loving this body

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by beetlesandstars, kryptonian

Summary

> Ilya picks up on the third ring, breathing heavily into the phone. Shane hears a door slam shut through the device. “Do not yell at me.”
>
> Shane stares at the half-empty bottle of vodka on the coffee table. “You suck.”
>
> “I *suck?* I scored hat-trick! In your stupid body! I have not eaten in six hours, Hollander. I have not pissed. I have not laid down. I want to go home.”
>
> “Rozanov–”
>
> “Your mother has called twenty times. Your manager has called thirty times. Your father text me picture of crossword puzzle and ask for help. Clue is about American President from the 1980s. I cannot help!”

OR: the hollanov bodyswap fic.

Notes

> hellooo! welcome. cj and i spent, no joke, 18 hours writing today. (it's our day off so we said fuck it) (why would we do that). anyway, the fic's timeline is vague. they have modern iphones. who even cares. we are going to bed. much love.
>
> enjoy! or else!
>
> cw: ilya’s brother calls him the f slur and threatens to out him. there is a homophobic conversation in a locker room. the term cocksucker and queer are used in a derogatory sense. also cw for ilya’s dad who fucking sucks and is mean to him. canon typical

See the end of the work for more notes

Shane wakes up to an alarm that is not his own. He knows it's not his own because he painstakingly searched for and changed it to Silk six months ago, and now Radar is blaring in his right ear.

With his eyes still half-shut, Shane scrambles for the phone and taps at the screen until the alarm shuts off.

And then he realises he's not in the bed he fell asleep in.

The sheets he's wrapped up in are navy *blue,* for one. The hotel bedsheets in New Jersey were white. And he was definitely in a hotel bed in New Jersey last night. Now, though…

Shane's head swivels as he looks around, stomach plummeting when it hits him that this… this is *Ilya's* bedroom. In Boston. Ilya's paintings on the wall, Ilya's dresser, Ilya's blue bedsheets, and Ilya's phone, still in Shane's slack hands.

Holy shit.

Okay.

Okay, so Shane either teleported to Ilya's house sometime during the night, or he's dreaming. Or maybe he sustained some sort of head injury? Maybe he has amnesia, or– or he's in a coma. *Something.*

Skin erupting in goosebumps, Shane slides out of bed on shaky legs. As soon as his feet touch the ground, though, he freezes. Because those are *not* his feet. He has touched these feet, has pressed a kiss to the right one's ankle. He has massaged these feet and watched them slip into and out of socks, and he has, on two separate occasions, accidentally stepped on these feet.

Because they are *Ilya's* feet.

Breathing coming quicker, Shane's head snaps back up, fumbling for the phone beside him. He taps the screen frantically, refusing to acknowledge what it means that he suddenly knows Ilya's phone's passcode, maneuvering quickly to the camera app, only to freeze a second later.

It just– it can't be. Ilya Rozanov cannot be staring back up at him with his big blue eyes, because that would be insane and impossible.

A second ticks by. Two.

His pulse skyrockets.

Swallowing, Shane drops the phone back down on the bed and gets up. He feels– taller. Heavier, somehow, like the room's gravity has shifted. He is also, he's realising, panicking.

Palms clammy, he makes his way down the hall and into Ilya's bathroom, gaze on the floor as he parks himself in front of the mirror.

This is the definitive test, he thinks. Once he looks up, he'll know for sure.

He looks up. Ilya's face – *his* face, now – stares back at him.

Fuck. *Fuck,* okay, Shane is somehow in Ilya Rozanov's body.

"What the hell," Shane says, voice jarringly loud. It reverberates through him, his voice lower like this, coming out of his own mouth. Hands trembling, he slaps gently at his own cheeks, unwilling to hit himself any harder in Ilya's body. He feels the sting of it, anyhow, and feels it again when he tugs at his – now curly and blond – hair.

Fuck.

This is really happening, he realises. It's like something straight out of a sci-fi movie, but Shane is somehow, literally, in Ilya's body. His consciousness has somehow been– transported, or something, into the body of his rival, and, *shit,* what the fuck happens now?

Oh, God. Oh, shit. Is he going to have to pretend to have a Russian accent? Is he going to have to pretend he can *speak* Russian?

Head spinning, Shane tries to think logistics. Ilya's in Boston because he has a game here tomorrow night. Shane was last in New Jersey, because he had a game there. Which– is Shane's body in New Jersey? Is Ilya in Shane's body?

Shane's ass promptly hits the edge of the bathtub.

This is fine, he tells himself. *This is so, totally fine, and I have everything under control.*

Distantly, he registers his phone ringing. He stares really hard at the tile grout and does not move.

It hits him then that he needs to pee. Which– no. Peeing for Ilya is just– it's too much. A step too far. If he's in a coma, he might piss himself. Or, he supposes he would be wearing a catheter, but– still. And if this is real, he would be touching Ilya's dick in a non-sexual context. He would have to look at it and aim the head of it at the toilet bowl and relax enough to actually pee.

Fuck his entire life.

In the bedroom, the phone rings again.

This time, Shane vaults himself to his feet and jogs back to the bedroom, clipping his shoulder on the wall. The pain barely registers.

He doesn't even glance at the Caller ID because it *has* to be Ilya, but then–

"Ilya, where the fuck is my money?"

Shane blinks. Pulls the phone back to find that it's Alexei, Ilya's brother, who has called. He should hang up, but he's too stunned to move, because Alexei definitely just spoke Russian, and Shane definitely just understood it.

"Alexei?" he says tentatively.

"Yes? Hello? Are you deaf? Where's the money, dipshit?" Alexei says, and Shane holds his breath.

"W-what, uh, what money?" Shane asks, in *perfect fucking Russian,* holy *shit.*

"What money?" Alexei asks, growing louder. "I asked you last night, Ilya. You're in fucking America, and I'm here with Dad. You expect me to take care of him without any money?"

"Alexei–"

"You sent me fifteen thousand last month like I'm some washed-up college kid. Like you're not rich. What happened to thirty thousand a month, *minimum,* huh? Dad is fucking useless, Ilya."

Reeling, Shane stumbles backwards until he knocks against the bed. He sits down heavily, unable to parse through the whirlstorm of emotions suddenly wreaking havoc in his chest.

"I pay you that much?" he blurts, dumb and confused.

"Are you fucking stupid?" Alexei asks, voice taut with anger. "Fifteen thousand to take care of an old man who doesn't even remember his firstborn son. It's a joke." A pause. Then, "Can you send the money this afternoon?"

Shane swallows. Doesn't reply.

"You want me to tell Dad you're a faggot, huh?"

Shane's blood runs cold. He forgets, momentarily, that Alexei is talking to Ilya. Clenching his fists, Shane says, "How– what do you mean?"

Alexei scoffs, voice taking on a meaner, sharper quality this time. "Sasha is back in town. I guess I could have a *talk* with him. I don't think his father would forgive and forget as quickly as ours."

"No," Shane says, quick and desperate. He has no idea who Sasha is, but he knows, instinctively, that Ilya cares for him. "I'll– I'll send the money. Just– this afternoon. I'll send it this afternoon."

"Good man," Alexei says. "Don't fuck up the game tomorrow, dipshit."

With that, the line goes dead.

Shane takes a deep breath, lowering the phone to stare at the screen. And then he finds Jane's number, clicking on it without letting himself think.

When Ilya wakes up, he expects to roll over and slap his hand down onto his alarm, hitting the snooze button with a practiced motion—but instead, beside his bed, as he opens his eyes, he blearily sees a phone that isn't his, but above that, across the room, Hayden Pike is asleep in the bed across from him.

He freezes.

No. Absolutely not.

Suddenly sure this is some sort of nightmare, he closes his eyes again. The alarm continues blaring a grating harp tune. Ilya believes if he keeps his eyes closed for long enough, he will open them again, and he'll be safely back in his bedroom in Boston, not in this weird nightmare realm where he is sharing a room with Pike. Surely, reality will correct itself before Ilya has to reopen his eyes.

Instead, barely a moment later, something smacks him in the head.

Hard.

"Shane," Hayden groans, voice thick and gravelly from disuse. "If you're gonna set your alarm an hour before we need to be awake, you gotta turn the damn thing off when it goes off. Jesus Christ, dude."

Ilya's eyes fly open. "What did you say to me?"

Another pillow flies across the room, colliding with his torso this time. "I got three kids, Hollander. I can sleep through a lot, but I can't handle your damn harps."

Ilya stares at the back of Pike's head—then at the phone that is still screaming at him. He lifts a hand, grabs the unfamiliar device, and hits the mute button. The screen goes black, and in the reflection, Shane Hollander's face stares back at him.

Oh.

This is not good.

This is not good at all.

Ilya taps the screen on, and staring back at him is a photo of Shane at maybe ten years old, smiling wide with his front left tooth missing, Yuna and David Hollander on either side of him with wide, proud grins on their faces as Shane grips both hands onto a trophy.

Shane looks so young, and his parents look so excited to be there. Ilya closes the phone so that he doesn't have to keep looking at it. He slides out of bed, dazed, and makes his way down the hallway to the bathroom. In there, he presses both hands to the sink, eyes closed, inhaling and exhaling, before dragging his lids open and lifting his head to witness what he kind of already expects will be there.

Shane Hollander's wide, deer-like brown eyes stare back at him, right beneath them, the freckles Ilya adored from the first moment he saw them. They dance along his cheekbones, dense and perfect.

Okay.

So, this is a weird nightmare. He's had many nightmares before, but none of them have been like this.

Surely, somehow, he will wake up.

Ilya stands there staring at himself—well, at Shane in the mirror, waiting for the universe to crack open and correct itself. Eventually, though, he realises how badly he needs to pee.

He sighs, placing the phone down on the counter, face down and pulls his shorts down. The soft dick before him is cut, which is a weird difference to adjust to, but Ilya has seen this dick many times before, tasted it, and touched it. They are well acquainted.

Once he finishes using the bathroom, he flushes, washes his hands, and picks up the phone again. He types in a code that he only somehow knows from muscle memory. It's fine. It makes sense. Dream logic is stupid.

But he does think that if Dream Ilya is in Shane's body—Dream Shane surely is in his.

He calls Lily.

The line rings, and rings, and rings. Then—his own voice comes through: "This is Ilya Rozanov. I cannot answer phone. Leave name and number." and then a long beep.

Ilya lets out a long, drawn-out, dramatic groan. He does not say anything else in the message. He hits the hang-up button and pockets the device. It seems he is alone in this nightmare world with Hayden Pike.

He steps out of the bathroom, and Hayden is shirtless and sitting at the end of his bed, texting. He looks up, smiling warmly like they're old friends. "Hey, man. The team meeting isn't for another hour or so. I'm gonna grab breakfast at the restaurant downstairs."

"So, we are playing today," he says out loud.

Hayden blinks. "Uh—yeah, buddy. We sure are. You feeling alright?"

"Yes. I am fine. We are playing … which team? I have forgotten."

Hayden immediately stands. He crosses the room, pressing the back of his hand to Ilya's forehead and searching his face. "You feeling okay?"

Ilya fights the urge to slap his hand away. "Yes. I am fine. Good. It was a simple question."

"We spent like twenty-five minutes talking about the Devils last night, Shane. Did you hit your head in your sleep?"

Well. Maybe Ilya is concussed. He has had weird, delirious hallucinations while being concussed before, though none were this vivid. “Right. I know this. We are in …” A pause, head nodding slow. “New Jersey.”

God, who the hell wants to wake up in New Jersey? He wants to go home. He wants to wake up.

His phone begins buzzing in his pocket, then chimes sound from it. He grabs the phone and sees *Lily* across the screen. He turns the screen so it’s not visible to Hayden, who is still looking at him with a scrutinising intensity that makes Ilya’s stomach feel twisted.

“I must take this.”

“Right,” Hayden says, squinting at him. “Okay.”

Ilya speed walks toward the bathroom, shutting and locking the door behind him. He drops himself onto the closed toilet seat and answers the call.

The phone rings four times before Ilya picks up.

Neither of them says a word for a long second, and then Ilya, in Shane’s voice, says, “Hollander?”

Shane inhales so sharply it stings. “Rozanov? Is– fuck, is that you?”

On the other line, Ilya laughs once, sharply. “Shane Hollander, are you in Boston?”

Shane can’t even spare a minute to acknowledge the terrible Canadian accent Ilya’s put on, because he’s too focused on the fact that Ilya is apparently not panicking *whatsoever,* which is *insane.*

“What the fuck,” Shane says. “What the fucking– fuck. Fuck, Rozanov, are you fucking kidding me?”

Because he’s the worst, Ilya laughs. Again. “I have never heard you swear so much when you are not getting fucked. You swear like pirate. *Arr*.”

“Shut the fuck up, this is fucking serious,” Shane tells him frantically. “You’re– I’m–”

“In wrong body, yes?”

“Yes!” Shane exclaims, throwing his hand up into the air.

A beat. Then, “Hm.”

“Hm? What does *hm* mean?”

“This is weird dream.”

Shane groans, foot tapping a furious rhythm into the floor. Lowering his voice, he says, “It’s not a dream, asshole. I woke up in your bed with your feet, and I had to pee, but I can’t pee with your dick, and now I’m literally talking directly to you, and you think you’re dreaming, which means you’re not taking this seriously when our careers are on the fucking line!”

This time, when Ilya speaks, he sounds brittle. “This is real?”

“For fuck’s sake, Rozanov– *yes.”*

Silence. Shane’s head keeps spinning. There’s so much to do. So much that could go wrong that they need to plan for.

“Listen,” he starts. “I have my whole itinerary for the month logged on my Calendar app, okay? Just do whatever’s on there, and if you have any questions, call me. I’ll look at your itinerary and do the same thing.”

“You are planning?” Ilya asks, voice incredulous. “I am in your body, and you are *planning?”*

“Our careers are on the line,” Shane grits out. “We have to pretend, right? Like everything’s normal. And then… Montreal. We’re both playing in Montreal in four days.”

Ilya makes a small noise. “You think we can fix problem together?”

Shane barks a panicked laugh. “I mean, fuck, man. We better. We can’t be stuck like this forever. Right?”

On the other end of the line, Ilya shuffles around. After a moment, he says, “Right. No, impossible. But again, I am in your body. Also impossible thing.”

“Don’t–” Shane closes his eyes. “Don’t think like that. We’re gonna fix this, you and me. Okay?”

“Okay, Hollander.”

Shane opens his eyes, realising that their pretending has to start now. “You can’t call me that.”

Awkwardly, Ilya says, “...Shane?”

