

as you mean to go on

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by [jtimu](#)

Summary

Ilya holds Amber in his arms and looks seriously into her tiny eyes. She giggles appreciatively at him. At the end of the hall, he can see Pike trying not to let his dismay show. Ilya enjoys holding the baby nearly as much as he enjoys the discomfort building on Pike's face as he watches them.

She hasn't managed words quite yet, but they're close. "Ro za nov," he says, trying to get Amber to repeat it back. She is a happy baby, born to a perfect family. He hopes her whole life will be as happy and boring as this.

Ilya and Shane babysit the Pike kids for New Year's.

Notes

I have been possessed by the ghost of Christmas something.

Set nebulously post show. It's Christmas, don't make me think about timelines.

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

- Translation into Русский available: [так и проведешь](#) by [Minerva_HW](#)

Ilya hears the phone ring, followed by a frantic fumbling and an “ah, *shit*,” from Shane. Luckily for him, Ilya is close by. He plucks the phone, now covered in flour, off the floor and presses the green button. Pike’s voice comes out in a tinny mumble.

Shane is wrist-deep in bread dough and looking between his project and his phone with dismay. Ilya rolls his eyes and taps the speaker button. Pike is still talking.

“—wouldn’t ask,” Pike says. He’s talking quickly. “I know it’s last minute. I’ll owe you forever.”

“What? Sorry, I missed the start. I’m, uh. Have you ever made sourdough?”

“*What?*”

Ilya does not know how these two have ever had a conversation.

“Yeah, we’re trying to bake—it doesn’t matter. I think I did it wrong. What’s up?”

“I got those tickets for the show that Jackie wanted to see. It’s tonight, right?”

“Most of the New Year’s parties are.”

“Right.” Pike’s voice goes tinny, like he’s holding the phone too far from his face. It cuts back again. “I asked everyone else first, I promise. The sitter cancelled and Jackie’s parents are out of town. It’s just two of them,” Pike says, like this is sweetening some sort of deal. “The twins are at a sleepover.”

“Why did you ask everyone else first?” Shane sounds wounded. Ilya cannot believe this man.

“You know.” Pike hesitates. “Because he’s there.”

Shane’s voice goes sharp. He keeps his eyes on the phone, not looking up at Ilya. “Oh, you don’t trust him around your kids?”

“No, fuck, that’s not it. You know that’s not—yeah, sorry,” he says, and it sounds distant. “I know. Jar. Shane, look. I don’t want to. Ugh.” Pike sounds disgusted. “Don’t make me say it.”

“I want to hear it.”

“It’s because you never get to see each other.” Pike huffs it out like it hurts him. Ilya is starting to enjoy this conversation. “And it’s New Year’s and I don’t want to get in the way of your gross love fest.”

“Gross?” Shane asks it with the weight of *problematic* behind it. Ilya is so proud of him.

“You know what I mean! Look, I know it sucks, and I’m sorry I’m even asking. You can say no. No hard feelings if you say no, but we can order you a pizza or something. No, wait, Jackie says she’ll cook.”

Ilya decides it’s past time to chime in. “Do you think I cannot afford pizza?”

“Fucking *shit*, Shane, am I on speaker?”

It was a foregone conclusion as soon as Shane answered the phone. Ilya doesn’t take it personally. The bread was a lost cause already, and it was no hardship to toss the unrisen mess into the trash can where it belonged. Shane has many talents, but baking is not among them.

It’s not two hours later that they’re standing outside the Pikes’ home, and Shane is giving him a look that means Ilya should behave.

Jackie meets them at the door with Amber on her hip. She has a long green dress on and sparkling diamonds in her ears. Her hair, perfectly curled, is somewhat marred by the baby’s grabbing hands. She looks stunning. She could do much better than Hayden Pike.

Ilya, behaving, does not tell her so, and instead takes the baby from her.

“Thank you so much. Really, thank you. We wouldn’t ask but—”

“It’s fine, Jackie,” Shane assures her. “We’re happy to help.”

Ilya holds Amber in his arms and looks seriously into her tiny eyes. She giggles appreciatively at him. At the end of the hall, he can see Pike trying not to let his dismay show. Ilya enjoys holding the baby nearly as much as he enjoys the discomfort building on Pike’s face as he watches them.

His niece is the only thing left in Russia for him to care about. He puts money in her trust and sends presents a few times a year. He remembers when she was tiny, much smaller than this. Small enough to hold a future in her hands.

Ilya settles her on his hip, tucked under one arm. Damp hands grab at his shirt.

