

Digging up old ground

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Digging up old ground

by [paperstorm](#)

Summary

“I did not ... know what happened. You touched over my pants, kissed my stomach. Went into my lap.” Ilya gestures with his free hand like he’s grasping for a word he can’t find, just out of reach. “Something was different.”

Shane can’t say he remembers all that in as much clarity as Ilya does – the whole day is a bit of a blur in his mind.

“We were having fun afternoon. Sex and naps and talking. And then I touched your hair and you went somewhere. Scared me, a little bit.”

Blinking and still not understanding, Shane repeats, “I went somewhere?”

Reaching over, Ilya picks up the booklet. One handed, he holds it against his thigh and flips to a page around halfway through with the word Subspace in bold at the top. He taps it with his forefinger. “Went here, I think.”

Shane experiences a sub-drop without knowing what's happening. Ilya doesn't know either, so he makes it his mission to find out.

Notes

I got very stuck on the little detail from episode 4 of how upset and confused Ilya looks when he accidentally drop-kicks Shane into his feelings by petting his hair :D Title is from the song Dionne by The Japanese House

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

“Fuck,” Shane moans, back arching.

Ilya drags his hand down the sweat on Shane’s skin, blunt fingernails digging in. Shane’s body feels exquisite around him, squeezing him and pulling him in like it always does – like it wants Ilya buried to the hilt more than it wants water or oxygen. Ilya’s wants that too. His hips snap forward, pleasure building deep in his gut.

“Oh my God.” Shane gasps, head dropping down between his shoulders, and he pushes back.

Grinning, Ilya gently smacks the side of his ass and tells him, “That’s it, fuck yourself on my cock.”

“Mm.” Moaning again, Shane does as he’s asked; rocking backwards so the tight, slick channel expands to take Ilya in again and again.

“Harder,” Ilya instructs, giving him another smack, just a bit sharper this time. It leaves redness on Shane’s skin and the cry that comes from Shane’s throat is strangled, garbled, as he works himself on Ilya’s cock.

“Ilya, I ...”

“Just like that, Hollander. Keep going. Use me, make yourself come.”

Another word dies on Shane’s tongue, Ilya doesn’t catch it before Shane’s arms give out underneath him and his chest hits the mattress.

Gripping his hips, Ilya drives swiftly into him half a dozen times just to listen to Shane whimpering before he walks forward on his hands. Shane’s knees slide out under the weight as Ilya drapes over him, their bodies pressed together all the way down. He rolls his hips, aware that Shane’s got all the sensation now – Ilya grinding into his ass and his cock rubbing the smooth sheets below.

Right into his ear, Ilya growls, “Did I say you could stop?”

Shane’s breath hitches. It’s such a small sound but so loaded, and it spreads like warm honey over Ilya’s heated skin.

“I have to do all the work,” Ilya complains, nipping at his earlobe. His hips roll again, faster and faster as he chases his own release. Shane’s gone quiet and pliant beneath him, no longer pushing back but just a melted puddle for Ilya to thrust into.

He pushes his face into the back of Shane’s head, the smell of sweat and hair gel filling his nose with each ragged inhale. Pressure builds in his pelvis, a slow burn that escalates to a wildfire and then catches. Ilya grunts into a long moan as his hips stutter and he tips over the edge, spilling into Shane and filling him up. He always loves that, the thought of marking him, *claiming* him, in a way that nobody ever has before. They have their pasts and their wasted years but no one has ever had Shane like this, with nothing between them, and Ilya intends to keep it that way.

“Mm, fuck,” he swears, a smile overtaking his face as post-orgasmic tremors dance along his nerve endings.

Shane’s still unmoving underneath him; it takes Ilya a moment or two to notice from his dizzying heights. He kisses the back of Shane’s neck, nosing through his damp hair and inhaling the musky, intoxicating scent of them together.

“Are you dead?” he jokes.

Shane doesn’t answer. He moves ever so slightly, head turning on the pillow and hips adjusting under Ilya.

“Did you come?” Ilya asks, frowning when again he gets no answer. He pushes up to his knees, careful about it as his cock slips from Shane’s body. He takes a moment to look; to enjoy the sight of his release beginning to leak out onto the back of Shane’s thigh. Then he pats Shane’s hip. “Over.”