“No. Jesus, I’m Rozanov. Okay? This starts *now.”*

“Hollander, stop panicking.”

“You have to call me *Rozanov,”* Shane hisses.

“Okay,” Ilya says. Then, mysteriously, he adds, “Hayden is going to breakfast, I will go with him. Do not pick up phone. Unless I am calling, then you pick up. Capische?”

Shane tries not to think about Alexei. He'll need to figure out a way to send him fifteen thousand dollars without Ilya's help, and without alerting Ilya to the fact that he's doing so.

"Alright," he acquiesces. "No bacon, by the way. Or whole-fat milk. Or bread. Eggs are fine, and you can have black coffee. See if they have smoothies, or–"

"Holy fuck," Ilya interrupts. "I am not eating like bird. Your body is hungry, H– Rozanov. I will feed it. Now go be me."

Shane squeezes his eyes shut. *"Fine.* Fine, whatever. What's your itinerary for today?"

Ilya blows a raspberry. "Nothing. Gym, maybe. Long run. Take a nap, Rozanov. Goodbye."

"Uh." Shane blinks. "Bye–"

The line goes dead.

Shane pulls up the camera app again and stares down at it, struck suddenly by what he thinks is a very appropriate amount of dread. Ilya Rozanov stares back at him, face contorted into horror.

"You're *fucked*. This is *fucked*. Everything's *fucked*," Shane says severely.

Ilya's face does not disappear. The situation does not resolve itself. But he does feel a tiny, minuscule bit better.

Ilya's entire world has been flipped upside down. The realisation that he is not in some absurd nightmare hit him like a freight train. There's so much of his life that he's purposely kept hidden from Hollander, so many things he keeps distant and private from anyone in America.

These problems should be avoidable if Shane just does not answer the phone. Or read his texts. Fuck.

He can't think about that right now; if he lingers on this, he will panic and spiral, and only one of them can have a breakdown at a time.

He remembers, suddenly, that he's never told Shane so much about himself. Including one deeply dangerous fact. He quickly taps their text conversation and shoots him a quick text.

JANE: Avoid bees.

Another crisis averted. Shane being aware of his deathly allergy is important if they're going to survive long enough to return back to their own bodies.

He is solving all the problems that are coming up, and eventually, four days from now, when they are in Montreal together, they will sort the whole body exchange problem altogether. It is fine. Ilya will be normal and live Shane Hollander's weirdly normal, perfect life.

He opens the Calendar app, just like Shane advised, and almost every hour is blocked out: meetings, tasks, travel. Ilya stares at the screen, trying to absorb it, but the sheer number of colour-coded entries is ridiculous. He swipes to tomorrow. More of the same. The next day. Worse. The next. Worse still.

God, who on Earth has this many things to do?

He steps out of the bathroom, phone tucked back into his pocket, stressed fingers running through unfamiliar straight hair. Hayden is sitting at the edge of the bed, now wearing a shirt, tying his shoes.

Fuck. He has to be Shane Hollander. Shane Hollander, who is normal, and friendly, and awkward. Ilya can do this.

“Pike,” Ilya begins, forcing a casual smile. “I will come with you to breakfast.”

Surely he can gain further information about the events of the day and how to act normal if he converses with one of Shane’s closest friends, even if it means having to spend time with boring, annoying Hayden Pike.

“What did you just call me?” Hayden says, pausing mid-tie, head lifting.

“Your name. Come on. We must eat,” Ilya says. “Fuel is important for good meeting. I will put on shoes, and we will go.”

He grabs Shane’s shoes, which are, as he expected, right by the door, and tugs them on and ties the laces quickly. When he looks back at Hayden, he’s watching Ilya with an unsure stare, brows furrowed like he’s trying to piece together a puzzle. Ilya does not enjoy the fact that he is doubting Ilya’s perfectly decent performance.

“You are ready?”

Hayden blinks at him. Grabs his wallet and the room key card from the table. “Sure, Shane. Let’s go.”

On the elevator down, his phone dings, a single message:

LILY: What the fuck

He does not answer. He does not have time.

After the call ends, Shane stands for an embarrassingly long time in front of the toilet with his hand halfway in his sweatpants.

He really needs to pee. But that requires handling Ilya’s dick. It just feels… too intimate. He would never sidle up behind Ilya to rest his chin on his shoulder and bat his hands away so that he could aim his stream for him, you know? And this is essentially that. This is Ilya’s body, Shane’s soul has just… intruded.

Sighing heavily, Shane pulls his – Ilya's – dick out. He wills himself to pee.

Nothing happens.

Shane's never been pee-shy before. But right now, he is finding it exceptionally hard to pee.

"Okay, come on," he mutters under his breath. "Just let it out. Pee. Pee, pee, pee."

Finally, a pathetic little dribble spurts from his dick. Unfortunately, he gets so excited that it stops again immediately.

He focuses again, and an imaginary Ilya in the back of his head begins teasing him.

You've held my dick a million times, imaginary Ilya says. *Don't be prude, Hollander. Pee for me.*

"I don't want to pee for you," Shane says into the empty bathroom.

He stands very still with his dick in his hands for a long minute. Stares at the freckle on the side of Ilya's dick, the one he's kissed at least a dozen times. Oh, God, he cannot get a semi right now. Then he'll never pee again.

Panicked, he starts humming *Yellow Submarine* under his breath, and then *thankfully,* he starts to pee.

Finally, bladder empty, Shane's shoulders slump.

Next, Shane heads to Ilya's gym. He takes a moment to look around, finding the usual equipment. But the yoga mats and yoga ball catch his eye. He knows Ilya doesn't use them; they talked about it once, actually– *"Why would I do yoga? I am bendy already, Hollander. You know this."*

So why does Ilya own a yoga mat? Why is there a yoga ball tucked into the corner of the room?

He decides to simply not think about it, hopping onto the treadmill to run. Five minutes in, he realises he didn't put on any music, but he doesn't want to fetch Ilya's phone. Isn't sure he'd like any music he has saved on there anyway.

Shane runs fast and hard for an hour and a half in complete silence.

His stomach growls when he steps off the treadmill, muscles satisfyingly tired. He's not sure what Ilya usually has for breakfast, but Shane decides he should probably try to stick to Ilya's usual diet.

Which means he'll be eating foods he hasn't let himself so much as think about in years.

Trepidation setting his shoulders straight, Shane ambles into the kitchen. He opens the fridge and stares at its contents: cottage cheese, breakfast sausages, eggs, and protein shakes.

Alright, he thinks. *It's just breakfast. For once, you're allowed to indulge.*

Shane makes an omelette and pours vanilla creamer into his coffee. It tastes incredible, and he finishes everything in under five minutes. Biting his lip, he decides to grab himself a blueberry muffin as well, one Ilya had left in a little bag in the fridge.

He doesn't think Ilya would mind.

When he's done, he brushes his teeth and finds himself with nothing to do. He doesn't know if Ilya has any friends in the area, and even if he did, it would be a bad idea to see them. And it's not like Shane can call Rose, or Hayden– they wouldn't understand why Ilya Rozanov is calling them. So, for a while, Shane simply… walks around. He studies the art on the walls, opens drawers that contain either nothing or miscellaneous items that don't seem to mean anything: receipts and gifted books, pens and half-smoked cigarette packets.

Shane gathers every cigarette packet he can find and throws them all in the garbage. He nods, satisfied, when he's done.

The house's interior design really is impressive. He's always been a sucker for high-rise ceilings, and Ilya's ceilings definitely qualify. He wonders what it would be like to live here full-time. Or– well. *Almost* full-time. God knows Ilya travels as much as Shane for work, but he gets to return between away games.

Fuck. What the hell does Shane do on his days off? He can't for the life of him remember.

Wandering back into the kitchen for a fourth time, his eyes land on the freezer. He drums his fingers against his thigh and then, frowning at himself, he opens it and pulls out a bottle of Vodka.

Ilya's playing Shane's game tonight, after all. And it seems nobody ever calls or texts Ilya– nobody Shane's going to respond to again, anyhow. One drink won't hurt.

Several drinks and hours later, Shane's watching his own body throw a punch at the New Jersey Devils' centre.

Shane slumps back into the couch. Once more, with feeling, he says, "You're fucked."

Ilya's day is not normal in the slightest.

He attends the team meeting with Hayden and manages to stumble his way through the events without anyone questioning him too directly, except for Hayden fucking Pike, who continues to stare at Ilya like he's staring directly into his soul and knows exactly what is going on—which is strange, because Ilya is still not even sure he fully understands what the fuck is going on.

One moment, he was falling asleep peacefully in his bed, post-orgasm, and the next, he's multiple inches shorter, forced to speak English every single fucking conversation, and moving around on a schedule that barely leaves time for a piss or snack break.

He makes it through the photoshoot, which, for some reason, immediately follows the team meeting. It's for some American sports drink brand, and during the session, he receives two separate calls from Shane's manager (he presumes) and one from Shane's mother. All three conversations are brisk and fairly easy to get through once he reminds them that he is at the damn photoshoot trying to take the photos so he can get to some 3 pm meeting with Rolex, apparently.

The schedule feels endless. Ilya is driven from the first meeting to the second, and in that time dodges at least seven calls. He cannot continue his Shane Hollander act every minute of the day, not if he wants to preserve his energy for the game tonight. Ilya does not think he has ever received this many phone calls in his entire life.

He sets the phone to Do Not Disturb and goes to add *Lily* to the list of people who can push through it, but as he loads up the screen, the name is already there. The list is shorter than he expected it to be, just three names: Coach Theriault, Hayden Pike and Lily. Just Lily.

There are a million people in Shane's life he imagines should be here instead of him. His parents. Rose. Other teammates. But instead, it's him. Shane, even when he silences the world, wants Ilya's messages to get through no matter what.

His chest feels tight. Thankfully, before the thought can linger any longer, he arrives at a very tall building. He sighs, adjusting the outfit Shane had selected for this, and heads inside.

Once the meeting is completed, he only has thirty minutes to get from the building to the stadium for pre-training work-out, then warm-ups, then he will have to kick the ass of the New Jersey Devils with Shane Hollander's name scrawled across his back, his jersey alight in blue. It feels a little like a betrayal to his team, but he thinks, if they knew the strange fucking shit happening to him, they would understand.

The second he's out of the car, his teeth are not aching like they often do before a game. He realises then, he hasn't smoked a single cigarette the entire day. The body he's in is not craving the cigarette, but Ilya Rozanov, who has just had to deal with bureaucratic nonsense in a body that does not belong to him, using words he barely understands, needs a fucking cigarette.

He stands in the parking lot, bag slung over his shoulder, the buttons of his nice shirt done all the way up the top, choking him a little bit. Shane can not say for a second that Ilya did not try to portray him accurately. He has been doing a fucking good job.

He unbuttons the top button and glances around. In the corner, lingering by the trash cans, is a man in his thirties with a cigarette hanging from his lips and a lighter in his hand. The cigarette is already lit, and the scent wafts through the air.

Ilya heads toward it immediately, feeling a little like an American cartoon character floating along after a smell.

The janitor's dressed in a dark-wash uniform, leaning against the wall with a mop bucket beside him. He's just settling onto a milk crate when Ilya approaches. The man looks up, eyes going saucer-wide, yanking the cigarette from his mouth as he chokes on his breath.

Ilya lets him cough a few times before he reaches over, offering a friendly pat to the guy's back.

The guy finishes coughing and gapes. "You're Shane Hollander."

Well. Not quite.

"Yes, I am Shane Hollander," Ilya says. "Do you have a cigarette?"

The guy glances down at the lit cigarette hanging between two of his fingers, and, still wide-eyed and frazzled, he holds it out for him to take. Ilya takes it, slipping it between his lips with practised ease and inhales deeply.

Instantly, his throat is on fire. Smoke scorches its way into his lungs. He jerks the cigarette away, turns his head, and coughs—more violently and longer than the janitor had moments ago. Dizziness washes over him, nausea curling low in his stomach. When the coughing finally subsides, he hands the cigarette back, faintly mortified.

"Okay. Thank you," he says, feigning normalcy.

The guy is still gaping. "D-Do you smoke?"

Ilya thinks, briefly, of headlines. Of teammates. Of Shane's reputation—far too pristine and perfect, if you ask him. He wipes his mouth, shakes his head, and says evenly, "No. I do not smoke. Have a nice day."

And makes his way inside.

At some point, Shane's calm subsides entirely, and he's left staring at the TV, listening to the droning voice of the commentators.

"And what was up with Shane Hollander tonight? I've never seen him play so aggressively."

"I don't think he's ever thrown a punch like that before, either. New Jersey Devils' centre, Mike Johnson, hit the damn ice!"

"I don't think he's ever thrown a punch like that before," Shane mocks, grabbing Ilya's phone. He spots seven missed calls from Alexei, and realises he hasn't found a way to send the money. He's going to have to tell Rozanov he took Alexei's call this morning.

He dials Jane's number, but by the time he's listening to the ringing, he's already forgotten why he was calling.

Ilya picks up on the third ring, breathing heavily into the phone. Shane hears a door slam shut through the device. "Do not yell at me."

Shane stares at the half-empty bottle of vodka on the coffee table. "You suck."

“I *suck?* I scored hat-trick! In your stupid body! I have not eaten in six hours, Hollander. I have not pissed. I have not laid down. I want to go home.”

“Rozanov–”

“Your mother has called twenty times. Your manager has called thirty times. Your father text me picture of crossword puzzle and ask for help. Clue is about American President from the 1980s. I cannot help!”

Shane hums, lifting his drink and taking a long sip. “You can send me a screenshot.”

“This is not priority, Shane Hollander,” Ilya says, breathing frustration straight down the line. “Are you fucking joking?”

“Rozanov,” he corrects.

“Fuck you. Fuck you. Fuck you.”

“You haven’t done that in a long time,” Shane comments, eyes slipping shut.

Through the phone, there’s a long pause. Then, carefully, slowly, “Are you fucking drunk right now?”

A helpless giggle slips past Shane’s lips. “No.” He hears a weird thumping noise. Over and over. “What are you doing?”

“Trying to kill myself on car door.”

“You’re in a car?” Shane asks. “Where are you going?”

“Wherever Taxi takes me. I hope is off bridge.”

Crackly, distant through the line, Shane hears someone say, “I’m not doing that, sir. We’re just going to the hotel.”

“If hotel is at bottom of New Jersey river, is fine,” Ilya says.

“Sir–”

“Ilya,” Shane sighs.