Jackie gives Shane the highlights: they’ve already eaten. Bedtime as usual. Arthur isn’t quite old enough to understand New Year’s Eve yet, and Amber has only just emerged from the stage at which babies are more potato than not. Shane babysits for them sometimes, so he knows all of this already. Ilya will get the notes from him later. For now, he coos at the baby, knowing it’s driving Pike crazy.

“We’re going to steal her,” Shane declares. It’s good that Shane said it, because it would not be so well received coming from Ilya.

“Get your own,” Pike says. He looks fine, Ilya supposes. The suit fits.

“It doesn’t quite work that way for us,” Shane says in the tones of a patient tutor.

“I don’t know,” says Ilya. “Maybe if we try harder.”

“Oh my god.” Pike is turning red. Shane, too. Canadians. Ilya rolls his eyes at them and goes back to the baby.

She hasn’t managed words quite yet, but they’re close. “*Ro za nov*,” he says, trying to get Amber to repeat it back. She is a happy baby, born to a perfect family. He hopes her whole life will be as happy and boring as this.

“There’s dinner in the fridge,” says Jackie as she rifles through her purse. “Did you get the —”

“I have the tickets.” Pike puts his hands on her shoulders. “Let’s go before I change my mind.”

Shane shoos them out of the house with one last “have fun!” and then they are alone in Hayden Pike’s house, with Hayden Pike’s children, and Ilya wonders idly whether this is a punishment or a reward.

Shane knows these children. He is Uncle Shane, and the novelty of Ilya’s presence is not enough to disrupt their routines. They bounce around for an hour, and Ilya chases the toddling child, roaring like a monster, until he collapses into giggles, his tiny cheeks round and pink.

“Bedtime,” Shane declares, and then Shane is singing a little song as they swirl bright blue toothpaste onto a brush. Arthur opens his mouth wide so all of his bright white teeth are on display.

Ilya leaves him to it and heads to the nursery. Changing a baby is an old routine. He never ceases to be amazed at how soft, how delicate they are. He was never this small, he decides. He murmurs to her in Russian throughout, keeping her distracted. There is probably a song for this, too, but Ilya does not know it.

They babble back and forth while he manages the powder and wipes. It will be good for her, he thinks. She can learn some Russian phonemes. He has a pleased thought that maybe Pike’s baby’s first word will come out in Russian. He tries to get her to imitate *mama* and *papa*, and then, realizing they are too similar to English, tries for *Ilya*.

He walks her up and down the hallway. They pass an open door, and he can hear Shane reading a story out loud. His voice goes soft and growly as he reads a line, then high for another. Ilya’s heart is suddenly very loud in his ears, too big for his chest to contain. He peers in the room and Shane winks over at him. He’s sitting on the low bed, up against the headboard. Arthur is mostly asleep already, his face soft and his chest rising and falling with his slow breaths.

Bedtime is easy. Ilya doesn’t know why people complain about it. Maybe the Pikes have easy children. He doesn’t know what he was like. His father acted like Ilya sprang into the world a

full-fledged disappointment, but no one has ever told him whether he cried, or how he slept.

Shane was a difficult child. His mother said so once, and Ilya had tucked away this new knowledge. They went for dinner, Shane's arm in a sling so that he would not use it accidentally. She said it like a joke, how she didn't sleep for years after Shane was born and now she can barely sleep sometimes for worry about him. She looked at Ilya after she said that, commiserating. Ilya can barely breathe thinking about it.

It is still so early when the children fall asleep.

He and Shane rummage through Jackie's kitchen. Shane knows where things are: the glasses and the plates, and the drawer in which the silverware is kept, in an odd place on the other side of the kitchen. Shane pops the tray in the oven to heat.

"It'll get soggy," he says, when Ilya points out the microwave. This is Shane all over. No shortcuts.

There's a bottle of champagne in the fridge with their names on it in neat blocky writing. The post-it flutters to the floor when Ilya pulls it out.

"It's nowhere near midnight," Shane protests.

Ilya ignores him. He has to rummage through the cabinets until he finds the champagne glasses, and then rinse the dust off them. He pours Shane a glass, and Shane glances down the hallway.

"They are fine," Ilya says. He closes Shane's fingers around the flute. "Is fine. We can stay tonight. If you want." He adds the last begrudgingly.

"We're babysitting."

Ilya shrugs. "I have tolerance. Not like you."

Shane huffs out a little laugh and sips his champagne. He might finish the glass by midnight, Ilya thinks.

Shane makes a face. "I don't actually like champagne."

"What do you like? Not ginger ale. It is a holiday."

"Beer, I guess? Do they have any?"

"Too bad," Ilya says, and takes the glass from Shane's hand. He holds it up to his mouth and tips it until Shane has to accept a drink or risk spilling it all over himself. "This is champagne holiday."

