

## (Never) Stop Looking At Me Like That

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| Characters:      | <a href="#">Shane Hollander</a> , <a href="#">Ilya Rozanov</a> , <a href="#">Carter Vaughn</a> , <a href="#">Scott Hunter (Game Changers)</a> , <a href="#">Kip Grady</a> , <a href="#">Hayden Pike</a> , <a href="#">Jackie Pike</a> , <a href="#">Original Male Character(s)</a> , <a href="#">Original Female Character(s)</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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# **(Never) Stop Looking At Me Like That**

by [heavenlykviss](#)

## Summary

Shane is in love with Matt. They're in love and it's fine. It's better than fine really, Shane loves just about everything about Matt and he loves all of Matt's friends. Except for the big tall Russian one that won't stop staring at him like he knows something Shane doesn't. Like he's waiting for Shane to snap. Like he's begging Shane to do something.

And Shane won't, obviously. Because Ilya is the type of man to reel you in and then leave you high and dry. Leave you looking for pieces of him in every new person that you meet, leave you looking for signs you didn't just make the whole thing up, like some wild fantasy that was born of monotony.

Oh, and the fact he has a boyfriend who he loves. A lot. It isn't monotonous. It's love.

## Notes

Hi guys this is my ao3 debut because I HAD to put these losers into a situation or else I would literally implode so pls be nice bc I haven't written in years so I may be a little rusty :) Hope you enjoy this Hollanov cheating fic <3 (also I was listening to 'too lost in you' by sugababes a lot while writing this and I feel like you can tell so maybe give that song a listen while you read this)

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

Shane is stood in front of his boyfriend's apartment. Some kind of boys night something or other. He's not really sure. It's not like he doesn't like Matt's friends, or boys nights per say, he loves Matt's friends and he loves spending time with them. Tonight is different though – the elusive roommate. He's heard many *many* stories about Ilya (or Rozy/Roz as the boys call him most of the time), some of them funny, some of them absolutely degenerate (his actions in a Greek strip club on their first boys vacation to Zante after college for example). In the 10 month relationship he's had with Matt he has never met his college best friend / roommate. He knows what he looks like of course, Matt has many group pictures of him and his friends on Instagram, but Shanes never met him *in person*. Ilya returned from a summer in Russia not too long ago and this was the first gathering since then.

The door swings open and he locks eyes with Ilya. He's not wearing a shirt. That's the first thing Shane notes, the second thing is that he's ogling Shane from top to toe. His incessant chewing was the third and final thing Shane noticed. Not the most pertinent thing however, that award goes to what can only be described as Ilya's massive tits. Seriously what the fuck? How does one get muscles that big?

“You are Shane, yes?” He asks, his accent coming out a lot thicker than Matt or anyone else had mentioned it being.

“And you must be Ilya.’ Shane smiles tightly. The chewing is rude and it's starting to take centre stage in Shane's mind now. It's very rude actually, It's even ruder when someone's quite literally chewing *at* you. Everyone knows that, who raised this man?

“That is me, Matt is not home yet but Hayden is here, you have met, yes?” He nods and steps aside for Shane to enter the apartment.

When Matt had mentioned he had a roommate during one of his and Shane's first dates he had mentioned he was Russian, which, admittedly, Shane had been only a *little* confused about. From what he knew, Russians were like... super homophobic. Well, he guesses not all of them are, but a fair few of them. Enough to raise an eyebrow when someone mentioned that was their place of birth. A raised eyebrow, and a conveniently timed, stealthy question about what their opinions were on Eurovision. Just to gauge where they stood. Matt also mentioned that he usually spends the summers in Russia, which by the time it was getting serious enough to introduce each other to their friends, he was preparing to leave for Russia. But now he's back, and he's shirtless and he's looking at Shane in a manner he can't quite place.

“Thank you.’ Shane said politely stepping into the apartment.

“Hollander!” Hayden yells from the couch, a PS5 controller in his hand.