Through the phone, Ilya exhales slowly, his voice softening. “Yes, take me to hotel. Thank you, Taxi man.” Then, after a second, “Why are you drunk, *Jane*?”

“I had to pee with your dick,” Shane explains.

Ilya chokes. “And this made you get drunk? What is wrong with my dick?”

“You have a freckle. On your dick,” Shane slurs, eyes still closed. “I knew it was there already. But it… it’s distracting. I couldn’t focus.”

“You got drunk because I have freckle on my dick? Dick that has been inside you?” A pause. “Taxi man, please pretend you do not hear anything.”

Taxi man replies, “My lips are sealed as long as you don’t kill yourself in my backseat, sir.”

“You’re traumatising a taxi driver in New Jersey, Rozanov,” Shane murmurs, dragging his eyes open and staring up at the ceiling. “Did everything other than the game go … okay?”

“Do not worry. I went to stupid meetings. I do not know how you do all this. I am exhausted to bone.”

“You get used to it.”

“No,” Ilya says. “I do not think you do.” A pause. “Maybe if you are President.”

Shane sits up a little and finishes off his glass. “Just follow Hayden in the morning. You’ll sit next to him on the flight, and then you can go home for a bit before the photoshoot tomorrow.”

“I … do not know where you live.”

“I’ll text you the address.”

“Okay,” Ilya says, tone unreadable. “Okay, Jane.”

“We’re here, sir.”

There’s shuffling on the other line, the click of a car belt unbuckling. Shane listens to Ilya huff a sigh, presumably climbing out of the car and into the balmy New Jersey air.

“Good luck with your… Jane, sir,” Taxi man says. “Hope she– he– Jane is okay.”

“Thank you. Jane is drinking all my vodka.”

Shane rolls his eyes. Listens to the car drive away. He has seven missed calls from Alexei, and Ilya needs to know about the unsent money.

“Your brother,” Shane says, swallowing. He doesn’t know how to tell Ilya this without it sounding like a harsh truth or a confession. “He wants fifteen thousand dollars. I was supposed to figure it out, but then—I … uh—”

“...You answered phone?”

“No,” Shane says quickly. Too quickly. “I mean, yes, but it was– before. Before we talked. I picked up without thinking.”

“You do not send him money,” Ilya says, all the humour gone. “I do not do that anymore. Okay?”

“I don’t have your bank details anyway,” Shane says. Then, softer, “I’m sorry. I answered before you told me not to.”

A pause. “Is okay.”

“Okay.” Another pause. “I’m sorry.”

“We do not have to talk about it now,” Ilya says, firm but not unkind. The words sound practised. “I have to go. I am scheduled to sleep in thirty minutes. As you know.”

Shane lets out a laugh that barely counts. The room feels suddenly very still. The buzz in his head drains away, leaving everything too clear, too sharp. He feels dead sober. “Yeah. Okay, Rozanov. Goodnight.”

“Goodnight, Jane.”

Ilya has just finished Shane’s scheduled morning workout in his home gym. His muscles are burning, his shirt is clinging to him, and he is *fucking starving*. He wipes his forehead with a soft, plush light blue towel and checks Shane’s phone for any messages from Lily.

Instead, there’s a missed call from Rose.

Ilya finds himself glaring at the screen. He knows—*logically*—that they’re no longer together, but that simple fact does nothing to quell the flare of jealousy reigniting deep in his chest.

Rose Landry. The woman Shane made his debut with, the second Ilya opened himself up and damaged the brittle connection they had by whispering Shane’s name into his mouth, the name sounding more like a confession than a moan.

Seeing her name now drags up memories of the dozens and dozens of smiling couple shots splashed across articles, the news, and every fucking other Instagram post that ever crossed Ilya’s feed.

She called four minutes ago. He’s prepared to ignore it—until the phone dings.

A text.

Rose: Call me immediately

Okay. Sounds urgent. He furrows a brow, steels himself, and types back.

Shane: Why?

Rose: I miss my best friend :(

Oh. Well. That's nice. Maybe she's not so bad after all. Or maybe she is evil. He should investigate.

Rose: I'm in town next week btw. Dancing?
Don't say no 🙏

Ilya rolls his eyes, preparing to toss the phone to the side once more and take a long, hot shower. Three seconds before he does so, the phone dings again.

Rose: Also, I need an update on your super-secret hockey player boyfriend.

Ilya freezes.

Boyfriend. Rose Landry is referring to a boyfriend. The only person it could be is Ilya. Right? He would know if Shane was being fucked by someone else. He would know.

Feeling only a minimal amount of guilt about snooping, he responds:

Shane: Ok. I will call.

***Rose** has loved your message.*

Ilya makes his way out of the gym and prepares himself something to eat, because if he doesn't, he will fucking die– he spends a few minutes orienting himself and preparing his best Shane impression to ensure he can not give himself away on the call. Hayden was not so easy to convince, but he is sure Rose will be easier.

He drops himself onto a tall, leather stool and hits the call button.

"Sha-ane!" Rose sing-songs, voice bright and happy. Ilya almost can't believe that Shane is friends with her. They are so unlike each other.

"Hello," Ilya says, before taking a big bite of his toastie.

"My dearest, darling boy– you would not *believe* what Francois told me on the way to rehearsals yesterday."

Chewing, Ilya asks, "What did he say?"

"Um," Rose says. "What are you doing?"

"Eating," Ilya says, mouth full. "Breakfast."

"I have literally never experienced this before," Rose says. "Shane Hollander, willingly eating a breakfast that isn't liquid?"

Ilya kind of wants to yell *I know, right!* But he is a brave man, so he musters an unimpressed hum instead.

“Food is fuel,” he says. “Or so I have listened.”

“So you’ve heard?”

Ilya sighs. Fucking English. “Sure.” Then, “Tell me about Francois.”

“Okay,” Rose says, voice picking up. “So, you remember how his ex-girlfriend found out about his new boyfriend, and how he kind of looked like her brother?”

Ilya’s eyebrows climb up his forehead. “Sure.”

“Right. So, apparently, she had every right to point this out, because Francois just privately DM’d him. His ex-girlfriend’s *brother.* He asked him *out!”*

Ilya gasps, loud and theatrical. “And he told you this? Francois?”

“Not in so many words,” Rose admits. “But I texted his ex-boyfriend Matthew since we’re on good terms, and he confirmed everything. Like, how crazy is that?”

“Very crazy,” Ilya agrees. He takes another bite of his toastie.

Rose sighs, a happy little trill in her voice as she asks, “Anyway. How is he?”

“How is who?”

“Your mysterious beautiful boyfriend you spend half our conversations talking about,” She pauses. “Fine. Not boyfriend. You know what I mean. Your hockey boy.”

“I– uh.”

“Come *on,* Shane. Give me something here. I need the scoop.”

Fuck. Okay, Ilya needs to find something neutral to say. He needs to think through the rapid pounding of his heartbeat. “He is… fine.”

“Seriously?” Rose says. “Shane, darling, you would not shut up about his shoulders the last time you saw him, which was *months ago*. Your love life’s sadder than mine. And I haven’t got laid in months. Talk to me about his big c–”

Ilya thinks Shane would faint like a Victorian child at such obscenity, so he gasps dramatically, cutting her off. “Rose Landry!”

Rose cackles delightedly. “Come on!”

And, well, Ilya’s never been one to shy away from a challenge. Pursing his lips, Ilya says slyly, “He has freckle on dick.”

“What?” Rose gasps again. “Shane!”

For the first time since Ilya woke up in Shane’s body, Ilya laughs.

As it turns out, Rose Landry isn't so bad.

Once they hang up, a handful of notifications pop up—articles, all of them about Ilya or the Boston Bears. He taps the notifications tab and watches, mouth ajar, as the screen is flooded with push alerts about him, a relentless number of them. Shane keeps up with him. Shane keeps up with his *team*.

Ilya swipes away, chest tightening. Down the bottom of the screen, a little widget, the Boston timezone staring back at him on a small, round clock.

He locks the phone.

He was right, Ilya thinks, when he told Shane that nobody could get used to his schedule. Today, just like yesterday in Shane's body, is entirely relentless– meetings he barely says word in, meals with Shane's parents he dodges, and so. Many. Photoshoots. You'd think Shane was running to be mayor.

When he gets home, he's so tired he can barely think. He sets his phone to Do Not Disturb and falls back on the bed, weary limbs splayed out like a starfish.

He really should shower. He can just imagine what Shane would say if he knew Ilya had sprawled on the bed in his outside clothes.

Turning his head sleepily, he spots Shane's glasses on the bedside table. Predictably, a pleasant shiver runs down his spine.

He doesn't think about it, nor does he have any intentions when he slips his hand into his pants; it's just he's relaxed, experiencing a rare few minutes of peace as he lives Shane Hollander's life, and a mere graze of fingers and a resting hand has Shane's dick already stirring with interest.

Fuck. He probably shouldn't. But the sheets smell like Shane's aftershave, arousal pooling in his gut, and he would really, really like to know what Shane feels like when he comes. It's just an experiment, if he really thinks about it.

For a few minutes, Ilya plays with himself. He runs a finger up the vein on the side of the dick, thumb slipping over the head's slit. It's different, the feeling ever-so-slightly muted given that Shane's cut, but it's also good. He grows harder and harder in his hand, breathing coming quicker every time he remembers it's *Shane's* dick he's handling. Shane's skin and nerves and blood, Shane's cock swelling and leaking all over his thighs.

Before long, he grows impatient. He needs to come.

He squeezes himself before letting go, bringing his hand to his face to spit into the palm of it. Then he wraps his fingers back around his dick, sighing at the sweet, wet pressure. Shane's cock is silky smooth, hard and blood-warm, and Ilya wishes he were in his own body so he could put it in his mouth.

He groans at the thought, breath stuttering when he realises it's Shane's voice he's using. His hand starts up an unsteady rhythm, the slick sound of skin on skin driving him nearly insane.

"Rozanov," he breathes, just to try it out, and *fuck,* that's good. He reaches down with his other hand to cup his balls. "Rozanov, fuck."

Swiping his thumb over the wet head, Ilya groans. Shane gets *so wet*– drops of pre gathering like his dick is begging for release.

"Ilya," he moans, squeezing his fingers over the head of his dick. His own name rings through his ears, but in the whiny, desperate tone and voice of Shane Hollander, and before he knows it, he's coming.

The orgasm washes over him in waves, cock pulsing in his hand. He exhales hard through his nose, eyebrows furrowing.

When it starts to hurt – Jesus, Shane really *is* sensitive – he lets go. He drags his fingers through the cooling spend smeared across Shane's smooth, strong stomach while Shane's cock lays softening against his thigh.

Panting, he lets his arm fall back on the sheets beside him.

Well. Experiment successful.

On the way out the door to the game, Shane's phone rings.

"Ilya, are you playing at home tonight?" An unfamiliar voice, one again speaking in fucking Russian, asks through the phone. Shane hesitates—jaw tensing.

"Uh. Yeah." He clears his throat. "Who is this?"

"Svetlana, obviously. I thought you said the concussion wasn't serious."

"No, uh– sorry. It isn't."

"Great. Anyway, I will be at the game. Friend of mine has a crush on your goaltender for some reason. Can I have your tickets?"

"Uh. Sure."

"...Great. Do you want to fuck after?"

"Uh," Shane says, choking on his breath. Dread floods him. He managed to survive peeing with Ilya's dick, but he's not sure he can manage to have sex with someone to keep the act up. "No? I'm sorry."

Svetlana scoffs, but it's not a mean sound. "Okay. You're busy with Jane again, I get it."

Shane feels his eyes bug out. *"What?"*

Svetlana barks a laugh. “What do you mean, what? You disappear, you say no to sex, you get all weird. It’s always Jane when that happens. You are not that good at hiding your phone, Ilya.”

“What, uh,” Shane fumbles. “What do you mean?”

“Jesus,” Svetlana says. “Remember when you were inside me, and you fell off the bed because your phone buzzed on the dresser? It wasn’t even Jane. It was an Ikea order for a new fucking lamp.”

The words land like a physical blow. He feels *winded.* Ilya’s been so desperate for Shane’s attention that he literally fell out of a woman?

It’s just… it’s never occurred to Shane that Ilya cares as much about him as Shane cares about Ilya. They both keep things so close to their chests.

“I’ll let you go, Prince Charming,” Svetlana says.

“Okay,” Shane squeaks.

“Play well tonight. No concussions this time, please.”

“Okay,” Shane says again, just now clocking that he didn’t even know Ilya had recently had a fucking concussion. “Bye.”

Jesus. This whole week is going to feel like a fever-dream, once he’s back in his own body.

He drives to the stadium for the team meeting on Ilya’s schedule, the one his coach had also texted about. He mostly keeps quiet. He catches one or two suspicious glances, but he manages to get through it.

Right before the game—right before they take the ice—Shane realises every single player in the room is looking at him. Waiting. Expectant.

Shane has made a speech or two in his time, but it’s usually just an all-hands-in, and then they go and kick ass. They’re looking at him, perched all around the room, and waiting.

“You good, Rozanov?” Someone to his left asks.

“Uh—yeah. Yes.”

Cliff Marlow narrows his eyes, leaning against his stick. “You always get weird when you skip the speech,” he says. “C’mon. Say the thing.”

“The thing,” Shane repeats faintly, panic flaring. Ilya did not tell him about a thing. Ilya did not prepare him for the thing.

And instead of providing any kind of explanation, anything that could possibly help Shane Hollander who is having the weirdest week of his fucking life, the entire time choruses back to him: “The thing.”

Shane swallows thickly. He looks around at the team, all familiar faces, names he knows, but people he doesn't. They're sweaty, geared up, buzzing with energy, and all looking to him for the final piece of the puzzle. They're waiting on something Shane Hollander doesn't have, because he is not Ilya Rozanov. He does not have that specific type of fire in him. He doesn't know. He doesn't—

"I just—" He starts, then stops, because while he seems to know how to speak Russian, whatever Ilya usually says in times like this lives somewhere Shane is unable to reach. "We're good. You're all…great. We're a good team."

Dead silence.

Across the room, someone coughs.

Kane, sitting in front of him, visibly grimaces. "Wow."

Someone behind him mutters, "Jesus. That was bleak."

Shane finds his face aflame, shame and anxiety burning bright and pink along his cheeks and neck. "I'm sorry—I—today's just—"

A player stands up. Varkov. Number 27. He takes a step forward, helmet knocking against his, like punctuation. "Still love you," He says, tapping Shane's shoulder with a glove. "Even if you are being a freak."

"Yeah," Someone agrees. "I guess you don't have to scream bloody murder every time."