Shane is a terrible lightweight, which Ilya finds embarrassing for a professional athlete. His body is a temple to deprivation. He drinks his champagne anyway, his throat working on the

swallow.

Ilya pours himself a glass as well. It's the spirit of the thing. You have to follow the rituals. Hockey is like that, too, almost absurdly superstitious. Ilya's never quite sure if he believes in the superstitions, but he follows them anyway.

This is not the night they had intended to have. The food is delicious, of course. Jackie's only fault is her taste in men. It's lovely to sit across from each other in the reflected glow of Christmas lights and share a meal that was made for them, good enough for Shane's nonsense diet and well-seasoned besides.

They had planned to stay in, of course. They can't go out together, not how Jackie and Pike can, off to some expensive event, surrounded by their friends. They, Shane and Ilya, have very few friends as a couple.

Ilya had planned to tie Shane to the headboard and edge him until midnight. To see if he could time his orgasm for the ball drop. It was a good plan, and he mourns it briefly. It would have been fun. Ilya would have enjoyed it. Shane too, maybe. They say you should ring in the new year the way you intend to spend it. Ilya intends to spend the year playing hockey, but maybe it can also be ring in the new year the way you *want* to spend it, with the person you wish you could spend it with.

Shane rinses the dish and puts them in the dishwasher. Ilya helps himself to the chocolate cake under a glass dome. They settle on the couch together, Shane curled up under Ilya's arm.

It is still *so* early. Now is when they should be going to find a party. Shots and champagne and girls in sparkling dresses. Music loud enough to make his head throb. Other things.

"The children are asleep," Ilya says into Shane's ear, pitching his voice low. Shane is warm against his side.

"Shut up."

"We do not have to sit on the couch the whole time."

"Fuck off."

"Swear jar," Ilya says, and bites Shane's earlobe.

"Oh my God, no." Shane scoots himself to the other end of the couch. He's trying to look serious but he's bad at it, the smile breaking through the cast of his features like the sun peering out from behind the clouds. "You sit over there."

"Ok," Ilya agrees. He sprawls out so the bulge in his pants is obvious. Shane can't stop looking at it.

They see each other so rarely. It is nearly painful to have Shane here, within arm's reach, and not to reach.

"I'm putting on a movie," Shane says.

“Do you think you can keep your eyes on it?” Ilya says, and gestures to where Shane’s gaze keeps drifting naturally.

“Seriously, fuck off.”

Maybe Ilya’s brain is twisted that he hears fuck off as I love you. It makes him soft. He lets Shane put the movie on, the volume low so they don’t wake the children. Eventually Shane creeps back over to him and puts his head in Ilya’s lap.

“Do you mind?” Ilya asks. He’s not sure what’s going on in the film. He has no reason to look at it when he can watch the tracery of freckles across Shane’s skin.

“Do I mind what?”

It’s in Ilya’s brain now. He hasn’t been able to drop the thought. “Do you not want to be out celebrating?”

Shane looks up at him, features wrinkling. “We can’t.”

“I know *we* cannot. But you— you have friends. You do not want to celebrate New Year with them?”

“Of course I do.”

Ilya gets so frustrated sometimes. Language is an imperfect thing, and English only exists to get between them. “Do you want to be there?”

Shane catches on eventually. “No,” he says simply. “Not yet.”

“You will be old before you go to your next New Year’s party.”

“I’m not much of a partier.”

Ilya loves him. God, he loves him. Shane goes back to watching the movie. Ilya runs his hand through Shane’s hair over and over, playing with the strands.

“That’s nice,” Shane mumbles. He stretches out like a cat.

“Are you going to sleep? It is not midnight yet.”

“Yeah, wake me up for it.”

“I can keep you awake.” Ilya lets his voice go lascivious.

“No, I’ll definitely fall asleep if we do that. After,” Shane clarifies, when Ilya scowls at him.

“We can fuck on Hayden Pike’s nice big bed.”

“He’ll kill me.”

“Oh, but you want to. Maybe I fuck a baby into you. That bed is good for that. There is evidence. Four of them.”

Shane’s face is flaming red, but he is watching Ilya now. “You can try,” Shane mutters. It’s not quite agreement. Ilya decides to push his luck.

“I can. Let me.”

“No, Ilya.”

They sit quietly for a few more minutes. It’s not even ten o’clock.

“Maybe in the bathroom,” Shane says, and Ilya knows he’s won.

“In their bathroom?”

“No. Maybe.”

“I could fuck you right here, over the back of their big couch. You can bend over. I will fuck you as they count down for the new year.”

Shane’s legs rub together. He is so easy to read, after all these years. Plain like a book. Ilya spent his life hiding away and here is Shane who has probably never told a lie in his life, aside from this one, the one that is *them*.