One word is all it takes. Shane pushes up onto his hands and flips, bouncing as he lands on his back. Ilya looks down, finds Shane’s cock shiny and messy with smears of spit and precome but still hard.

“Hm, seems not,” he muses. He sits, cross-legged, and lifts one of Shane’s legs up to toss over his shoulder. It spreads him out, gives Ilya an obscene view of his perfect body. He reaches out, sliding his palm over Shane’s abdominals. They contract under his touch and he rubs his thumb along a hipbone before he takes Shane’s cock into his hand. It’s burning hot, silky and stiff in his fingers.

He strokes, enraptured by the wet mess at the tip and swiping his thumb over it. His gaze travels up, expecting Shane to be looking back at him by the time his eyes reach Shane’s face, but he isn’t.

Shane’s eyes are closed and his lips are parted, soft breaths rising and falling in his chest. He’s an otherworldly amount of beautiful like this. Ilya strokes him harder, expecting a moan or a gasp or an arch of his back off the mattress, but Shane remains still, as if he’s in a trance. Ilya bites his lip. He drops his head down to spit, smearing his saliva over Shane’s impossibly hard cock and gripping it tight as he pumps his fist. He twists the way he knows drives Shane crazy, and it’s the final straw. Shane’s cock twitches in his hand and spurts, leaving lines of white along his own quivering stomach and spilling over Ilya’s fingers.

He doesn’t make a sound, and it’s a minute or two of Ilya rubbing his leg before Shane finally blinks his eyes open, looking around the room like for a moment he’s forgotten where he is.

“Privetik,” Ilya says, giving him a smile despite the unease that’s settled in his gut.

Exhaling slowly, Shane says, “Hi.” His lips are smiling, but there’s something unreadable in his eyes.

Ilya is diligent about cleaning them up. He wipes himself down with a cloth in the bathroom and then makes sure it’s warm enough before he brings it back to the bed, to clean Shane’s

stomach and between his legs. Shane blinks slowly up at the ceiling, still not seeming quite with it – almost as if he’s concussed. If they hadn’t been together all day, Ilya might worry Shane hit his head earlier and didn’t think to mention it.

He wraps them up in blankets, folding Shane into his arms and kissing the top of his head before relaxing against the pillow. He feels warm and floaty, suspended on the lingering high and happy as always to have Shane close to him. They exist in comfortable silence for long enough that Ilya is starting to nod off when a sound brings him back.

“M’sorry,” Shane mumbles.

“Hm?” Ilya asks. Only silence greets him, and he frowns and lifts his head. “Sorry for what?”

“You wanted me to fuck myself on your cock and I didn’t.”

Frowning deeper, Ilya shakes his head. He doesn’t understand. “I was – what’s the word, dirty talk? I’m not mad.”

Shane’s quiet for a moment, and then he says, “Okay.” Shane burrows into him and drops it, and there’s a voice in Ilya’s mind telling him to ask additional questions but his mouth seems unsure how to form the words.

With a frown still tensing his forehead, he puts his head back on the pillow and tightens his arms around Shane’s shivering body.

In the morning, Shane goes for a run after breakfast and Ilya throws his bare feet up on the coffee table and stares at his phone. He isn’t even sure what to search for, as he brings up a search engine. He blinks until his phone goes dark, his own reflection greeting him in the black screen. Huffing, Ilya brings it back to life and taps with his thumbs.

Man quiet in sex doesn’t result in anything helpful. A few other phrases he comes up with get him nothing but links to porn, and while the men in the thumbnails are very hot, they aren’t what Ilya is looking for in this moment.

He remembers the way it felt like Shane wasn’t quite there, like he’d been hypnotized and needed a trigger word to wake up. It isn’t the first time that’s happened. Ilya’s noticed it, nowhere near every time but enough to be a pattern instead of a singularity. They’re usually loud, athletic, enthusiastic, but sometimes Shane goes a little dopey and melty as if his bones are turning to liquid and his brain has switched offline. Ilya’s assumed he was just extra great at fucking those nights and patted himself on the back for it, but now he wonders if something else is going on.

It takes another few unsuccessful searches until he comes across a website about dominance and submission, and reads with butterflies in his stomach a few paragraphs that ring familiar. He’s startled when Shane gets back, fumbling with his phone and hastily shoving it between the couch and his thigh.