Another affectionate headbutt. Then another.

"Love you, Cap," Kane says. The next few headbutts are accompanied with the same thing.

"I love you."

"I love you."

"I love you."

The whole team headbutts him on their way out, as if they're trying to reassure him, when he was supposed to be the one motivating them. As they exit, Shane is left standing there last, a startled thin laugh slipping out of him. It's shaky, trembling.

"Okay," he says, nodding to himself. He squares his shoulders and makes his own way down the tunnel. "Time to kick ass."

They do not, in fact, kick ass.

The game goes badly. He plays too tight, overthinks every move, finds himself distracted, feeling out of body and a little dizzy for most of the game. He tries to find his footing, but he never really manages to.

At one point, he misjudges a turn and goes down hard, skidding across the ice before colliding with the barrier in a way that makes the entire crowd suck in a collective breath.

He finishes the game shaken and sore, the loss ringing in his ears.

When he goes to shake his team's hand and tell them good game, it goes a little differently than it normally does. Each of them passes by, shaking his hand firmly, catching his eye meaningfully before saying, “I love you.”

It’s not dissimilar to what happened in the locker room before the game. Shane’s head is pounding, and his muscles are burning, and suddenly, he finds his eyes are too. He blinks away the tears, and by the last few players, he finds himself returning the sentiment.

“I love you.”

“I love you.”

“I love you."

It’s such a stark contrast to how Shane feels with his own team that Shane wonders if this is abnormal or if his own experience is strange. He doesn’t have any other point of reference. In every locker room he’s ever been in, no matter how beloved he was by the crowd, he always felt a little out of place, a little wrong.

He was usually the only Asian kid growing up, and then eventually, now, the only gay player in the room. Everything about him felt like he had to earn his right to be in that damn room.

While Ilya’s team cares for him, they look up to him, and by the looks of it– hell, they love him.

Shane makes his way out to Ilya’s stupid fancy car. By the time he’s pushed his key into the ignition, his phone is ringing. Instinctively, not even checking the name, he answers the phone.

He regrets it as soon as he does.

Through the phone, a voice speaking in Russian booms down the line.

“Are you an idiot, Ilya? Did I raise you like this? Did you even show up to the game, or have you been possessed?” A voice says through the line, voice thick with disappointment.

Shane’s blood runs cold. The body he’s in tenses up, almost as if it’s bracing for a hit. It feels like muscle memory of a memory Shane doesn’t even have.

“What?”

“Are you deaf? Is my own son deaf and lazy? You go all the way to America just to bring shame to all of Russia?”

Oh.

Fuck.

“I slipped,” Shane says quietly, shoulders curving forward. “It was an accident.”

“Accident!” The voice shouts, a disbelieving scoff following. “You played like a child. What am I supposed to tell people, huh? What am I supposed to tell your mother?”

Shane doesn’t know a lot about Ilya’s family, but he knows one thing. Ilya Rozanov’s mother is dead. His throat feels tight, words lodged in there and unable to escape.

“You play again in two days in Montreal. You need to stop being so lazy and get your act together. You should be ashamed, Ilya.”

He doesn’t mean to, he doesn’t, but instinct and rage kicks in—the need to defend Ilya, even though it was Shane that performed poorly, flares up. He wants to yell down the line that Ilya isn’t lazy—that he’s talented, and he’s funny, and he’s soft, and he’s beautiful. Worthy. He has nothing to be ashamed of.

But he can’t do that. This isn’t his life, not really. So instead, he pulls the phone away from his ear and ends the call.

His head drops forward, resting against the steering wheel, and then, he screams. He screams until his throat goes hoarse, his eyes squeezed tightly shut.

Because he is a normal, well-adjusted guy, he then clears his throat, turns the key in the ignition, and pulls out of the parking lot. The radio crackles to life, playing *Call Me Maybe* by Carly Rae Jepson.

Shane is silent the entire drive back to Ilya’s home, and listens to the song more intently than he has ever listened to any song before.

Unfortunately, Shane only has time to lock the front door behind him before his phone starts ringing. Again.

Toeing off his shoes, he slips it out of his pocket, shoulder twinging.

Jane.

Bracing himself, he picks up.

“Hollander,” Ilya growls. “You are good at hockey. Why do you *sabotage* me?”

For fuck’s sake.

“I wasn’t trying to sabotage you,” Shane says hotly. “I just *fell.* It was an accident.”

“Right,” Ilya scoffs. “Your mother called to gloat. Says Ilya Rozanov is losing edge. Next time, I tell her it is her son who is losing edge.”

“Rozanov,” Shane starts, but he doesn’t know what he wants to say. He’s had a few too many emotional moments today, and he just– he can’t handle being yelled at by Ilya. Not after speaking to Grigori, which he can’t tell Ilya about either, because he broke the one rule Ilya had set by answering the phone in the first place.

“You play better next time,” Ilya says. “I have crossword puzzle to solve with David. Goodbye.”

Shane clenches his jaw. “Bye.”

Like the sadsack he is, Shane makes himself a truly awful carbonara for dinner. Ilya had parmesan and a fine cut of bacon in the fridge, so he had thought, fuck it. Why not? Unfortunately, he isn’t used to cooking with either of those ingredients, and as competent as he is everywhere else in his life, he simply does not know how to handle sizzling, spitting bacon in a hot pan.

The pasta, inexplicably, comes out soggy. It might have had something to do with the fact that he was scrolling through Sports News articles about Ilya Rozanov’s out-of-character playing at the game earlier.

Whatever.

He eats what he can, when the food is done, and washes it down with a cold glass of water and an Advil. Now that he knows that Ilya sustained a concussion a few days before they body-swapped, it’s obvious: eyes unfocusing, head aching, excessive sleepiness.

But right now, he doesn’t want to sleep. Right now, he wants to throw his half-empty plate at a wall.

On the table beside him, his phone rings again. This time, he checks the Caller ID.

Svetlana.

With a huff, Shane picks up.

“I don’t want to fuck,” he says irritably.

“I know, idiot,” Svetlana says, unmoved. “You are a devoted, monogamous man now. I’m calling to ask if you’re okay. You’ve never fallen over nothing before.”

“Ha ha.”

“Did something happen with Jane?”

Shane takes too long to respond.

“Okay. You don’t have to tell me.”

“It– kind of,” Shane admits. “I just… we’re arguing. I don’t want to argue with h–her.”

“You are too soft with the people you love,” she tells him. She says it matter-of-factly, like it’s a universal truth. Like it’s undeniable, Ilya’s harbouring love for Jane. It knocks the breath out of Shane.

“Right.” Shane presses his fingers to his temple. “Right, okay. Did you need anything?”

He knows he’s being rude. But he needs to be alone. He needs to stop pretending for just a moment to be Ilya Rozanov.

“No,” Svetlana says. “I just worry about you. I don’t want you to get lonely in your little mansion.”

“Okay,” Shane says. “I, uh. I really need to sleep, sorry.”

Svetlana sighs. “Okay, Ilya. Text me tomorrow.”

The line goes dead, and Shane stares at the table.

He doesn’t end up throwing the plate at a wall.

Ilya is icing up his skates, knee to knee with Hayden Pike, who apparently loves to sit very close to Shane Hollander. Across the room, they’re discussing something, someone, and Ilya only catches the last line.

“—I’m not surprised he got traded, man. I hear he’s a cocksucker.”

The room continues on like nothing happened, then: “He’s a queer?”

“Yeah, I know, I was surprised too. Imagine a guy like that in your locker room. Fuck that. Like I said, not surprised about the trade. Not sure what team is gonna want a guy like that.”

At his side, Hayden glances across at him, shooting him an unreadable look.

Ilya panics. Shane Hollander is a brave, kind man. Surely this can’t be the normal kind of behaviour that echoes in the Montreal locker room. Surely Shane doesn’t let those kinds of comments slide.

…Right?

He looks over his shoulder, finding a man he barely recognises sitting across from another player, clearly the two who’ve been talking.

Ilya panics and realises he has to perform. “Uh—do not say that, man. He is a good guy.”

The room ceases all movement. All eyes land on Ilya. Across the room, a hockey stick clatters to the floor, slicing through the silence.

And then, Davis-something, he thinks, says, “What, you some kind of cocksucker too?”

It stings. It shouldn't sting, not when his own brother has hurled worse vitriol at him for years, not when he's been a part of the NHL for years– and not when he saw his own fear reflected in Sasha's eyes the first time they were almost caught.

Hayden, beside him, grabs a sneaker off the floor and throws it across the room. "Fuck off, George. You *wish*. I know you haven't gotten laid in eight months."

Someone else laughs across the room. "Woof."

The tension breaks in the room. Ilya turns to Hayden and sees him in a new light. Hayden, who, as far as Ilya knows, doesn't even know that Shane is into men, sees Shane staring down the barrel of a gun, freaking out, and is willing to throw footwear to silence his own teammate.

Ilya leans closer, nudging their shoulders together like he assumes Shane would. Hayden nudges him right back.

He won't let this shake him. *Can't* let it shake him. Ilya's dealt with homophobia in locker rooms before, but not since being drafted into the major leagues. That's the kind of shit you hear in Russia, not here. He wonders how frequent this is, how much bullshit Shane has heard and copped over the years.

He forces his hands to keep moving, fingers stiff around the laces. His pulse is thudding hard enough he's half-convinced the entire room can hear it. He breathes in through his nose, then out through his mouth, like he's watched Shane do when he's fighting spiralling.

Hayden turns to him as they stand, catching his eye. Brows lift, a silent: *You okay?*

Ilya shoots him a quick nod and heads out onto the ice.

Ilya Rozanov has played a lot of mediocre games in his life, but this is certainly the worst of them. Halfway through the game, the centre of the other team during the face-off says, "Thank God you didn't show up today, Hollander. Not even breaking a sweat."

Usually, the rage helps him play better, but today, he's unsettled. Uncomfortable. He attempts three separate goals, and not only do they not go in the net, but they're also not even stopped by the goaltender; they sail right over it or beside it.

When the game is over, Ilya doesn't speak to anyone. He shakes their hands, congratulates them, and then gets the fuck out of there before anyone can try and speak to him about his performance. He's not sure he'd be able to stop himself from saying something he knows he shouldn't, not when he's wearing Shane's pretty face.

He needs to wash off the sweat on his body. He needs a stiff drink, a cigarette, and a burger with so much cheese and grease on it that he feels ill.

He decides to tackle the sweat first.

Shane, as it turns out, has a pretty roomy bathtub. He hadn't thought much of it upon first seeing it, but now, body and heart aching in tandem, he finds himself drifting toward the

bathroom, eager to be enveloped in gentle heat.

He's only just pulled his shirt off, not yet turned the water on, when his phone buzzes in his pocket. Fumbling it out of his pocket, he sees it's Lily calling. Shane.

He's ashamed of the way he played tonight, especially given that it reflects poorly on Shane. He doesn't want to be yelled at, but he always wants to hear Shane's voice.

Biting his lip, he picks up and twists the tap on.

"Hey," Shane says, and Ilya aches at how soft the quality of his voice is.

"Hello," he replies, leaning back against the bathtub's lip. "Sorry about game. I know I played… bad."

"It's okay," Shane tells him, and he sounds like he means it. "Payback, right?"

Ilya huffs a laugh. "Yes. Was payback." Then, remembering what had unsettled him enough to play badly in the first place, he adds, "Your team is full of assholes."

Shane laughs. "What?"

"Davis. Or David. I do not care." Ilya strips the rest of his clothes off, testing two of his fingers in the water. It's a little too cold. He adjusts the temperature before continuing, "He talk shit. Call *Jake Sulley* a cocksucker. Do not worry, I told him Sulley is good guy."

"Rozanov," Shane starts, and Ilya shuts his eyes, knowing he's said the wrong thing. "Are you serious?"

"Yes."

Shane sighs, clearly frustrated. "Why did you say something? Dude, it's just— it's locker room talk. You're drawing attention to me."

Ilya finds himself growing annoyed. Shane isn't the kind of man to let this kind of thing go. Not the Shane he knows. "You are captain. You are the centre of attention."

"Not about this."

Ilya turns the tap off, and discomfort buzzes beneath his skin at the silence.

"Hollander, I did not— I was trying to be you. I would not try and mess up your life. You know that."

A beat. A sigh. "I know. I gotta go, man."

"Hollander," Ilya exhales. He feels small. Like Shane is mad at him. He does not like when Shane is mad at him.

“I’ll talk to you later, Rozanov. Tomorrow, we’ll fix things, and then we can put this all behind us. Go back to normal.”

Ilya doesn’t even remember what normal looked like. He imagines a world where he doesn’t know Shane Hollander talks to Rose about him, where he doesn’t know Shane’s team dynamic, where he hasn’t seen the true friend Hayden Pike is and a world where he doesn’t know Shane’s phone inside out—the little details, the haunting little quirks. The Do Not Disturb, the clock, the notifications.

The things just keep piling up. He feels like he’s seen a side of Shane he’s never seen before. A side he hadn’t even known was there. Wasn’t *supposed* to know was there.

“Okay, Hollander.”

“Goodnight.”

Ilya hangs up. He does not say goodnight back. He steps into the bath, sinking into the steaming, hot water and melts into it, closing his eyes.

Shane’s mad at himself when he hangs up on Ilya. He’s mad at himself most days, for one thing or another, so it’s not an unfamiliar feeling. Still, it’s not particularly pleasant– a constant prickle at the back of his head that he has to fix something. Has to change himself. Has to be better, play better, act better.

He sighs, clicking his phone open to double-check his schedule for tomorrow, confirming he’s got the tickets loaded for his flight. Accidentally, he clicks on the photo app instead, still adjusting to the use of hands bigger than his own.

There are no sorted albums, except for two. Both are locked. Shane squints at them suspiciously, thumb hovering over the one that only has a half dozen photos.

It’s private. He shouldn’t click it. He’s had too much of Ilya’s life exposed to him already without Ilya’s permission. The hovering continues before he finally caves, tapping it just once, promising to only glance.

It unlocks using the facial recognition scanner.

He’s confronted by seven photos. All from the same moment in time, taken on the stage in Vegas the night they’d met up again after months apart. Shane is hit with a flood of memories, not from the stage itself, but from the after.

He remembers trying to drag an explanation out of Ilya in the bathroom, then pressing in close, begging for Ilya to suck him off. He remembers how on edge he’d felt throughout the remainder of the party after they’d found out who had won, knowing that Ilya could have whatever he wanted from Shane.

Then, later that night, he remembers the one thing Ilya wanted was to *watch*.