“Hi Hayden.” Shane smiles, he doesn't hear Ilya shut the door, but he feels his eyes on him as he walks around the back of him, moving to sit back in, what Shane assumed, to be his previous position next to Hayden.

“Scott said him and... his boyfriend are in Uber.” Ilya says after looking at his phone for a second.

“Jesus! just call him Chris if you have such a problem with his name.” Hayden chuckles.

“Is stupid name, how is Kip Christopher!” Ilya defends “Shane agrees, yes? Kip is stupid name.” Ilya nods for Shane to agree.

“I kinda like saying it while emphasising the P.” Shane chuckles and Ilya rolls his eyes.

“You are like Carter.” Ilya points a finger at him. Still chewing his annoying gum. The sound is starting to grate on Shane. He looks over Ilya properly for the first time, and it’s kind of also *annoying* how good looking he is. Not in the, like, conventional gentlemanly handsome type that Shane is used to, but in the rugged, egocentric way that Shane has always thought was trouble. Attractive in the ‘kind to kick you out of their apartment after hook up on Grindr and never talk to you again’, way. The kind that Shane can smell the hedonism off of him from the other side of the room.

He looked like that one Alexandre Cabanel painting of Lucifer Shane had studied so much in college. Or maybe the statue of David. Either way, it was biblical, and made Shane’s chest feel hot, the kind of heat that burns so bad you have to physically rub it out of you.

*Pop!*

God that fucking sound was going to drive him crazy.

“You are taller than I imagined, Shane.” Ilya says randomly, Shane looks up at him with a raised eyebrow.

“Yeah my dad’s Dutch... it’s where I get my freckles from too.” He nods.

“Ah Dutch! explains it... you speak Dutch?” He asks.

“A little bit,” Shane nods “I only really feel connected to my Dutch side when Eurovision is on...” Shane says and holds his breath. *Obviously* this guy isn’t homophobic, half of his friends are gay. But then again that means nothing to be honest. There could be a ‘no kissing in front of the Russian’ rule in this friendship group that Matt had forgotten to mention to him for all he knew.

“Ahh of course,” Ilya nods again, “good country to support in Eurovision. You do well, yes?” Ok so he watches. Shane’s shoulders relaxed a little. He was becoming increasingly aware that maybe he was judging Ilya too hard. Making assumptions. You know what they say about assuming. He *almost* felt the need to apologise. He opened his mouth to do so when—

“Ah!” Ilya curses “twink from Wednesday will not stop messaging me. What is not understandable about Grindr hook up? We fuck, you leave, we never speak again. Is simple.” He picks his phone up. “I forgot to block.” He finishes before, Shane assumes (yet again), blocking the Wednesday Twink and putting his phone down.

Like he said... he *almost* apologised. Shane had read him like a book. Sometimes you assume correctly. Well, he almost assumed everything correctly. Ilya had hooked up with Wednesday Twink from Grindr... so definitely not homophobic. Shane filed that in his brain under: *Interesting*.

“Are we going to get back to 2K?” Hayden asks, gesturing to the tv screen.

“No I am bored of it, you are too easy, I will wait for Vaughny to get here.” Ilya waves off.

“Fuck you Rozy,” Hayden swats. “Shane, you wanna play?” He asks.

“Oh no thank you, you saw me last time.” Shane chuckles. Video games were never his thing. He was always awful at them, no hand eye coordination at all. Much to the dismay of his mother who had big dreams for him to become an NHL star. He was too clumsy for that.

*Pop!*

Ilya was still chewing. Looking directly at Shane. It made Shane's stomach feel tight, it made him feel like Ilya knew something he didn't. Like he was prey. A small gazelle being hunted by a lion.

“Do you know it's rude to chew at people?” Shane couldn't bite his tongue any longer.

“Is so I don't smoke.” Ilya says with a nod, as if that justified anything.

“You're still chewing it at me, so like... stop. It's bad manners.” Shane says.

Ilya turns to Hayden,

“What is this... manners?” He asks.

“It's like... politeness, it's not polite to chew gum at people.” Hayden explains.