“It’s hot out,” Shane tells him, grabbing a bottle of water from the fridge and twisting off the cap. Ilya watches his throat move as he tosses his head back to drink.

“Want to come over here and sweat on me?” he asks; it feels more like what he’s supposed to say than what he actually wants in this moment.

Grinning, Shane shakes his head. “Let me shower. Then you can get me all dirty again if you really want to.”

“Always.” Ilya grins back, and whistles at Shane as he walks by. As soon as he’s alone again, Ilya pulls his phone back out.

His mind races back to years earlier – the two of them on the couch in Ilya’s home in Boston. He’d planned it all; the day before an afternoon game so he could casually suggest Shane spend the night. Hockey on the TV. Ginger ale in the fridge. He was longing for Shane to stay, to kiss him without it only leading to sex, to listen to him talk about everything and nothing, to hold him while they slept and wake up with his scent on the pillowcase.

He remembers petting Shane’s hair. He remembers Shane’s head on his chest. He remembers Shane seeming to collapse like a puppet with cut strings, face going to Ilya’s crotch and then scrambling into his lap. Ilya remembers feeling so intensely that something had shifted, like the very air around them had a different molecular makeup than it had mere moments before. Shane had seemed vulnerable, needy, helpless in a way despite it being his hand that wrapped around their cocks and stroked them both over the edge. Ilya’d longed to protect him, a desire stirring to life in his gut that he couldn’t explain.

He puts his phone down, turning his head to better hear the sound of running water from the bathroom. He blinks as he stares into the middle distance, wondering how many times Shane might have needed something from him – things he read about the website like safe words and aftercare – and Ilya didn’t know enough to give them to him.

Shane loads the last of the plates into the dishwasher, closing the lid and pressing the button for the normal cycle. He glances around the kitchen, grabbing a wayward crumpled napkin to toss into the trash and then satisfied with the tidy state of it. He brushes his hands on his jeans, turning to head for the living room and almost walking headlong into Ilya.

“Sorry,” he laughs. He thought Ilya had gone into the other room while Shane finished up.

Ilya smiles at him. He steps in close and brushes their lips together. Smiling into the kiss, Shane brings his hands up to rub along Ilya’s biceps.

He’s surprised when it doesn’t deepen. He’s expecting to be backed into the kitchen and hoisted up onto the counter so Ilya can kiss him stupid with the dishwasher humming underneath them, but instead the kiss is chaste and brief and then Ilya is stepping past him into the room.

Shane tilts his head to the side in confusion, and Ilya smiles again when he turns back around.

“Like Golden Retriever,” he says affectionately, gesturing toward Shane’s face.

“What’s up?” Shane asks. “Do you wanna watch a movie or something?”

“Can we ... talk?” Ilya replies.

Shane frowns, but nods. “Yeah, of course. About what?”

Ilya licks his lips. He reaches behind himself, pulling something from his back pocket. It’s a small booklet, about the size of a greeting card, and it’s been folded in half so it could fit into the pocket of Ilya’s jeans. He unfolds it and holds it out.

“What’s this?” Shane steps forward, taking it.

“Read.”

Looking down, Shane takes in the cover and his eyes widen. He recites the title aloud. “BDSM: How to engage in safe, sane, and consensual kink.” He looks up, not sure what he expects to find on Ilya’s face. “I – you wanna try something new?”

Ilya shakes his head. “No. Well. Yes, always, if you do. But no, that’s not why.”

Shane shakes his head, too, not comprehending. “What?”

“I think maybe you are sub,” Ilya tells him in a serious tone. “Sometimes. Maybe not all times.”

All Shane can do is repeat, “What?”

“You know what sub is?”

“I – yeah – I mean, from like porn,” Shane splutters. “Are you saying you wanna, like, tie me up, or something?”

The corner of Ilya’s mouth twitches. “Sounds fun.”

“Ilya.”

“But no. Not saying that, exactly.”

“What are you saying, exactly, then?”

“You like ... when I am bossy. When I tell you what to do. Put your leg here, suck my dick like this.”

“Sure.” He isn’t wrong, Shane always feels his spine turning to liquid when Ilya orders him around in bed. Or in the shower, or on the kitchen counters – wherever they’re currently wrapped up together with greedy mouths and wandering hands. Shane feels extra good when he does exactly as he’s asked and Ilya drapes praise over him like a heated blanket.