In his briefs, his cock twitches. Well, Ilya's cock does. Shane stares at the phone, pressing down on one of the photos and watching it enlarge. Ilya's arm is wrapped around him, a crooked grin on his face, and a forced one on Shane's own.

He didn't know Ilya kept these. He figured he had deleted them after that night. Maybe while Shane was in the elevator, typing *We didn't even kiss* into his phone like a pathetic, kicked dog who wants too much. Wants things he can't have. Things he shouldn't even want.

He flicks to the next one. The hand has shifted, Ilya's shoulder angled lower, and he remembers how the hand had slid down the warm line of his spine, dancing along the back of his suit jacket just out of view while the entire Hockey world watched, clueless.

Why did Ilya keep these? Why would he want them? Even after so much time, times when they didn't talk, when they were on weird terms, Ilya kept them.

Did he look at them? Did he zoom in on them like Shane is now, analysing the details?

Shane feels a little like he can't breathe. He rolls over in the bed, clicking out of it.

He navigates to the other photo album that's locked and opens it. He needs something to distract him, literally anything.

Suddenly, there's an onslaught of hundreds of nudes filling the screen. Shane yelps.

He recognises some of these photos. Most of them. Photos Ilya's sent him over the years, that Shane painstakingly had to scrub from his phone time and time again. He's weirdly glad Ilya's kept them. That they're not lost forever. Ilya does have a really nice– dick. It would be a shame if all photo evidence of it had been wiped.

Shane's deleted every nude photo he's ever taken the second he's sent it to Ilya, terrified of his phone being hacked and it being exposed in some way. Ilya has them stored away for safekeeping, hundreds and hundreds of photos of his body. He can't jerk off staring at the body he's wearing guilt-free—but he can look at photos he's seen before, ones he's been sent, gifted. It's fine.

He stares at the photos, eyes flying from the length of Ilya's naked torso to his cock, slender fingers wrapped around the base. His breathing grows laboured, mouth parting.

His hand flies down to grip himself through his sweatpants before he can think better of it, arousal flaring bright when it occurs to him that this is *Ilya's* dick. Ilya, who is uncut and gorgeous– who fucks him like he needs it to breathe, who makes sex feel safe and sexy at the same time, who knows how to reduce Shane to mindless, fucked-out noises and full-body twitches.

He flexes his dick, watching it lift half an inch as his eyes go half-lidded at how good it feels.

God, he's so hard. Knowing that he shouldn't be, that he's not allowed to touch himself, just makes him harder.

Fuck, what is he doing?

Okay. Okay, it doesn't count if he doesn't touch himself. Right?

Eyes still glued to the screen, Shane rolls onto his stomach, grabbing the nearest pillow and tucking it under himself. He won't take himself out of his sweatpants, because that would be cheating. If– if he rubs himself against the pillow, that's just friction. It's fine.

Honing in on a picture highlighting Ilya's happy trail, Shane rolls his hips once. Twice. He sighs noisily, biting his lip as he leans further onto his elbows, dropping the phone onto the bed at an angle he can still see the screen from.

He reaches out and scrolls down quickly, he spots a photo in which Ilya has rolled down the foreskin, holding his dick as though he's presenting it to someone.

Presenting it to Shane, for him to lick and suck and tease an orgasm out of. He imagines himself on his knees, a position he knows well these days, the tip glistening like it is in the photo and preparing to be fed into Shane's open, wet mouth.

He presses down harder against the pillow, feels his dick spurt a drop of pre. If he was in his own body, he would be leaking more– would already have dribbled all over the sweatpants, making the slide sticky and wet. Ilya would tease him about it, would tell him he's wet like a girl.

Shane sucks in a sharp breath, hips now moving in small circles, cockhead rubbing against the seam of the pillow just right. Just– *shit,* he's in Ilya's body. He's making Ilya's body feel good, taking care of it just right. He's sure Ilya would want him to do this, would want him to make him come. Would tell him to work for it, to earn it.

Fuck. He wants it. He wants Ilya to come. He wants to come.

His hips move faster, humping the pillow like a dog in heat, gaze unfocused as it slips from the phone screen to his own hand– Ilya's hands—his long, pale fingers, ones that have been buried deep inside Shane time and time again—clenching the bedsheets. He buries his face in the duvet, breathing in the smell of Ilya's preferred laundry detergent – something flowery, as opposed to Shane's clean, boring detergent – and groans.

He wants to get fucked. Wants Ilya to hold him down and make him take it, wants to feel the width of his hand pressed against the back of his neck, gentle but powerful. Possessive in a way they don't talk about.

Breathing coming faster, Shane squeezes his eyes shut, hips humping mindlessly into the pillow. The drag of his dick against the fabric of the sweatpants and the pressure of the pillow is dizzying, somehow more satisfying than his own hand would be. Like this, faced down toward the bed, he can imagine Ilya behind him, hands firm on his hips, grinding into him deep, *forcing* him to grind against the bed. He can think about Ilya's breath on the back of his neck, Ilya mouthing at the side of his throat, whispering praise, calling him a slut, anything, all of it. Fuck.

He's going to come, he realises, balls drawing up as he moans obscenely– the timbre of Ilya's voice wracking through him, lighting up every nerve ending he has.

He shoots one last, half-focused look at the phone screen and catches sight of a picture featuring Ilya's face—there's a soft, satisfied smirk teasing at the corner of his mouth. Shane is done for.

"Oh, fuck, fuck," Shane moans, orgasm hitting him like a freight train. It feels like it's been torn from him, dick kicking with each spurt of come, his breathing turning ragged as little, almost hurt-sounding noises slip past his lips. His sight is aburst with colour, even with his eyes squeezed tightly closed as the waves of it crash over him, leaving him gasping for air as he spills messily into his sweatpants, coming so hard he wouldn't be surprised if it leaks through and onto the pillow itself.

When his hips stop twitching, he collapses with a heavy exhale.

Blindly, he fumbles for the phone, leaving the Photo app before switching it off. He drops it behind him, rolling onto his back.

Holy shit.

He can't believe he just did that.

He came in Ilya's sweatpants with Ilya's dick. He gave himself an orgasm in a body that is not his own.

For a second, he almost bursts into laughter at the absurdity of it.

But– well.

He's still mad at himself. He can't let himself have this, have this want for Ilya– and still, he goes and does this.

The feeling is exacerbated when Ilya texts him, twenty minutes later.

JANE: Do not be mad. Please.
I am sorry

LILY: I'm not mad

JANE: Yes you are

LILY: I was mad. But I'm not anymore
Do you believe me?

JANE: I believe you.

Shane breathes a sigh of relief. That's good. He doesn't want Ilya to sit at home alone in Shane's empty apartment, feeling bad. If he could, Shane would drive to him now– just to be

with him. Just to talk to him, for a little bit. Maybe a little bit to apologise for coming while in his body and his bed.

If things were different, Shane would do almost anything to spend his days by Ilya's side.

It's a terrifying realisation, so Shane shoves the thought down, down, down, and goes to switch Do Not Disturb on. Just then, though, another text message comes in.

JANE: I miss you.

He stares at the notification, heart suddenly in his throat. Then, hands trembling, he presses on it.

But there's nothing there. Ilya must have unsent it.

Fuck.

He falls back into bed, staring unseeingly at the ceiling.

Soundlessly, to someone who won't hear him, in a room where no one can see him, he mouths the words *I miss you too.*

A minute later, his phone dings. He grabs it, stares at it.

JANE: Goodnight, Hollander. See you tomorrow.

Eyes burning, he drops the phone.

I was right, he thinks hollowly. *I'm fucked.*

When Ilya crawls into bed that night, he tucks his hand beneath the pillow, and his fingers brush against something that isn't linen. He frowns, lifting his head and shifting the pillow to the side. There's a shirt there, scrunched up.

Ilya recognises it.

It's plain black, but when he lifts it, it's clearly a size or two too large for Shane's frame. It's his shirt. Ilya's shirt. From the day that Shane left right after they'd had sex, hyperventilating as he dressed, likely not noticing he was stealing the shirt he'd been lent.

He runs his thumb across the fabric, and it doesn't smell like Ilya; at this point, it smells like Shane. His sweat, his cologne, his musk. Ilya holds it to his nose and inhales.

It's just another thing he's not supposed to know exists. Another thing he was never supposed to see.

He drops down against the bed, wearing Shane's clothes, his skin, his life. It's everything he expected—but so, so different. Caring for Shane's body, living his days, it feels so—intimate. Like something he was never supposed to have.

They're not friends. They're not dating. He doesn't know what they are, but whatever it is, they're not supposed to see things like this. To know them. To the whole world, they're enemies—rivals.

To each other, Ilya's not sure what they are. Ilya tries to melt into the bed, and scrub the thoughts of Shane Hollander from his brain, but it's hard to do when he's surrounded by Shane's things, in Shane's home, a home Shane never allowed him into.

It feels like an invasion to even be here, even with Shane's permission. A space he was never supposed to occupy. A bed he was never supposed to lay in.

Dragging him back to the real world, he hears his phone ding.

Hayden: SOS. I need an urgent favour

Shane: What is going on?

Hayden: Jackie's got an appointment tomorrow morning, and I've got a meeting I can't get out of. Any chance Uncle Shane could swing by for like two hours and watch the kids? Please please please
I would owe you so bad, dude

Shane: We have game tomorrow

Hayden: It's in the morning. I'll be home way before we gotta head there. I'll even drive us.
🙏

Shane: What time?

Hayden: Seven to nine.
🙏

Ilya pulls up Shane's calendar, flicking through his never-ending schedule. Surprisingly, there's a small gap there. Well, there's not, but it's labelled gym for the entire section, and the previous two hours, so he figures that is not set in stone.

He thinks about texting Shane and asking for Hayden's address—but he's not sure Shane would give it to him. It's fine. He can do Hayden a favour and keep up his appearances as Shane. Hollander never needs to know.

Shane: Send address. I will be there

Hayden: What?
You know what, never mind. Thank you!!!!!!
65 Stones Ave

Shane: Ok. Goodnight, Hayden

Hayden: Night, weirdo.

He sets his phone to Do Not Disturb and rolls over, closing his eyes.

That night, when he dreams, Shane is there. Kissing him. Touching him.

Ilya wakes up alone.

The flight to Montreal is painless, thank God. Shane's palms had been clammy until they got through Passport Control, suddenly convinced somebody would call him out for using Ilya Rozanov's passport.

Of course, nobody did.

LILY: Boarding soon. We will figure everything out tonight.

JANE: Safe flight.

LILY: How do we even fix this?

JANE: We see each other and boom.
Like magic.

LILY: We don't even know what caused this in the first place.

JANE: Not our problem.

LILY: We'll pull from the movies.
They usually do or say something that causes the switch.
Something meaningful.
What were you doing the night before it happened?

Ilya doesn't answer for almost ten minutes. Shane stares at his phone, ignoring the way Cliff attempts to glance over his shoulder, which Shane dodges, scowling at him. Cliff smirks knowingly. Shane does not like that.

His phone dings again.

JANE: Sorry. I was driving.
I was doing nothing important that night.

LILY: But you were doing something.

JANE: I was in bed. Nothing exciting. I am sure I jerked off.

LILY: Did you think about me?

Another pause. Only a few minutes this time.

JANE: Yes. I usually do.

LILY: How often?

JANE: I do not think this is important to problem.

LILY: Like a percentile. Come on.

JANE: I “come on” hand usually. Sometimes stomach. Recently your sheets.

LILY: You’ve jerked off? Since we switched?

JANE; Well. Yes. Your body had problem. I solved. Like when you are hungry, I eat. Same thing.
It is not like your dick and I are not old friends.

LILY: Jesus.
Okay.

JANE: Have you not jerked off? It has been three days.

LILY: I got off once. But I didn’t touch your dick.

JANE: Asshole?

LILY: Excuse me?

JANE: Did you touch asshole

LILY: Oh.
No

JANE: You are being very secretive, Shane Hollander.
Did you hump bed? Use toy? Tell me.

LILY: It was a pillow.

JANE: Couch or bed?

LILY: Bed.

JANE: You are so bad.

LILY: Okay, we have to stop talking about it. I’m with your teammates.

JANE: Are you getting turned on, Hollander? Is my dick hard?

LILY: Shut up.
Go work out or something

JANE: Or something ;)

LILY: Goodbye, Rozanov.
I'll call you when I land. We're about to board.

JANE: Tell pilot be careful
He has precious cargo on board

LILY: You going soft on me, Rozanov?

JANE: I meant my team

LILY: Asshole.

Ilya is at Hayden Pike's front door fifteen minutes before he's required to be. He assumes Shane normally would be too. Hayden pulls open the door and has a baby on his hip, and looks absolutely wrecked.

Ilya raises a brow. "Good morning."

"It's sure a morning," Hayden murmurs, gesturing for him to come inside. He walks past, spotting two young girls perched on the couch with bowls of cereal in their hands, one using a spoon, the other using her bare hand to dig into the milk. Well. That is a technique.

As he turns, Hayden immediately holds a baby out. Ilya's eyes widen a fraction, but he cools his expression, taking the baby and pressing her to his chest. His body moves before he thinks, head tucked behind the bottom of the infant's skull, steadying her neck as she sleepily curls against him instead, seemingly unfazed by the transfer.

"Girls are eating. This one should still be pretty sleepy for the next hour, but there's formula on the counter. You know the drill," Hayden lists off, grabbing his wallet and keys.

Ilya stares at him.

And then he realises, quite suddenly, that he's never babysat a day in his life.

His eyes flicker down, spotting spit up on Hayden's shoulder. "You are wearing puke."

Hayden glances at the stain, sighs, and pulls a wet wipe out of a small container of them on the hallway table, wiping his shoulder before pulling a jacket on top. Ilya feels his nose crinkle, but he swallows any comment.

"Alright, see you in an hour. I know you've been—weird recently, so just—hang out with the kids. Unwind. We'll kick Boston's ass tonight."

Ilya feels insulted; his jaw clenches. "I am sure they will put up good fight."

Hayden squints. "Sure. And you'll kick Rozanov's Russian ass like you always do." He doesn't linger much longer, pulling the door open and taking a step out.

Beneath his breath, mostly to the baby, he murmurs. “Not always. Sometimes Rozanov kick Shane Hollander’s ass, you know.”

The baby stirs, looking up at him with wide, blue eyes.

Hayden’s head pops back in. “What? Were you talking to me?”

Ilya lifts a foot, nudging the door, fighting a smirk as it boinks against Hayden’s chin. “No. Get out. I am Uncle Shane.”