“Oh Canadian thing.” Ilya waves off.

“It's not a Canadian thing, it's a human being thing. Everyone knows that it's rude to do that.” Shane rolls his eyes.

Ilya stared at him again, relenting in his justification of his chewing. Instead going back to his previous pursuit of staring at Shane so hard you'd think he was going to get tested on every atom of Shane's entire... *soul* after this boys night was done. Which, Shane was definitely starting to blush under Ilya's intense gaze. Not good.

Ilya was listening to Hayden talk, as Shane was trying to do, but he was still looking at Shane. Nodding along to whatever Hayden was talking about, but clearly spaced out. Clearly somewhere else.

There was a knock on the door.

“Place bets, is it Vaughny or Scott and Silly Named Boyfriend?” Ilya asks standing up “or maybe is *your* boyfriend.” He looks at Shane. Right... Matt. That’s why he was here.

“My money's Scott and Kip. \$10” Hayden says

“You’re on.” Ilya says, swinging the door open. “Please be Vaughny... *no!*” he says

“What a lovely way to be greeted by my good pal Rozy.” Scott says deadpan.

“You and Silly Named Boyfriend just lost me \$10.” Ilya rolls his eyes, opening the door wide enough to let Scott and Kip in.

“Final time Ilya, Kip is short for Christopher.” Kip rolls his eyes.

“Is not. Where is the K coming from?” Ilya asks.

“Don’t you call your friend Aleks Sasha?” Kip shoots back.

“Is different, makes sense in Russian. Different alphabet.” Ilya waves off.

“Whatever Rozy,” Kip says, turning his attention to Shane “yay! You’re here.” He smiles, opening his arms for Shane to hug him.

“Hey,” Shane smiles, hugging Kip. “Did you read that book?” Shane asks. He loved Kip. They were very similar. Studied similar majors in college, had similar family units, similar tastes in music, that sort of thing. Things that usually made them separate from the rest of the guys at these sorts of things and talk about their own interests that weren’t sports or finance or cars, like their boyfriends and their friends usually did.

“I’m halfway through! Very good.” Kip smiles sitting down next to him.

“Where is Sinclair?” Scott asks. Sitting on the ground in between Kip's legs.

“Do you want this seat Scott?” Shane asks, gesturing to his place next to Kip.

“I’m good Shane, I'm closer to him this way anyway.” Scott smiles.

“You are both disgusting,” Ilya fake gags “and Matt had to run out to get beer, he will be back whenever he decides he is done. You know Matt, he is never on time.” Ilya says.

“You haven’t trained that out of him yet?” Scott asks Shane.

“I wish,” Shane chuckles, “he was an hour late to dinner with my parents last week.” He says.

“In defence of Matt for that time he was running around apartment for 30 minutes trying to find his lucky socks.” Ilya said with a smirk. “I hid them.”

“That is evil! Never touch another man’s lucky socks, what if he hid your lucky necklace?” Scott asks.

“Impossible is always on me.” Ilya smiles, flourishing a hand to his (still bare) chest.

Shane noted the Russian Orthodox cross that nestled between his pecks. Another thing Shane filed into his head under: *Interesting*. From what he knew of Eastern Orthodoxy, it was a stricter band of the already strict Catholicism. Kind of. Someone somewhere in the east didn't like the pope and decided to make their own church. Christ, how many thousands of dollars on an ancient history degree and that's all he could muster up? Granted religion wasn't his specialty but still...he'd better not open his mouth about it, lest he embarrass himself in front of Ilya. Not that he cared about whatever Ilya thought of him, or that he wasn't looking at Shane anymore, too engrossed in his phone to even look at his friends in the room. One of which was trying (and failing) to get his attention.

“Ilya!” Scott finally yelled, throwing a pillow at him.

“What?” Ilya asks looking up.

“Sorry were hoe #1 and hoe #2 more entertaining than us?” Scott raises his eyebrows.

“I was talking to hoe #4 actually,” Ilya smiles loosely, making eye contact with Shane who looked away immediately.

