?” He ran a hand through Ilya’s hair, noticing how wet it was near his hairline. “You’re sweating.”

“I’m freezing,” Ilya said, shaking his head.

“Here,” Shane said, shaking out two more Tylenol. “Take these.” He waited until Ilya swallowed the pills, then guided him to lie down on his chest. He pulled the heavy covers down off Ilya’s shoulders, leaving a sheet and blanket.

“Shane, *nyet*,” Ilya moaned.

“It’s okay, I’ve got you,” Shane replied, stroking Ilya’s sweaty curls. He held Ilya’s shivering body against his and started singing a song his mother used to sing to him.

“Une chanson douce

Que me chantait ma maman

En suçant mon pouce

J’écoutais en m’endormant.”

Ilya started to settle, his breathing becoming deeper and his body relaxing.

Shane woke the next morning to Ilya still asleep against him. He subtly put his hand to Ilya’s forehead—warm, but not as warm as last night. He carefully pulled away, making sure to rearrange the covers to keep Ilya warm, and left two more Tylenol next to Ilya’s Gatorade.

He was downstairs waiting for the toast to finish when he heard Ilya behind him. “Good morning,” he greeted, kissing Ilya’s forehead. “How do you feel?”

“A bit better,” Ilya mumbled.

“Do you think you can eat something?”

“Can always eat something,” Ilya answered, and Shane laughed.

Ilya managed toast and fruit, and Shane brought him back upstairs and ran a bath. He helped Ilya undress, wincing in sympathy as Ilya groaned at his sore muscles. He eased Ilya into the bath, wetting a washcloth and running it over Ilya’s chest and shoulders. “Okay?” he asked, and Ilya nodded. “Can I...?” Shane asked, trailing off.

Ilya looked at him. “What is it?” he asked quietly.

“Um,” Shane said, swallowing. “Can I wash your hair?” Ilya smiled and nodded. Shane took a cup from under the sink and filled it with warm water. “Tilt your head back and close your eyes,” he instructed. Ilya did so, exposing the long line of his throat, and Shane carefully poured the water over his head, watching it run off his curls.

He squeezed shampoo into his palms and worked it into a lather, then gently massaged it into Ilya’s scalp. Ilya groaned in pleasure. “Okay?” Shane asked.

“Mmm,” Ilya answered. “Feels...nice.”

Shane smiled. “Tilt back again,” he said, and rinsed Ilya’s hair. He soaped up the washcloth and gently washed Ilya’s body. Ilya’s eyes remained closed, and Shane could see that he was getting drowsy. He helped Ilya to stand and step out of the tub, immediately wrapping him in a towel. “Sleepy?” he asked softly.

Ilya nodded against his shoulder. “I do not like being so tired.”

“I know,” Shane said, kissing Ilya’s temple. “But you need rest right now so you can get better. Go lie down on the couch and I’ll make tea.”

Ilya smiled. “You are like team mom, Hollander,” he said affectionately, and Shane rolled his eyes.

When Shane returned, Ilya had turned on the TV and was settled against the arm of the couch with a blanket. He sat up, then froze. “What is that?” he asked, pointing to a glass jar and a spoon next to his mug.

“Raspberry jam,” Shane answered hesitantly.

Ilya looked at him. “How did you know about this?”

“I, um...I texted Svetlana,” he said. “I’m sorry if I shouldn’t have, I just wanted to see if there was anything from home that would—.”

Ilya cut him off with a hug. “You are home,” he said, squeezing his eyes shut in the hopes he wouldn’t cry. He gently tugged Shane down to sit with him. Carefully, he added a spoonful of jam to his tea, smiling when the sweetness hit his tongue. “*Ya lyublyu tebya bol’she chem kogda-libo mogla sebe predstavit,*” Ilya said softly into his mug.

“What does that mean?” Shane asked.

“You should know first part,” Ilya answered.

“Mmm,” Shane hummed. “It was ‘I love you.’”

“Ah, my Shane is so smart.”

“Then I think ‘more’?” Shane asked.

Ilya snorted. “Yes. You hear that one a lot.”

Shane blushed and lightly smacked Ilya’s arm. “Okay, I love you more. More than?” he guessed.

Ilya nodded, setting down his mug and resting against Shane’s shoulder. “It means I love you more than I ever could have imagined.”

Shane’s breath hitched. “Oh,” he said, his arms coming up around Ilya. “*Tu es tout mon monde,*” he said into Ilya’s hair.

“I am guessing that means ‘you are very sexy.’”

Shane laughed. “It means you are my whole world.”

Ilya buried his head in Shane’s neck, and Shane stroked a palm up and down Ilya’s back.

“What are we watching?” Shane asked after a minute.

“Show about old houses. Is boring. You would probably like it. Good to sleep to.”

Shane chuckled and shifted them so they were lying down. He placed a palm against Ilya’s forehead. “Sleep,” he whispered. “More medicine when you wake up.” Soon Ilya’s breathing evened out, and Shane, lulled by Ilya’s warmth, fell asleep himself.

The rest of the day was spent lounging. Shane ordered chicken noodle soup and made sure Ilya stayed hydrated. As they lay in bed that night, Shane took Ilya’s temperature again. “You are officially fever free,” Shane announced, kissing Ilya on the lips.

Ilya took Shane’s hand in his. “Thank you, *moya lyubov*,” he said, blushing and looking at their joined hands. “*Ty tak khorosho obo mne zabolish’sya.*”

Shane smiled and kissed him again. Ilya felt his heart flutter at the warmth in Shane’s eyes. “I’ll always be here for you, okay?”

Ilya nodded, wrapping his arms around Shane and lying down. “*Ya tebya lyublyu*, Shane,” he said.

“I love you too, Ilya.”

End Notes

All translations are from the internet, so please forgive any mistakes!

nenuzhnyy (Russian): unnecessary

mon amour (French): my love

chéri (French): darling, sweetheart

luchik (Russian): sunray

nyet (Russian): no

moya lyubov (Russian): my love

Ty tak khorosho obo mne zaborish'sya (Russian): You take such good care of me

Ya tebya lyublyu (Russian): I love you

The song Shane sings is called "Le loup, la biche et le chevalier (Une chanson douce)" by Henri Salvador, which translates to "The wolf, the doe and the knight (A sweet song)."

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