“I want to suck you,” Shane says, acquiescing. He’s as horny as Ilya is.

“Right here?”

“No, come on.” It’s a shame. Ilya likes the thought of Pike coming home early to find Shane between Ilya’s knees.

“Where?”

“Bathroom,” Shane repeats. He is as red as a candied apple. “In the hallway. We can lock the door.”

They nearly don’t make it. Ilya pushes Shane up against a wall and they kiss for long minutes, his hands roaming up Shane’s sides and chest. Shane catches himself on a moan, and darts a wide-eyed look at the closed bedroom door.

“Come,” Ilya says, and tugs him into the bathroom.

It’s tasteful, probably. Spacious. Stone that looks like marble and clean white towels. Ilya doesn’t know. Doesn’t care, not when Shane pushes him up against the door, and sneaks a hand past him to twist the lock.

“You have to be quiet,” Shane says in a hot, low voice.

“I know how to be quiet. You are the one with that mouth.” Ilya tucks a thumb into that mouth, presses down on Shane’s tongue. “But you will be too busy to be loud.”

He feels Shane’s answering groan more than hears it.

Shane drops to his knees, fumbling with Ilya’s pants. He rubs his face against Ilya’s dick through his underwear, nuzzling against him like a cat. Ilya’s never met anyone who loves to suck dick so much. He counts his blessings every day, and chief among them is Shane, this perfect Canadian boy with the mouth of a two-penny whore.

Shane gets that mouth over Ilya. He knows exactly how Ilya likes it by now, perfect suction, his other hand making up the lack of depth.

“No, do not,” Ilya says, when Shane reaches between his own legs.

He should clarify. He doesn’t. Shane stops anyway, even though Ilya hasn’t said if he’s going to have to wait until he’s finished with what he’s doing or until they get home. Ilya likes that stupid joke: I’m going to make you wait until next year. He doesn’t say it this time, because he won’t.

He comes embarrassingly quickly. Ilya wants to pull back and stripe across Shane’s perfect face, but they are being discreet tonight, so he doesn’t. Shane swallows neatly, and the astringent taste is thick on his tongue when Ilya pulls him back to his feet to kiss him.

“Ilya,” Shane says, into his mouth. He’s nearly begging. He will, if Ilya doesn’t respond soon. Ilya resents that he can’t take the time he desperately wants. He wants to make the most of this precious night. But they have tomorrow as well. Ilya will be sleepless and slow at the first skate of the year, but it’s worth it for the look he coaxes from Shane’s face as he drops to his knees in turn.

He doesn’t switch their positions. Ilya still has his back to the door, with Shane leaning against it above him. His hips move in quick thrusts, deep into Ilya’s mouth. Ilya wants to swallow him whole, carry Shane inside him forever. He has to settle for this for now, a quick blowjob in a borrowed bathroom while Shane bites his fist to keep quiet.

They use the white towels to clean up and settle back on the couch together. It makes Shane giggly. He’s not used to being the bad guy, to doing things that would get him in trouble.

Ilya can’t find it in himself to regret any of what led him here, to babysitting on New Year’s Eve. It’s boring, and isn’t that the point. Happiness filters in through the sieve of his contentment.

They don’t make it to the countdown. Shane slips off first, and Ilya follows, his head drooping back to rest uncomfortably on the back of the couch. The champagne flutes sit half-empty on the coffee table.

Ilya wakes with a start when the front door opens.

Jackie and Pike are clearly drunk. They shush each other while Jackie kicks off her heels. Shane will have to drive them to fetch their car tomorrow. Shane is curled up on the couch, his head in Ilya's lap.

Jackie catches sight of them and stage whispers, "Oh, my god you're adorable," loudly enough for their neighbors to hear. Pike rolls his eyes, and nearly his ankle when he stumbles.

"Kids ok?"

"No, we sold them to orphanage for children whose parents are bad at hockey." It's not Ilya's best work, but he's still half asleep and Jackie laughs the easy amusement of the very drunk.

"You're staying? We can pull the couch out."

"No, is ok." Ilya's jaw cracks when he yawns. He wishes he could scoop Shane up in his arms and carry him out to his boring car. He lays a hand on his shoulder instead, shaking him gently awake. "I will drive us home."

"It's no problem," Jackie says earnestly. She sets her earrings on two different counters.

They missed the countdown, but maybe the new year starts when they wake up tomorrow in Shane's big bed. Ilya intends to start the year how he means to go on, in ways that would not be welcome in this lovely, wholesome house.

As a parting gift to Pike, just before the door closes, he tells him this.

End Notes

They're not related enough for a series, but this is set after [this Christmas fic](#).

Works inspired by this one

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