“You are actually insatiable,” Hayden rolls his eyes “what's wrong with monogamy.”

“Big word for you,” Scott nods his head to Hayden with a chuckle.

“Not everyone wants to get married at like...12,” Ilya waves his hand dismissively at Hayden. “You are picture of Americana. Me... not so much.”

“I'm Canadian.” Hayden defends.

Shane's own phone buzzed, thank god. Finally able to distract himself from the tightness in his chest.

**Matt:** in uber now, had to fight some bald man for the last case of modello, be home soon. i love you.

**Matt:** also whos all there? <3

**Shane:** everyone but carter :)

**Matt:** how is ilya? he's cool right? :)

**Shane:** sure if thats your definition of cool... does he own shirts?

**Matt:** ahhh you know what, ive lived with the guy for 6 years and i'm not convinced he does



Matt and Carter arrive at the same time, Matt greeting Shane with a kiss after placing the case of Modello in the fridge. The night is similar to many Shane has had with Matt before, they drink, they play board games, they talk. It's all very familiar. Except... except for the Russian

who has at least a couple of inches on Shane, staring at him while ignorantly chewing his gum. Staring like he's never seen a man before, staring like he's willing Shane to mention it, staring like he's been lost in the desert for 40 days and 40 nights and Shane is an oasis.

And Shane ignores it, he nestles into Matt and makes conversation with Kip about a new art show that opened in the gallery downtown, he talks to Carter about his new girlfriend and when he's going to introduce her to the group, he talks to Scott about when he's going to propose to Kip, he talks to Hayden about the up and coming prospect of fatherhood, and he doesn't say a word to Ilya for at least an hour. He bites his tongue about the stare he's burning into his cheek, he bites his tongue about the *agonizingly* annoying chewing, he bites his tongue about his bare chest. He swallows all of it down and doesn't say a word. Doesn't even really acknowledge him until Carter asks him a question about Ancient Rome, which spikes Ilya's interest. He asks Shane a couple of questions about the Roman Empire, Shane explains that he was obsessed with Ancient Greece as a kid and that sparked his interest in Ancient history in general. His college thesis was on democracy in Ancient Rome, however the Greeks still had a special place in his heart.

"Which one of you started him on his 20,000th rant about the olden days then?" Matt rolls his eyes at Carter and Ilya.

"I am absolutely fascinated by your boyfriend, Matt. I always learn new stuff." Carter says with a smile.

"I like the movie gladiator, that is old Rome, yes?" Ilya asks

"It is." Shane says with a nod. "One of my favourites when I was a kid."

And that's the last time they speak all night, which Shane is grateful for. It isn't the last time they make eye contact though, and Shane is less grateful for that, because Ilya's extremely intense stare had started to make the heat in Shane's chest genuinely hurt. He wasn't uncomfortable though, and maybe that's what bothered him the most. Maybe what was really getting under his skin was that whenever Ilya picked up his phone, or started a conversation with someone, Shane could feel the absence of his glare. Which was bizarre because this was his first time meeting the guy.

The second time Shane meets Ilya he's, again, not wearing a shirt. He swings the apartment door open much like he did the first time and Shane is greeted with him bare chested and bare foot, clad in only very low hanging grey sweatpants. And then he fucking pops that stupid gum in his face. Jesus fucking christ.

"Hello Shane, Matt is still in shower, come on." He gestures his head into the apartment.

"Do you own any shirts or am I just special? Shane quips.

“Is my own apartment, I do not have to wear clothes.” Ilya smiles lazily, his eyes tracking over Shane’s... soul? At this point, that’s exactly what Shane is convinced Ilya is trying to see.

“You still chewing your gum at people I see,” Shane notes “its—”

“*Rude*, yes you have said,” Ilya rolls his eyes “you want?” he smirks, opening his mouth slightly and pushing the gum out with his tongue for Shane to take.

“You are disgusting.” Shane bites.

“And you are judgemental, we all have our bad habits.” Ilya shrugs.