The baby turns, giggling at Hayden’s pouting expression. Pike ducks out the door, closing and locking it behind himself.

From the couch, a set of “Hi Uncle Shane” echoes down the hall. They are like twins from The Shining. He hopes they are not haunted.

The flight goes by more quickly than he expects it to. Ilya’s teammates are friendly, and they keep nudging him for being too quiet and trying to watch a movie. At one point, one of them steals his headphones and tells him to be social.

None of the jabs feel cruel or like they’re genuinely annoyed. Shane’s stomach hurts. He blames it on the turbulence.

He focuses on keeping his (awful) Russian accent up when someone asks him a question directly. He’s excited to be back on solid ground again. Really, he’s excited to see Ilya. Or, well, his own face, but with Ilya’s words and self tucked inside.

Shane jokes along with them, accent wavering with every other word. He really isn’t pulling it off, but no one calls him out on it. They order a round of shots on the plane while the coach is in the plane's bathroom.

Shane coughs and gags as he shoots his.

They all laugh at him. It still feels like a hug. Or like it had felt as they knocked their helmets against his, telling him they love him, over and over.

Once they get off the plane, he collects his baggage and tucks away in a corner, pulling out his phone again.

He hits call.

“Please, do not eat battery,” Ilya says, voice harried and far away.

Shane’s eyebrows fly up. “Who’s eating a battery?”

“Nobody,” Ilya says, quick and firm. Too quickly.

“I feel like someone might be eating a battery.”

Ilya swears in Russian, which sounds– weird, in Shane's voice. "Sorry, do not talk to me. I must—"

He hears the phone get dropped onto a pillow, and distantly, he hears gentle scuffling. Then, the phone is lifted again. "Okay. Hello, Hollander."

"Hi, *Lily*," Shane says, smiling at someone who gapes at him as they walk by. "Who is eating batteries?"

"No one is eating batteries, Hollander," Ilya says, somehow firmer this time.

Then, a tiny familiar voice crackles through the line. "Who is Hollander?"

Shane snaps up from where he's curled in on himself and sitting on his suitcase, spine dead-straight. "Is that Ruby?"

Ilya curses. In English this time. "Fucking shit."

"You have to put a dollar in the swear jar."

"I do not have dollar. Why would I have dollar?"

"You do the crime, you pay the crime," Ruby says.

"That does not even make sense," Ilya argues. Oh, this is not a fight Ilya is going to win. No one ever wins with Ruby. Except Jackie. Or Jade.

"You do not make sense," Ruby retorts.

"Do not stick tongue out at me."

"Ilya, are you at Hayden's house?" Shane asks, cutting in.

"No," A pause. "Okay, yes. But I am doing big favour. Do not worry. Nothing is going wrong."

"Jade broke the TV remote."

"Thank you, little gem," Ilya says. "Can you go away for a minute please?"

"Okay," Ruby responds. Quietly, distantly, he hears tiny little shoes tapping against the wooden floor, walking away.

Shane blinks at the shiny, newly mopped airport floor. He can't believe this is his life.

"Pike family had appointments. I am sitting children. Before you ask," Ilya explains.

Faintly, Shane queries, "Baby-sitting?"

"What I said."

Shane's entire body warms. "You're baby-sitting three children to keep up appearances?"

For me, goes unspoken.

"Yes," Ilya says. "I am good fake-parent."

At once, unbidden, images of Ilya Rozanov with a child in his arms appear– a baby, whose head fits in the palm of Ilya's hand.

Shane imagines Ilya would be a kind father. Patient. Nothing like Ilya's own. It's almost terrifying how easily Shane can imagine it—Ilya at a table, a little girl with bright, honey curls beside him as he helps her sound out letters of the alphabet. Shane also thinks he'd be a fun dad—the kind to organise birthday parties, or to launch himself into a lake just to make his kid laugh. Shane thinks he'd fall into the role naturally, if how he captains his team shows anything. He'd be motivating, and funny, and kind. A good, loving father.

Objectively, of course.

The pendulum swings the other way, and suddenly Shane's thinking about himself. He would be the boring kind of parent, he's sure of it. The one who handles the logistics and makes sure everyone (*Ilya included*) eats their vegetables. Shane likes to believe he'd be a safe place for everyone to land, though– someone sturdy to lean on and come home to when the going gets tough. Ilya would be sturdy too, but in a different way.

Shane imagines the dinner table again, the same girl, the same letters, but Shane is there, too. Across the table, in comfortable leisurewear, smiling fondly.

Kids have never seemed like a reality—just something that wasn't, and couldn't be, in the cards for him. Something beautiful, something to want, and to long for, but never something to hope for. Something only for other people to have.

The vision doesn't seem so unrealistic with Iyla sitting there with him.

He doesn't know what to do with that. He blinks, eyes burning, turning his head to the side before realising he's been silent for a few seconds too long.

Clearing his throat, he says hoarsely, "Oh, yeah?"

"Yes, Hollander," Ilya says, clearly amused. "Children love me."

"I bet they do."

Get it together, Hollander, he tells himself.

He clears his throat again. "Anyway. I, um. I just called to say I've landed. Looking forward to tonight?"

"I will beat your ass tonight," Ilya says, a smile in his voice. "So I look forward, yes."

“We’ll see,” Shane says, feeling his mouth also curving into a smile, despite the wetness in the corner of his eyes. “Good luck with the kids, Lily.”

“Good luck on ice, *Jane*.”

With that, Ilya hangs up. Shane keeps the phone pressed to his ear for a long moment afterwards, and only startles back into movement when someone taps him on the shoulder, asking shyly if he minds taking a picture of them.

He only panics a little when they open the camera app and he’s met with Ilya’s face. He’ll have to tell Ilya he took a picture with a fan for him, later. For some reason, the thought warms him.

Ilya arrives at the game, thankful to have been relieved of babysitting duty. No children died, and no major appliances were damaged. Hayden drives him to the game, and in the car, is once again grilling him a little suspiciously.

He wishes he had driven alone. Or taken an Uber.

Hayden comes to a stop at a red light, turning and staring at Ilya’s side profile. “So, Jackie’s pregnant again.”

“Wow,” Ilya says, staring forward, his hands folded calmly in his lap. “This is big news.”

“Aha!” Hayden yells, swerving around the corner and pulling up on the side of the road. “Shane already knows Jackie’s pregnant. She’s seven months pregnant. Everyone who sees her knows.”

Ilya does not look at him. Refuses to. He stares through the windshield, refusing to even react to the erratic driving, let alone give Hayden what he’s looking for. “Yes. I was being sarcastic.”

“No, you weren’t.” Hayden leans across the centre console, an accusatory finger jabbed his way. Ilya fights the urge to turn his head and bite it. “Shane has a special sarcasm voice. You didn’t use it.”

Ilya exhales through his nose. “Pike, you are sounding crazy.”

“And he doesn’t call me Pike.”

Ilya shifts in his seat, fingers tightening over his knee, nails biting into the denim of Shane’s jeans. “Can we go to game now?”

He can feel Hayden looking at him. *Really* looking. It feels like he’s trying to burn a hole in the side of Ilya’s head. The warmth of his gaze feels like two pinpricks against his cheek. “Are you an alien?”

Ilya blinks. “That is offensive term. I am here legally.”

A long pause stretches between them, broken only by the whirring of the engine, then, eventually:

"Rozanov?"

Ilya's gaze snaps toward Hayden before he can stop it. His eyes saucer-wide. "What the fuck —"

"Oh my god!" Hayden's face goes slack with dawning horror. He leans closer, voice dropping, firm and insistent. "Say that again. Say *what the fuck*."

"No."

"Say it."

"No."

"Say–"

"I hope you die in fire."

"Oh my God," Hayden squeaks, recoiling backwards like he's been backhanded, his hand pressing against his sternum like he's clutching his pearls. Or like he's having a heart attack. "This is crazy. Are you– how is this– where the fuck is *Shane?"*

Ilya hesitates. Shoulders slumping just a fraction. "Um. He–"

"Ilya Rozanov just babysat my *kids!"* Hayden cuts him off, hands throwing up in the air as he tilts his head back, staring at the ceiling of the car.

"I did good job."

Hayden laughs just once, a sharp, hysterical burst, then scrubs his fingers through the strands of his hair. "I knew something was wrong. It's been weird since fucking Jersey. I knew you were—you were acting like a freak! I thought you were possessed!"

"I am not possessed." He frowns, offended. "I did *good job."*

"You're *possessing* Shane! You're inside my best friend!" Hayden yells.

Well, Ilya thinks, *wouldn't be the first time I have been inside him*.

He does not say this out loud to protect Hayden Pike's sanity, because he is a good person.

"Where the hell is my best friend?" Hayden asks.

"Driving to game. With Boston Bears." Ilya gestures vaguely to the road ahead, ready for this entire fucking saga of bullshit to finally be over. "Can we go to game now? We are going to be late."

Hayden blinks once, slowly, like a lizard. "Wait. Wait, he's– is Shane *you?"*

Very patiently, Ilya says, “He is me, I am him. Can we go?”

Hayden drops his head, forehead hitting the horn. For an entire five seconds, the horn blares before Hayden lifts his head again and nods without looking at Ilya.

“Game time,” he says.

“Game time,” Ilya echoes, mildly disturbed.

When he checks into the hotel, he’s advised that they have separate rooms this evening, much to Shane’s surprise. He’s honestly grateful to have a second to catch his breath. He finds himself sitting on the edge of his hotel bed, already ready to head to the stadium, just taking a second to feel a little less unmoored. As much as he can in Ilya Rozanov’s body, anyway.

He doesn’t have that long, twenty minutes or so, but he finds himself staring at the photos again. The ones from Vegas. The night was so complicated—leaving him both relieved to be touched and to touch again, but also, afterwards, feeling hollow in a way he hadn’t felt after sex with Ilya before.

He taps twice, zooming in on his own face, the one he hasn’t seen in days.

He thinks about the night before they swapped. He’d been dead tired, curled up in his bed, exhausted down to the bone. He has so many obligations, so many things to do, he rarely gets a moment to himself—the real time he takes for himself is the stolen few hours he has with Ilya when they hook up. It never feels like performing with Ilya.

Ilya doesn’t let him. He pushes Shane down into the mattress, creating a ruin out of him, leaving him breathless and thoughtless—and for those few moments, right after they come, he doesn’t have to be anyone. He’s not Shane Hollander, famous hockey star, Montreal Metros centre and Captain. He’s not a gay hockey player in the closet. He’s not the only Asian Canadian person on his team, let alone famous in the major leagues.

He’s just … him. A raw, untethered, unworried version of himself. Curled up in Ilya’s arms, kissing gently at his skin, melted against the bed.

He was craving it that night—those few moments. He remembers right as he slipped into sleep, wishing he was brave enough to beg the universe for Ilya to be here, even just for the night. If Ilya were here, he’d take away the stress like he always does, he’d force Shane right out of his head—even if only for those few moments.

And now here he is, Ilya not here, but his body present.

Is this his fault?

Is all of this Shane’s fault? Is this some sort of punishment for trying to ask for more than he was allowed? More than he’d normally ever allow himself?

He sighs, grabs his duffel and throws it over his shoulder, and heads out the door.

Once he's arrived at the game and made it through the warm-ups, he spots Ilya properly for the first time—his own face across the ice, grinning widely and leaning on his stick. He shoots him a gloved salute, winking.

Shane rolls his eyes, yanking off his glove just to flip him off. It only makes Ilya grin wider.

At the face-off, Ilya crowds in close, sticks bracketing the puck, grin still firmly in place.

"Hello, *Rozanov*," he drawls, voice pitched just loud enough to carry. "Ready to lose?"

Shane snorts. Normally, he ignores Ilya's chirping at moments like this, but tonight he can't help himself. "Prepare to get your ass kicked, *Hollander*."

The whistle blows. *Game on*.

They've played a lot of good games together—ones where they push each other to be better and better, but this game is different. Better.

They both seem more settled in the bodies they're wearing now, less distracted, less prone to stupid mistakes. Ilya, skating in Shane's body, slams him into the boards more than once. Shane has to wrestle down the familiar spark of arousal that flares every time Ilya targets him like this.

Ilya chirps relentlessly, utterly unconcerned with the face he's wearing. He calls Shane Rozanov at every opportunity, like he enjoys the taste of the name too much to stop.

Shane chirps back—less often, but pointed. Little comments tossed over his shoulder after he sinks his second goal of the night.

When Ilya scores his third, he blows him a kiss from across the ice as Shane catches his breath from chasing him across the length of it.

Every time they clash head-to-head, it feels less like hockey and more like flirting—or foreplay—but neither of them lets it affect their play.

Scoring a last-second goal, Shane shoots a goal into the Metros' net, right past his own goalie (ignoring the weird feeling that shoots up the second he'd reared up to take it), and the Bears lose their absolute mind as the siren goes off, declaring the end of the game. Teammates swarm him, arms wide, hauling him into what has to be the biggest bear hug of his life.

Over their shoulders, he sees his own face in the crowd, a proud smile on his mouth despite the flicker of disappointment in his eyes. Shane has the overwhelming urge to kiss him, smack him directly in the chest, stealing his breath away.

The second he's in the locker room, he shoots off a text, smiling fondly down at his phone.

LILY: Meet me back at my apartment.

Cliff turns to him. "Your Montreal girl texting you?"

Shane tenses, but is unable to force the smile away. “Shut up.”

Ilya responds quickly.

JANE: You sure? You have hotel room. Is nice. I booked it weeks ago so we could fuck.

LILY: I’m sure. Hurry up.

JANE: You are so pushy.

Ilya’s not sure why he feels nervous on his way back to Shane’s apartment, given that it’s *Shane’s* apartment, and *Ilya’s* the guest. They had just played an incredible game of hockey together– an electric game, one which Ilya is sure is being talked about all over, and still, the nerves persist.

Maybe it’s because it’s unclear what’s coming next, maybe it’s because they haven’t been alone together – on purpose – in months. How are they meant to talk their way back into their own bodies? What if Shane makes them do some sort of ritual, where they have to stand around a candle and hold hands? On second thought, that doesn’t sound entirely unpleasant. Ilya would be okay with that.

But what if it doesn’t work?

What if no solution they come up with works? Are they going to live like this forever? They would be tied to each other for the rest of their lives– it’s not like either of them could disappear, or stop answering one another’s calls. Ilya would have to maintain a relationship with Shane’s parents, and team, and best friend. Fuck, Hayden would have to start hanging out with Shane while Shane’s donning Ilya’s body.