Ilya holds his hand out between them as if that's all the argument he needs to present. When Shane just stares at him, Ilya elaborates, "Submissive. They like to have sex with someone dominant. Tells them what to do. They get, uh, head-space things, that's all like sparkles in the brain."

The words settle in pieces at Shane's feet – he feels only about halfway to the point it seems Ilya is trying to make. He looks down at the booklet in his hand. "How do you know about this stuff?"

"You have Google in Canada, yes?" Ilya asks with a raised eyebrow.

Shane rolls his eyes. He doesn't answer; it wasn't a real question. Instead he opens the booklet, feeling himself blush as his eyes travel over the printed words.

"Where did you even get this?" he asks, mind conjuring some kind of adult resource centre Ilya might have nonchalantly wandered into and left with incriminating whispers in his wake. And then, before Ilya can reply, "I could literally have just Googled."

With a shrug, Ilya says, "You like real things to hold. Like all of your books, instead of Kindle."

Shane blinks. He's unexpectedly touched, ridiculous as it seems while he's holding a brochure on BDSM. He looks down at it again. "So ... okay wait, let me make sure I have this right. You noticed that I like it when you're bossy, so you went out and got me an information packet about BDSM?"

With a wrinkle in his nose, Ilya's hands go limp at his sides. "Is it bad?"

"No, it's not bad," Shane answers quickly, "I'm just not positive I understand."

After looking at him for a moment, Ilya holds his hand out again – not a gesture of argumentation this time but a request for Shane to take it. He does, their fingers threading together and follows as Ilya leads him to the living room. They sit next to each other on the couch. Shane feels just a little bit like it's akin to being called into the principal's office, but he's trying not to let his anxious mind spin too far out of orbit before Ilya has a chance to explain.

"Million years ago at my house in Boston, when we ..." Ilya trails off for a moment; Shane isn't sure whether he's searching for what he wants to say or simply trying to remember how to say it in English. Ilya looks at him, wincing as he says, "After famous ginger ale and tuna melt."

"Oh." Shane swallows and understands the reason for the hesitation. He isn't sure exactly what to call that, either. It felt a whole lot like a break-up at the time, but they'd have to have been officially together for that term to be accurate, and they weren't.

Ilya shifts closer. He lifts his arm and Shane tucks himself underneath it. It's so automatic, at this point. Ilya leads and Shane follows, like a reflex. He can smell a lingering hint of Gillette

when he tucks his nose up under Ilya's freshly shaven chin; he'd showered while Shane was warming up leftovers for their dinner.

"I had you just like this," Ilya says, his voice low and soft. It vibrates between them, the warmth of his breath ghosting over Shane's nose.

"Like what?" he asks.

"Under my arm." Ilya exhales. "Head on my chest. Fingers in your hair."

"Oh," Shane says again. Ilya's fingers stroke his hair like he's describing, digging gently into his scalp. A shiver runs down Shane's spine.

"I did not ... know what happened. You touched over my pants, kissed my stomach. Went into my lap." Ilya gestures with his free hand like he's grasping for a word he can't find, just out of reach. "Something was different."

Shane can't say he remembers all that in as much clarity as Ilya does – the whole day is a bit of a blur in his mind. He remembers being pulled against Ilya's chest and then shutting the front door behind him with his pulse hammering behind his ribcage but he can't entirely recall what happened in between. He does remember the way the panic felt rising in his throat, like swallowing a mouthful of potato chips he hadn't chewed thoroughly enough but in the wrong direction.

"We were having fun afternoon. Sex and naps and talking. And then I touched your hair and you went somewhere. Scared me, a little bit."

Blinking and still not understanding, Shane repeats, "I went somewhere?"

Reaching over, Ilya picks up the booklet. One handed, he holds it against his thigh and flips to a page around halfway through with the word *Subspace* in bold at the top. He taps it with his forefinger. "Went here, I think."

Frowning, Shane looks down and skims. His eyes catch on words like *haze*, and *dissociation*, and *euphoria*. When he makes himself think back, he does remember feeling like something shifted after Ilya touched his head. Like there was something directing in the stroke of those fingertips, the same ones that are in his hair right now. It's blurry and warped by time, but Shane does remember his lips going to Ilya's stomach like a magnet connected them. He remembers feeling like his limbs were moving beyond the control of his brain, as he climbed into Ilya's lap. He remembers thinking he'd do anything, anything at all that Ilya wanted him to. He remembers thinking the only thing that mattered was making Ilya feel good. Like in that moment, it was his only purpose for being alive.