It probably wouldn’t be too troublesome for Shane. Except with Rose, and his parents. But he wouldn’t have to deal with Grigori or Alexei.

Though– Svetlana. She would probably be deeply confused.

The whole thing is just– bizarre. Picturing a life like this outside of these few days… Ilya does not know how it would work, long term. If it even would. There is too much at stake, too many relationships on shaky ground. They need to fix this.

Ilya pulls into the driveway approximately thirty seconds before Shane’s Uber does. Just in case the driver happens to know who either of them are, Ilya waits until it’s pulled away from the curb before he climbs out of his – Shane’s – car.

Shane smiles when Ilya approaches him, hand in the air in a half-wave. Ilya understands why so many people fawn over him– Ilya’s body looks handsome even when it’s behaving awkwardly.

Nodding toward the building, Shane says, “Inside?”

Ilya nods.

Wordlessly, Ilya tosses Shane his own keys and follows him inside. They stand beside each other in the elevator, neither of them facing the other. Still, it's not awkward. It's anticipatory, like they're both gearing up for whatever comes next.

Together, they step out of the elevator and make for the front door. Once past it, they both toe off their shoes, stowing them by the door the way Shane likes.

It throws him for a loop, being here with Shane without initiating or hinting at sex in any way. Very few times have they been alone in a room together without the promise of sex hanging heavy in the air.

Nervously, Ilya walks down the hallway and gestures to the couch. Shane makes an agreeable face that just– does not belong on Ilya's face, so he looks a little bit like a clown. Ilya pretends it is not endearing.

"Before, you asked if I did something," Ilya starts once they're both seated face-to-face on the couch, legs folded beneath them. "To make us swap."

"If you'd done anything differently or, um– wished for something. Yeah," Shane agrees. "Like in the *Change-Up."*

Ilya nods, although he has no idea what the *Change-Up* is. He tries to avert his gaze and avoid his own blue eyes staring back at him, but inevitably, they slide back to Shane. "I did not ask you back."

"Ask me back?"

"If you also were doing something," Ilya clarifies.

Shane bites his lip, looking away momentarily. Then he admits, "I have a… a theory."

When he doesn't continue, Ilya gestures at him. "Okay. Tell me theory."

"So, uh…" Shane fiddles with the sleeve of his hoodie. "You said you were– jerking off that night. And you were thinking about me."

Ilya arches an eyebrow, pretending his heart doesn't do a little flip at the mere mention of himself jerking off to Shane– which is something he's done way too often to be shy about.

"So?"

"So," Shane says, "I was also doing that. Thinking about you, I mean. Not– not jerking off."

Now this, this is news to Ilya.

"You were thinking about me," he says, though he means for it to come out as a question.

"Yeah. Yeah, I was… thinking about my whole life, I guess. I'd had a really long day, and got kind of weird and introspective when I got home."

“Day more busy than usual?”

Shane laughs softly, nodding. “Yeah. Like, I had a million meetings with Rolex, and my mom was on my case about the Armani photoshoots, and Rose had a thing I had to attend. And then I had, like, three interviews. I thought I was gonna fall asleep while standing. Or just pass out.”

“Takes big things to make Shane Hollander tired.”

Shane hums noncommittally. “I guess… I don’t know. When I got into bed that night, my head just started racing. I couldn’t stop thinking about what life would be like without, like, any external pressures. No ad campaigns, or meetings, or meal plans. Just… playing hockey, the way I did when I was a kid. When it was *just* fun.”

Ilya mulls this over.

He says, “You said you were thinking about me also.”

Now, suddenly, Shane looks nervous. His eyes flicker up to meet Ilya’s before they dart away again.

“Yeah. Just… what it would have been like, if we’d met under different circumstances. Like, if we weren’t famous. Or rivals. I kept picturing you there with me, and… it doesn’t matter. I guess I just got stuck wondering if it would have been easier to make it… make it real, if we weren’t who we were. So, uh. Maybe this is my fault,” Shane concludes. He looks apologetic, like he really believes it, too.

“That is stupid,” Ilya tells him.

Shane’s eyebrows fly up.

“After I came, I thought about you,” Ilya admits. “I was thinking, I wonder what Shane Hollander is doing. I wonder if he is sleeping. I wonder if he would not run away if I was not Ilya Rozanov.”

If they weren’t rivals. Or players. Or anything. If they were nothing but normal people—would Shane want him? Would he stay?

Shane swallows visibly, eyes sad. Now, he looks more like the guy Ilya saw in the mirror before he woke up in Shane’s body. Still, Ilya’s face is not so bad to look at, when it’s Shane who’s wearing it. Otherwise, Ilya has a hard time looking at himself.

The seconds tick by, but Shane says nothing. He doesn’t have to. His remorse is impossible to miss, plain in his eyes.

Ilya clears his throat. “We fix problem now, yes?”

“Yes,” Shane agrees, drumming a pattern into his knee. Ilya watches him, fascinated by the ripple of movement in his forearm. Fuck, Ilya has good arms. He’s glad he works out so

much. “Do you… I mean, we know why it probably happened, but we don’t… how do we fix this?”

Shane seems nervous. Uneasy. Ilya fights the urge to wrap his arm around his shoulder and pull him against him, nose buried into his curls.

“Well,” Ilya begins, chewing the inside of his cheek. “You wanted me there … I wanted you there, and now, we are here. You as me, me as you. But we are here. I think—”

“Are you coming onto me right now?” Shane blurts. “*Now*?”

Ilya rolls his eyes so hard he almost sees Shane’s brain. “I am *solving problem*. I am *problem solver,* Hollander.”

“You’re trying to get into your own pants.”

“So what?” Ilya challenges, shifting closer on the couch till his knee knocks against Shane’s. “Would be fun, no? It is worth trying, I think.”

“You’re insane,” Shane says, voice breathy. Ilya’s eyes fall to Shane’s lips. His *own* lips, pink and parted.

“You don’t want to see what it is like?” Ilya asks, leaning in. He lifts a hand, cradling Shane’s jaw in his hand, tilting it to the side. He closes the distance, nudging their noses together. “You do not want to fuck yourself?”

Shane’s breathing stutters. “Do you?”

“Do I want to fuck myself?” Ilya asks, tilting his head just slightly, “I think maybe.” Gentling his voice, he says, “I think mostly I want to make myself feel good so I can hear you moan. I miss it.”

Shane doesn’t answer.

“Say yes, Hollander,” Ilya breathes, lips just shy of touching Shane’s. “You want it, don’t you?”

Eyes fluttering closed, Shane says, “Yes.”

Relief loosening his chest, Ilya leans in to press a soft kiss to the corner of Shane’s mouth. It’s a barely-there touch– a nudge, if anything. He pulls back, stroking his thumb over Shane’s bottom lip before he kisses the other side of his mouth. Unmoving in Ilya’s grasp, Shane shudders.

Finally, his head going quiet the way it only ever does before he initiates anything with Shane, before the threat of him leaving once they’re done looms over him, Ilya captures his mouth in a soft kiss.

Shane makes a quiet, relieved sound against his lips, his hand slipping around his waist, squeezing once as though to let him know he’s here, he’s with him. In response, arousal pools

in Ilya's gut, and he groans quietly, thumb landing at the corner of his mouth.

It's a little weird, kissing his own mouth. The shape of it is foreign, despite it technically belonging to him. When Shane darts his tongue out to lick unhurriedly against the seam of his mouth, that feels foreign too.

It's also really fucking hot.

The kiss gets heated quickly—suddenly, Shane is no longer beside him, but his own body weight settles atop his lap, the kiss unbroken. Ilya's hands tuck under his shirt, hands grabbing possessively at the curve of his waist, mouth parting on a gasp as Shane bites his bottom lip, a sharp nip of pain that's quickly soothed by Shane's tongue.

Ilya pulls back, mouth drifting down the column of his throat, mouthing greedily at the skin there—it tastes clean, like his body wash, like skin, like sweat. He sucks gently at the skin, not hard enough to bruise, but hard enough to drag a choked-out whine from Shane.

The spot is sensitive—he knows it is. He's got his own sweet spots memorised, knows exactly what makes his own body tremble and shake.

Fingers grasp at his bicep, nicely trimmed nails digging in.

His hands shift, lifting up, nudging at Shane's shirt. Shane lifts his arms, and Ilya unfortunately has to detach his mouth to get the shirt up and over his head.

He grabs a handful of Shane's – his *own* – tit, squeezing it. "Wow," he exhales, "is soft. Almost as soft as yours. I see why you do this."

Shane sighs and tips his head back, grinding downward. "Uh-huh. Great. Can you please focus?"

Ilya rolls his eyes, leaning forward and sealing his mouth around a nipple, flicking his tongue over the hardened nub. He massages the soft flesh of Shane's pectoral in his hand, testing the give of it, enjoying the way it yields easily beneath his fingers, soft and a good handful.

Shane, above him, is deeply enjoying himself—making sweet, pretty little noises that Ilya's never heard his own voice make before. Beneath them, he can tell it's Shane, the way he moans, the way his breath stutters, the way he's almost mad about how turned on he is. Ilya loves it, even like this, even when it's his own voice, his own body, it's Shane in there.

He nips at the skin, unkindly, and Shane hisses above him, rolling his hips. Suddenly, Shane shifts, hands moving under the hoodie he'd been wearing and tugging it up. Ilya laughs, knocking his hands out of the way and pushing it up and over his head, discarding it to the side. He watches Shane's gaze flicker over to it, clear that he doesn't like seeing his clothes strewn across his own couch.

Ilya waits—patient to see if he'll fold it. Doesn't mind if he does.

He doesn't. He instead kisses Ilya on the mouth, feeding his tongue into his mouth, hand curled around the side of his neck. Ilya gets lost in it, eyes closed and mouth slotting

familiarly with Shane's, even if the angle is different, and the feeling strange, it's still Shane.

After a moment or so, Ilya's the one that pulls back, his hands digging into Shane's hips as he leans their foreheads together. "We go to bed. I want to suck your dick."

"You mean you want to suck *your* dick."

"Shut up. Unimportant detail. Get up."

Shane rolls his eyes, throwing himself onto the couch beside Ilya, bouncing a little as he lands. Ilya stands, fingers working his belt and pants open, before he offers out his hand. Slender, pale fingers interlace with his.

They go to the bedroom, hand-in-hand, and even though it's only a half dozen steps, it feels like miles—the intimacy of the contact making Ilya's pulse race. His skin feels warm, aflame across the apples of his cheeks, the back of his throat and all the way down the front of his chest. He's sure he's blushing—Shane's face always goes so pretty and pink when he's worked up.

Once they're through the door—Ilya is abruptly hit with the reminder that this is the first time they've been in this room together. This is the first time they've slept together at Shane's actual home, and not the building he'd been renovating (and fucking in) regularly.

He's been in here multiple times now, but still, he takes a second to glance around, taking it all in. Shane impatiently tugs him toward the bed before dropping onto the edge of it.

Then, in Russian, he says, "On your knees."

Ilya can tell he feels very proud of himself. Hearing Shane speak Russian shoots something through him, but he can't even linger on the thought, too busy preparing to shove the pretty little brat right back into his place.

Ilya leans down, grabbing Shane's chin in his hand, roughly forcing his head up till their eyes meet. "Say please, Hollander."

The cocky expression disappears in an instant. Wide, blue eyes look up at him, expression softened, pupils blown so wide the cerulean of them is mostly swallowed by endless black. "Please."

Ilya tuts. "No. Ask properly. *And* say please."

Shane huffs a breath, his eyes a little fogged over. He always gets like this so easily, so desperate to be good, to be bad, to be forced to take what he's given. He's perfect.

"Ilya," he says.

Ilya's breath hitches.

"Please. Get on your knees and suck my dick," then, like he had all the way back in Vegas, he follows it with an even softer, "Please."

Ilya thinks he would move heaven and earth for Shane if he used that voice. He lowers down to his knees, dropping a kiss against his own abdomen, right beside his happy trail. His hand rests over Shane's half-hard dick, fingers curled slightly around the girth of it.

"Good boy," he murmurs right against the skin, just loud enough to hear. "So polite."

Beneath his fingers, the cock twitches, and above him, Shane's breath stutters.

Ilya smiles against his skin, kissing it once more before pulling back and working open his pants. He doesn't drag them down full, just gets them undone and tugs them halfway down Shane's thighs, leaving them there, keeping his legs trapped in place.

A hand drifts to his hair, pushing through the straight strands of it. It grips them, tugging impatiently. A spark of pleasure-pain shoots through him, his cock pulsing a thick line of pre into his briefs. *Oh*. That's why Shane likes that so much.

Ilya palms himself through his own pants, grinding the base of his hand against the aching, weeping cock in his briefs.

"I blow your mind now," Ilya says seriously.

Shane huffs a laugh, cheeks pink. "Go for it."

"I blow your mind," Ilya repeats, pulling Shane's dick out of his briefs. "And you blow load."

He gives Shane's dick a light squeeze, delighting in the way Shane's thighs tense. This is going to be so much fun.

He gives himself only a moment to study his own dick this close up to it. He spots the freckle he assumes Shane had meant when he'd waxed poetic about peeing for the first time in Ilya's body. Ilya's sucked uncut cock before, so that won't be new to him, but sucking Shane off while he's in possession of an uncut cock… *that* will be new.

Ilya ghosts his breath over the head, using his hand to pull the last of the foreskin back. He licks, teasing the edge of his thumb at the underside– gently, so as to not overwhelm Shane. He wants it to be almost enough, but not quite.

When Shane makes a soft noise, Ilya leans in and suckles the head, blinking up at his own face. Unhinging his jaw, he lowers himself, flattening his tongue before closing his mouth around the length of him. He bobs his head, once, twice, before closing his eyes. Slipping his hands up Shane's thighs, he finds a rhythm, gloating inwardly at how quickly Shane's breathing grows laboured.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck—" Shane grinds out, hips bucking just once and burying the length deep into Ilya's throat. He lowers his hips instantly. Ilya doesn't choke—because he is very skilled, but it's a close thing. Ilya has never sucked a dick the same size as his, and it's admittedly a lot harder to take than he'd expected.

Above him, Shane smooths his hair out of Ilya's face. "I'm sorry. Fuck. I didn't—"

Ilya hollows his cheeks, sucking hard. Against his tongue, the thick cock twitches. “Don’t —’m gonna—”

Ilya pulls back, exhaling roughly, jaw aching. He drops his head against the soft, hairy inner thigh to his right. “Is harder this big,” he admits.