With his lips turning to Shane's forehead, Ilya repeats, "Scared me."

"Why?" Shane asks in a whisper.

"It felt ... important. I did not understand why. You were ..." Ilya gestures around his own head. "And there's things I should have done, book says, when you were in that state. I didn't

know.”

Looking back at the page, Shane’s eyes travel over a sentence about intense vulnerability; about the potential lack of ability to verbally communicate, about hand signals, about soothing touches, about what can happen after if the sub isn’t properly cared for. It makes his stomach clench, curious and embarrassed all at once wondering whether that’s part of what had him running for the hills as soon as it was over.

He remembers Ilya moaning his name – *Shane*, instead of Hollander – and then hearing himself do the same as if he’d floated up toward the ceiling to watch it all play out from outside of his own body. Then he remembers the feeling of crashing back down, and the way everything seemed to shatter.

“How long have you been thinking about this?” he asks. That afternoon was years ago.

With a shrug, Ilya hedges, “Not all the time.”

It doesn’t really answer Shane’s question, but another one bubbles up under the surface of his mind before he can point that out. His mouth goes dry, swallowing thickly as he feels Ilya breathing against him. He swallows again before he can make himself say, “Has this ... happened again? When we were having sex? Is that why you’re bringing it up now?”

Silence deafens him for a moment, before Ilya’s gentle, understanding voice simply says, “Yes.”

Shane’s heart skips a beat.

“Most of the time, not,” Ilya continues. “We have fucking fantastic sex.”

Nervously, Shane laughs. “Yeah.”

“Now and then, somewhere in the middle you ...” Ilya gestures again in the space in front of his own face, wordlessly articulating some kind of trance. “Slide away. And sometimes you are very quiet, after. Happened enough times, so I Googled.”

“You could have just asked me,” Shane points out, embarrassed again.

With his own soft chuckle, Ilya counters, “You didn’t know about it until just now,” and despite the desire to argue, Shane doesn’t really have a good rebuttal to that.

“I guess.”

“You *guess*,” Ilya mocks, but it’s loving.

“So what ... I mean ...” he flounders for a moment, happy he’s tucked in Ilya’s arms and happy Ilya’s cheek is resting against his temple so Shane doesn’t have to look into his icy eyes as they fumble through this conversation. “What is it you want to do about this?”

Maybe Ilya isn’t wrong, maybe he does slip into what the page called *subspace* sometimes. When Shane thinks back with intention on that, he can remember a handful of times feeling

unsettled after sex in a way he could never quite put his finger on. Shane's not sure that he wants it to be a whole thing. He's not sure he wants a label on it, he's definitely not sure he wants to be tied up or blindfolded or spanked with a wooden paddle or any of the other things he glimpsed as he flipped through the booklet Ilya brought home.

Or maybe he does. The thought of surrendering completely, letting Ilya do whatever he wanted while Shane just lies there and lets himself be used, does funny, flippy things to his insides. It's a nerve-wracking prospect but maybe also an enticing one. Maybe.

"Could be nothing. I wanted to know what was happening," Ilya answers. "If I was doing something wrong."

"You're not doing anything wrong."

Picking up the brochure, Ilya gestures with it. "This is like ... road map. Not – we have to fuck this way or that way now, because book says so."

Shane presses his lips together. Unintended to be a romantic statement, but he loves Ilya just a little bit more every time he accidentally voices exactly what Shane was feeling but struggling to put into words. He knows that feeling is mutual.

"We've never done anything by the book."

Ilya tosses the brochure away; it flips in the air and lands a foot over on the couch. His other arm wraps around Shane, cuddling him in closer. "I could write a whole book about you. Mouth. Ass. Freckles."

"Always with the damn freckles."

"Mhm." Ilya kisses his forehead and Shane relaxes further into his embrace.

He swallows again, feeling nervous despite how secure he feels with Ilya as he says, "I guess ... I should read it closer. Maybe it would be good to at least understand what's happening, like you said."

"Is all I'm saying. And if there's things I can do, to make it better for you, I want to do them."

Sighing, Shane smiles and tells him, "You're a hopeless romantic, you know that? People wouldn't believe me if I told them, but you are."

"You better not be telling."

Shane shakes his head. He tilts it back, looking up at Ilya. "Nope. It's just for me."

Ilya's lips press gently into his, the kiss lingering only for a moment before Shane puts his head back on Ilya's shoulder. His mind is skipping around from thought to thought. He can see the booklet out of the corner of his eye, on the other end of the couch.

He does as he said he would. He reads the booklet from cover to cover, and then spends an hour on various websites reading more. Ilya knows he's doing it, their eyes met as Shane settled into a chair with the pamphlet and his iPad, but he leaves Shane to it. Shane knows him, he knows Ilya is probably dying to sit on the coffee table and stare at him while he reads, but he gives Shane space.

He reads a lot of things that feel familiar, terms and phrases that make sense of things he hadn't even noticed he was feeling until he had words for them. He reads some things that don't feel at all like his experience, and some things that make him nervous to think about and impressed by people brave enough to try them. He reads some things that make him love Ilya a few degrees more than he had the moment before – instructions for the dominant partner that are just lists of things Ilya already does, protective and caring and tender as he always has been.

He thinks about the tight grip of control he's tried to keep on his life. The schedules and routines, the fitness regimes, the internal insistence that he had to be the best because everyone expected it of him and he couldn't bear to disappoint them. The kids who look up to him. The teammates who rely on him. The family he needs to make proud. He thinks about how sometimes that's all been suffocating more than it's been motivating.

And he thinks about letting go of all of that, with Ilya. The way that he can put it all down, the way he can exhale when they're tangled together. The way he feels like he's accomplished everything he'll ever need to accomplish when Ilya growls *make me come* and Shane does it and then Ilya holds him and strokes his hair and calls him *good*.

Good enough. No sky-high expectations. No weight on his shoulders. Nobody waiting in the wings for him to fail. Good enough just as he is, when he's in Ilya's arms.

Shane gets up when his ass starts to go numb from staying in one position. He leaves the booklet on the coffee table and wanders to find Ilya in the bedroom, propped up against the pillows with his feet planted on the mattress and his phone in his hand. He looks up, a hopeful smile curving his lips, and Shane could swoon.

He walks over, joining him. Ilya rolls over onto his side so they can face each other, something glittery in his eyes as they search Shane's face.

"I'm sorry I scared you," Shane says.

Ilya's expression crumples, forehead wrinkling and head shaking quickly. "No," he says, insistently. "No, no. Hollander. Shane."

"Do *you* like it?" Shane asks, because that's important, too. "Telling me what to do, taking care of me like that?"

Ilya nods. "Feels ... right."

Anxious fingers that had been gripping around Shane's windpipe release a little and he can breathe. "Yeah. Me too."

Ilya nods again.

“I feel like ...” Shane’s voice catches and he has to take a breath before he can say it.

“There’s so much pressure, all the time. I do it to myself, I know I do, but sometimes it feels like the entire world is counting on me and if I’m not perfect all the time, I’ll let them down.”

“Too much pressure,” Ilya agrees, his face empathetic. “You are one person. Not superhero.”

“But when I’m with you ... it’s like I can let go of all that. You can tell me what to do and I can do it and then I feel ...”

“Hm?” Ilya asks, when Shane trails off.

He looks down, gaze settling on the hollow of Ilya’s throat. With his stomach in knots, Shane weakly admits, “Good enough.”

“Not just *enough*,” Ilya immediately opposes. “You are everything.”

Shane squeezes his molars together. He wants more than anything to believe that’s true.

“You got sad. Last week. That’s why I ... you thought I gave you an instruction, and you didn’t follow, and then you got sad.”

“I ...” Shane’s going to contradict him, but when he thinks about the night Ilya’s talking about, he realizes Ilya isn’t wrong. That’s exactly what happened.

He doesn’t know why, he doesn’t know what was different about that night than any other night when they talk and chirp and tease, when filth spills unthinking from their mouths, when they say a hundred things in the heat of the moment and then forget about them. But it did feel different. It felt like Ilya’d given him an order that he should have easily managed, and after it was over and Shane had realized he hadn’t done it, his whole stomach had dropped.

“Yes?” Ilya prompts.

Shane nods, cheeks burning. “Yes.”