Above him, Shane huffs a breathless laugh. “Yeah, I know.”

Ilya glances up at him, cheek still flush with the blood-warm skin of his leg. “You are champion.”

Shane meets his eye. Grins proud and smug. *“Yeah,* I know.”

Ilya turns his head, kissing the skin there, closed-mouth and sweet. He lifts his head, soothingly rubbing his hand along Shane’s covered calf. “You want to come in my mouth or you want to fuck?”

“Fuck,” Shane exhales. “I want to fuck. Definietly fuck. Get up here.”

Ilya does.

He rises upward, pressing a hand to his own warm sternum, nudging him backward. Familiar with the next steps, Shane shuffles back toward the pillows, tugging at his pants and pulling them off leg by leg before letting them get shoved to the bottom of the bed. Ilya strips his own jeans and briefs off at once, not bothering with fanfare, before crawling atop Shane.

Ilya rolls his hips, dragging their cocks together, pulling desperate noies out of both of them.

“Fuck,” Shane curses, eyes fluttering closed as his hand lifts, encircling the side of Ilya’s bicep. “Fuck me.”

Ilya’s eyes widen a little, hearing that in his own voice. Shane’s own eyes snap open. They hover in silence for a second.

“It is okay?” Ilya asks, lowering himself down to press a kiss to the corner of Shane’s mouth. “You want me to fuck you with your own dick? Make you take it? Let you lay back like princess?”

Shane exhales shakily.

“Do you want me to take care of you, Hollander?”

He grips Ilya’s bicep tightly, turning his head so their mouths brush. “Y-Yeah. Fuck. Fuck me. I want you to…”

Ilya kisses him—it’s a short, brief thing, but it still knocks the air out of Ilya’s lungs. “Ask for it. I will give it to you.”

“Fuck me with my dick,” he says, like he was just waiting to be told to ask. He’s always so sweet—follows commands like he was made for it. He’s so unbelievably coachable. No

wonder he is a star player. “Please, Ilya.”

He drags a hand down Shane’s side, settling at his hip before squeezing once. Murmuring, he says, “You’re easy.” Then, daringly, he adds, “For me.”

Shane nods, dragging his nose across Ilya’s cheek before kissing the hinge of his jaw. They separate, reluctantly, before Shane turns to stack the pillows more comfortably. Ilya follows the line of his back, which…

Wow.

Ilya’s ass is insane. The curve of it, especially like this, is something that would be depicted in paintings and observed and adored by thousands who saw it.

Leaning over to stroke the small of Shane’s back, he says, “I look good like this.”

Shane shoots him a baleful look before he tosses one of the throw pillows at him, hitting Ilya’s thigh. “Shut the fuck up and get in me.”

“I do! I have great ass. Beautiful. It will be a joy to fuck it.”

Another pillow.

“Okay, okay,” Ilya says, tapping his hip. He grabs a handful of one cheek, squeezing it and massaging the plump flesh. “Where is lube?”

“Didn’t you say you jerked off?” Shane asks, lying down with his face nestled on top of the throne of pillows he has stacked.

Because he cannot resist, Ilya taps hip. “Yes. But I did not need. You get so wet. Like girl. Easy to do.”

He watches Shane’s hands twitch, like he’s fighting the urge to take himself in hand.

Ilya grins. “Where is lube, Hollander?”

“Side table. Bottom drawer.”

“Good boy.”

He hates to put distance between them, but it isn’t for long. The condoms and lube are right where Shane said they’d be—tucked beside a crossword book, a pair of glasses, a flashlight and a black silk bag.

He squints. “What is in bag?”

“Oh my god, are you snooping?”

“Is right here! I am not snooping.”

“It’s my… it’s a dildo,” Shane says, neutrally like he’s trying not to sound embarrassed. “I’m surprised you didn’t find it sooner. You’ve been living here for days.”

“I was busy dealing with your life. Very busy.”

“Whatever,” Shane huffs, turning his head to face Ilya. He gestures to his own hard dick. “Can you come back now? Or I’m gonna finger myself open with spit.”

Ilya’s gut swoops, eyes roving over Shane’s chest, stomach and thighs. His own body, worn by his lover. “You are so impatient.”

He’s a hypocrite, he knows. Shane knows it too, if the look he’s sending him is anything to go by.

Smirking, Ilya throws the condom on the bed, squeezing a generous amount of lube onto his fingers to warm it up as he puts a knee on the mattress, shuffling until he’s hovering over Shane’s calves.

His fingers find their place between Shane’s legs, nudging Shane’s inner thighs until he parts his legs more.

Fuck, he’s about to finger his own body.

Gaze still firmly on Shane’s face where it’s tilted to the side, visible from behind, Ilya traces his rim. He presses a finger in slowly, a knot loosening in his chest when Shane exhales, muscles relaxing the way they always do when he knows Ilya will take care of him.

Ilya stays right where he is, close to Shane, as he fingers him open with two, and then three fingers. He kisses him when he makes soft noises, obliges when Shane asks for more, rubs at his prostate when he feels like teasing him. Shane moans so sweetly Ilya feels like weeping.

When Shane’s mouth drops open, Ilya knows he can’t wait any longer.

He braces himself, smearing a kiss over Shane’s cheek, heart fluttering when Shane’s eyes peel back open, dark and unfocused.

Ilya stills his fingers. “You want my cock?”

Shane smiles lazily, lifting one arm to give him a thumbs up. It looks extra goofy, given that it’s Ilya’s hand.

“You can not speak now?” Ilya teases.

Shane flips his hand, the thumbs up now a thumbs down. Ilya laughs.

He pushes in.

Ilya presses his hand to the same space it always ends up occupying, the space between Shane’s shoulders, pushing him into the mattress and pinning him in place.

Like this, even in a body that's not his own, Shane takes it. Ilya fucks into him, guiding Shane's own cock deep into Ilya's own body, brain dizzied even thinking about the logistics of it for too long.

Normally, they begin on Shane's back, and flip at the last minute so that Ilya can fuck deep—this time, though, they start like this, with Shane being railed from behind, face smushed into the pillows, needy, desperate nosies escaping him as he's taken. Shane is fucking back against him, meeting Ilya's thrusts, but eventually, after a few minutes, that slows.

Then, quietly: "Fuck, Ilya," Shane grinds out, more whine than word. "Flip me. Fuck. On—"

Ilya thrusts in, burying his cock deep.

Shane whimpers. "On my back. I wanna—" he huffs, "I wanna see you. Kiss—"

Ilya doesn't give him a chance to finish his sentence; he eases his cock out, smoothing his thumb over the top of his own ass before guiding Shane onto his back.

He guides his cock back inside, watching his own face below him contort with pleasure as he's filled to the brim. Ilya himself has never taken a dick, meaning his body is not accustomed to the feeling, but Shane Hollander takes it like a champ—just like he had the first time. Ilya smooths his hand along Shane's side, dragging it down before lifting Shane's thigh, wrapping his leg around his waist.

Shane goes easily, pliant and sweet, his head tilted back as he adjusts to the new angle.

Ilya leans down, and as he does, Shane finds his eyes. He smiles, soft and warm, before capturing Shane in a searing kiss. One hand braces beside Shane's head, while the other caresses the soft muscle and flesh of his hip as he thrusts into him. Shane moans into his mouth. Ilya tastes the noise more than he hears it.

They don't speak for minutes—just the noise of skin against skin and a litany of soft noises punched out of Shane's mouth. They're less kissing, more just breathing into each other's mouths. The tight, wet heat around him is intoxicating. Eventually, he pulls back, realising quickly that the body he's in is hurtling toward the edge much faster than he's used to. He takes a second, squeezing Shane's hip, fingers splayed over the skin.

Shane doesn't complain, just breathes with him, hand moving between them to glide over his thick, hard cock, the foreskin shifting as his fist leisurely pumps over the length. His eyes flutter closed, so quickly lost in the pleasure of his neglected dick receiving much-needed attention.

Fuck.

He wants to see Shane come. He wants to make his own body, with Shane inside, tremble and come apart at the seams. He grabs hold of one of Shane's legs, bending it back before fucking into him, eyes falling closed as he focuses on pumping his hips mercilessly. Soft little *uh uh uh* noises are punched out of the body beneath him, the voice unfamiliar in this tone, but the noises themselves are ones he's heard dozens of times before.

Suddenly, abruptly almost, all of the sounds come to a stop.

Ilya's eyes open, and below him, Shane is looking up with a concerned, displeased expression on his face. Ilya's hips still, cock half-inside, half-out. "Why do you look like this?"

Shane seems to snap out of it. He blinks. "Do I look this stupid every time I'm on top?"

Ilya laughs, the sound bursting out of him as he releases Shane's thigh, leaning down and burying his face in Shane's neck. He nudges the rest of his length back inside, kissing softly along his skin. "Yes," he murmurs. "It is my favourite. Makes me so fucking hard. You look so angry that you are horny."

He rolls his hips in slow, shallow thrusts. "It is like you are my lover and my enemy at the same time. I jerk off to it. I picture you in my lap, wearing your glasses, riding my dick and frowning. Makes me come so hard I cannot see for minutes after."

Shane looks like Ilya's just confessed his undying love for him. He has to backtrack mentally to ensure he didn't say the words he's been dying to say for so long. He hadn't.

"You jerk off thinking about my glasses?"

Ilya snaps his hips, fucking a surprised gasp out of Shane. "I jerk off thinking about *you*. But yes, you are often wearing the glasses."

"Fuck," Shane whispers, "Fuck, fuck me. I'll—you can fuck me in them—sometime. Once this is—"

Ilya laughs. "Sweetheart, do not try to talk." He snaps his hips harder, feeling Shane's hole flutter around him. "Just take. Let me look after you."

A soft whimper escapes Shane, right beside Ilya's ear. He digs his nails into Ilya's shoulder blades, dragging down.

Ilya takes that as Shane being happy with the idea. He drags his cock all the way out, just the tip left inside, before pistoning his hips forward. He repeats the motion, over and over, making Shane feel every inch of his own cock fill him up to the brim.

His body is smaller like this, but is still draped completely over Shane's—he thinks its the way he embodies it, the way he fills the space like he normally would, even if his mass doesn't match up.

He uses the mass he does have, though, putting all the strength and stamina he has behind every thrust.

Shane is putty beneath him, wordless, moaning, wanton in his pleasure.

"Fuck, Shane. Even like this, you are made for it," Ilya tells him, unable to stop the words from tumbling out. The pleasure is twisting inside him, rushing through him so quick and sharp that he's struggling to stop himself from finishing before Shane does. He refuses to.

Shane nods. So agreeable and pliant once he's fucked out and stuffed full.

Ilya groans, cock throbbing inside of Shane. "Fuck, wish I could—wish I could come in you. Not like this. Not for first time. Want to come in you bare. Want to fill you up, want to—"

Next to his ear, he thinks he hears Shane crying—not from emotion, but from overwhelm. He's making soft, pretty little whimpering noises, some closer to gentle sobs than moans.

"You're close?"

Another whimper.

"Fuck, you're so good. You're so perfect, Shane. I want to come in you. I want to—"

Shane drags his nails hard enough down Ilya's back that he swears he's drawn blood. Ilya hisses, the pain shooting through him pushing him over the line at the same time Shane cries out, "*Ilya*."

Together—completely in sync—they come. Ilya, hot and heavy as he continues rutting inside Shane, his vision aburst with a bright, white light, and Shane beneath him, cock seizing and shooting over both their stomachs and chests.

When Shane opens his eyes, his orgasm finally cresting—Ilya's face is below him, rather than above him—his mouth ajar, cheeks pink, eyes closed with incredibly long lashes sweeping over his cheeks. He's panting heavily, catching his breath, and Shane gets a second to just stare at the face he's worn for days—Ilya wears it so much better, looks at ease in his skin the way he always does after sex, expression soft and lax. Shane's hips shift, and he abruptly, all at once, realises he's inside Ilya Rozanov.

Ilya, seemingly realising it at the same time, opens his eyes.

"...Fixed it?" Shane says, easing his cock out of Ilya, sliding the condom off and tying it, the motion unpractised and a little clumsy. He tosses it into the wastebasket beside his bed. When he returns, he's still tucked between Ilya's legs. Ilya is watching him, looking fucked-out and exhausted.

"Did we come at same time?" He asks.

"Yeah."

"While I was fucking you," Ilya says, nodding once.

"As me, yeah." Shane scrubs a hand over his face, then drops it to the bed beside Ilya's shoulder. Their skin brushes, and even after all that, it still makes his skin tingle, nerve endings suddenly alight and enthralled at the contact.

"Strange," Ilya hums, rolling over onto his side, his eyes tracing along Shane's side profile, like he's relearning the slope of his nose, the line of his jaw, the curve of his mouth.

Huffing a laugh, Shane says, “Let's never do that again.”

“God, you are such bottom.”

“I meant the body swap, asshole.”

“You meant both.”

“Ilya,” He sighs, the name heavy on his tongue. “Shut the fuck up.”

In response, Ilya seems to shut up, instead taking a moment to roll on top of Shane, still naked as the day he was born, and lean all up into his space. Then, because he can’t shut up for more than thirty seconds, he says, “I am glad to be fixed.”

Shane lifts his brows in question. “Yeah?”

“Yes. Means I can look at you.”

Shane feels his cheeks heat at a truly impressive speed. He’s grateful he was already flushed.

He should make a joke, lighten the mood, before either of them says something they’ll regret. But Shane can’t think of a single thing he could ever regret hearing Ilya say. So, soft and undeniably vulnerable, he asks, “You mean that?”

Impossibly, Ilya’s eyes soften further. He places a hand over Shane’s heart, palm to warm skin, and says, “I mean that.”

Shane wants to tell him he loves him. A part of him aches to, if he’s being honest with himself.

Bravely, perhaps more so than he’s ever been, he decides he will. Not now, not when they’ve only just figured out where they stand with each other and fallen back into their own bodies, but soon. As soon as he can.

Ilya says, “Sleep. I will make special Hollander pancakes tomorrow.”

“What makes them special?”

“Extra protein,” Ilya mumbles, eyes drooping, dragging over the length of Shane’s torso. “For big, strong athlete.”

Shane smiles. “Okay.”

They adjust, Shane’s back pressed flush against Ilya’s front, an arm tucked snugly against Shane’s chest, fingers splayed over his heart.

Then, mouth against the back of Shane’s neck, Ilya says, “I will miss you when I am sleeping.”

It sounds a lot like *I love you.*

End Notes

thank you so much for reading :D let us know what you thought in the comments!

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