Ilya licks his lips and exhales noisily through his nose. For just a moment Shane isn’t sure what to expect, but then Ilya’s hand is so soft on his face, knuckles stroking his cheek.

“Look at me.”

Shane does as he’s asked. He notices right away the sensation of lightness in his chest when he does, when he meets Ilya’s oceanic eyes.

“Please don’t be sad.”

He says it so earnestly, like nothing could be more important to him, and tears spring to Shane’s eyes, unexpectedly choking him.

“Here,” Ilya whispers, moving in closer to him. “Come here. Sweetheart.”

He’s cradled in strong arms and Shane burrows into him, wanting not a breath of space between them. “I’m okay,” he whispers back.

“We’ll do things the book said,” Ilya assures. “Safe word, those things. So we can get you all sparkle-headed but you don’t have to be sad.”

Shane smiles through his tears. He worms his arm between Ilya’s ribcage and the mattress so he can hug him, wrapping one leg around him too just so that they’re thoroughly intertwined.

“You mean fucking everything to me,” Shane tells him.

“But *I’m* hopeless romantic,” Ilya says in his deadpan droll, to make Shane laugh, and it does.

“Fuck,” Shane moans, back arching.

He falls back down onto the mattress, Ilya’s mouth hot and heavenly on his cock and hand squeezing his balls. Two fingers are buried inside him, insistently rubbing at his prostate and lighting him up from the inside. Just as he had minutes ago, Ilya drags him right to the brink of ecstasy and then backs off, leaving Shane panting and whining and wanting to thrash around on the bed so the excess energy pent up inside him has some other way to escape.

He doesn’t, because Ilya didn’t say he could move.

“Hold,” Ilya instructs, his voice low and steady. No part of him is touching Shane for a moment, leaving him free-falling, but then his palm rubs over Shane’s stomach.

It feels even more heightened than a hand on his cock would have, right now, and Shane nearly sobs.

“Good,” Ilya whispers. “Doing so good.”

Shane doesn’t know how to talk anymore. He can’t think, he can barely move. He’s immobilized by the fog in his brain. Ilya’s been torturing him for what must be hours, Shane spreadeagle and shameless on the bed while Ilya edges him over and over and over.

The noise of movement reaches Shane’s ears. His eyes are open, he can make out the ceiling through the blur in his vision, but everything is sluggish and moving in slow motion through quicksand. He inhales when something soft touches his ankle, it might be Ilya’s fingertips or it might be the underwear he’d been dragging over Shane’s body earlier. His focus narrows down to just that touch, just that prickle of skin just above his anklebone.

It moves, traveling up his leg, to his knee, to the inside of his thigh where the skin is taut and sensitive. A warm puff of breath follows it, dancing over his pebbled flesh. Then lips brush, a wet kiss pressed to his thigh, so close to where Shane really wants those lips but not close enough.

“Colour?” Ilya’s voice asks softly.

Shane can’t speak. His mouth doesn’t know how, his lips and teeth and tongue have forgotten entirely how to form words in the haze and he can’t speak. Except he does, because Ilya told him to. “Green.”

“Good.”

Shane’s eyes fall closed as a warm tongue slides up the underside of his cock and he levitates.

Maybe the most beautiful thing he’s ever seen in all his life, Ilya thinks, as he watches the moment when Shane goes away. His whole body seems to sing even as it stays pliant and motionless, skin prickling everywhere Ilya touches it. His stomach rises and falls evenly with his breaths, soft ones through parted lips that are pink still from when Ilya was kissing him. His eyes glaze over, hands going lax, yielding and relaxed and *trusting*.

That’s the bit that gets Ilya the most. Shane trusts him so implicitly, and it will be the honor of Ilya’s life to make himself worthy of it.

He keeps touching, keeps dragging the fabric of Shane’s boxers over his skin. The material is soft and Shane deserves things that are soft. He deserves to be wrapped in silk and held close and whispered loving words. Ilya isn’t currently in possession of any silk but he has words, so he leans over to press kisses to Shane’s knee and hip and chest and armpit and leaves tender words in their wake.

They never discussed how this was going to end, Ilya realizes as he scoops up Shane’s cock again. They should have. Next time. They’re both still learning. He strokes slowly, watching Shane’s slackened face closely for any signs that this isn’t what he wants but Shane’s lips just curve into a dreamy smile. Ilya moves in closer, lifting Shane’s thighs to drape them over his own so that he can watch every bit of it play out on Shane’s face while he strokes him.

“Oh,” Shane breathes, eyes fluttering closed.

“You’re beautiful,” Ilya murmurs, thumb swiping over the slick head of his cock. He uses his other hand to gather some moisture so that he can bring it to his own lips to taste. “Come for me. Please? Let me see you.”

In an instant, Shane does. He whimpers and his cock spills over Ilya’s fingers. It’s a quiet sort of orgasm, no grunting or swearing or pistoning hips, but his whole body shivers and this time, because Ilya knows it’s okay, he thinks it’s even more meaningful than the sort of finish where they’re shouting the roof down.

He’s gentle in the afterglow of it. He rubs Shane’s stomach and legs, still whispering soft things to him as he, too, comes down from the high of something so poignant with the man he loves more than life itself. He crawls up the bed and lays next to him, head propped on his hand and stroking Shane’s chest with the other. Shane comes back slowly, inhaling and blinking up at Ilya with a dazed, satisfied look on his gorgeous face.

“It’s going to be very hard for me, you know,” Ilya comments, trailing his fingertips over Shane’s chest. He cups his hand around a pectoral to give it a brief squeeze before returning to letting his fingers ghost over the soft skin that turns back to gooseflesh under his touch.

“Hm?” Shane blinks, brown eyes still glassy as he looks up at Ilya with his eyebrows raised in question.

Grinning at him, Ilya explains, “To not go around telling everyone I meet from now on all about how I can sex you into a coma.”

“Shut up,” Shane laughs, shoving feebly at Ilya’s sternum.

Laughing, Ilya rolls over him, covering Shane’s body with his own. Beloved, he thinks as he looks down at his own reflection in Shane’s dark eyes. He’d learned that word years ago, in a book he was struggling to read in his second language, and he’s always felt it encapsulated how he feels about Shane more than any other in English. Ilya lets his gaze wander, tracing imaginary lines between freckles like they’re constellations. This man is so beloved to him it almost hurts; except that it doesn’t. Once upon a time it did, but not anymore. Now it’s just warm and soft and *home*.

“I love you,” he says in Russian. Shane smiles and repeats it, his Canadian accent tilting the Cyrillic. Ilya shifts down so he can rest his cheek on Shane’s chest. Strong arms go around him, holding him close in their bed. “Tell me what it was like.”

Shane’s quiet for a moment, long enough that Ilya’s stomach twists and he wonders whether he shouldn’t have asked. Maybe this is something that will be unspoken between them; maybe Shane doesn’t want to talk about it.

“Or don’t,” he adds. “Is okay.”

“No, I ...” Shane takes an audible breath, his hand rubbing down Ilya’s spine. He shivers. Shane isn’t the only one who melts when he’s touched. Ilya does, too. “I’m just not sure what the right words are.”

“Usually my thing.”

Chuckling softly, Shane’s other hand cups around the back of Ilya’s neck and squeezes gently. Ilya waits, gives him all the time he needs. Patience has never been a problem for them. They’ve had enough practice.

“I guess it ... felt like floating,” Shane says eventually. The rumble of his voice vibrates through Ilya’s cheek. “Like I wasn’t really here anymore, but I don’t know where I was instead. A bit like being really drunk, maybe, everything went fuzzy.”

Ilya hums.

“In a good way, though,” Shane adds. “I could still feel you. And I know you were talking to me. I couldn’t hear the words but I still knew what you were saying? I don’t know. That doesn’t make any sense.”

He's right, it doesn't, but as long as it was an enjoyable experience, Ilya supposes it doesn't need to make sense. "But good?" he checks.

"Yeah," Shane murmurs. "Really good. And really ... safe."

The thought puts a smile on Ilya's face and a warm tremor in his stomach. He's always wanted to make Shane feel safe, since far before he had the wherewithal to put a label on the desire.

"I will keep you safe," he promises. "In your awesome sex comas."

Shane laughs again. Ilya's expecting to be gently pinched or playfully teased, but instead Shane holds him tighter and soft lips find his forehead.

"Love you," Shane whispers, in English this time.

"Love you," Ilya whispers back.

End Notes

Comments are so appreciated 

Come talk to me [on tumblr](#) if you want! I am a multi-fandom blog but would love to say hello

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