“I’m not judgemental,” Shane defends “you just offered your chewed gum to me like I’m some sort of garbage disposal.”

“You have judged me like 6 times in the 2 minutes you have been here. I am counting.”

The door to what Shane knows to be Ilya’s bedroom opens and a small, petite blonde girl walks out clad in what Shane assumes to be one of Ilya’s t-shirts. Nice to know he owns them at least.

“Ilya.. are you coming back to bed or shall i get my stuff?” she asks and Ilya doesn’t take his eyes off of Shane. Like he’s studying his reaction. He’s smirking like he *wants* Shane to react, and isn’t that stupid? Why would Shane react? He’s met the man twice, he’s nothing more than his boyfriend’s friend. His boyfriend’s very *attractive* friend with very defined abs and a really *really* annoying habit. And really low hanging sweat pants. Shane’s never been known for his poker face, matter of fact, it’s frequently pointed out to him that he doesn’t have one. So, when he inevitably turns his nose up at the scene before him, he can only say that he tried his hardest to maintain his composure.

“You should go, we are done here, yes?” he says with a quick turn of his head and then his gaze is right back to Shane.

Matt pops his head out of his own room.

“I’ll be literally 30 seconds babe, I promise. You wanna wait in here?” He says.

“Sure.” Shane smiles, walking past Ilya, who grabs his wrist.

“7.” He whispers into Shane’s ear before letting go of his wrist. Shane feels like he’s had the air punched out of him. He feels Ilya’s breath dancing on his neck even after he’s closed the door to Matt’s room, even after he watches Matt get ready for their date, even in the uber to the restaurant, even in the uber back from the restaurant. He feels like he played it alright through the night though. He had fun with Matt, he can recall that. He can recall the waiter at the restaurant obviously flirting with Matt, he can’t recall actually being able to care about that, though he knows he must have pulled a face. He can recall Matt telling him a story about his boss and the presentation he had that day, and trying really hard to pay attention. Andrew (Matt’s boss) had sprung this presentation on him at the last minute, Shane

remembers Matt being stressed about it, and from what Shane gathered from Matt's story the presentation went fine. That's the most he got though.

But even as he's laying next to Matt, breathless and sweaty, he can still feel Ilya's breath on his neck. He knows it's Ilya's because it burns. Matt's hickey right over it and it still burns. His chest has been aching all night and he can't ignore that anymore. He swings his legs out of Matt's bed and grabs his boxers before heading to the kitchen to get himself a glass of water.

He turns around from the sink to take the water back to Matt's room when the door to Ilya's room opens and Shane almost drops the glass. Ilya locks eyes with him immediately, his eyes not moving as he approaches the kitchen. Shane should move, he should go back to his boyfriend's room, he should try and forget how Ilya's breath feels on his skin. He should drink his water and be a good boy, but he can't. Why the fuck are his legs not working?

The Russian walking towards him wearing nothing but Calvin Kleins might have something to do with that.

"You were loud." is all Ilya says, grabbing a lighter from the side before walking past Shane again and back into his room leaving Shane still stood in the kitchen white-knuckling his glass of water.

### **Where is the €20??**

*In this group: Matt, Hayden, Carter, Kip (+2 more)*

**Carter:** Ok meeting Aliyah time.

**Carter:** Benny's @ 8 tonite

**Carter:** She might be bringing a friend

**Carter:** BEST behaviour @Ilya

**Ilya:** No promises 😊

**Ilya:** 8 is good

**Scott:** Kip has tickets to an art thing at 7 but we should be able to make 9:00 :)

**Matt:** shane also has a thing at the museum but we should be good for 8 @shane?

**Shane:** should be, its only a walk through of a new exhibit :)

**Hayden:** Can Jackie come?

**Carter:** Can your pregnant wife come to a bar?????

**Carter:** I mean sure but that seems cruel

**Carter:** Like putting Ilya in a strip club with no money and handcuffs on

*(Scott, Kip, Hayden and Matt sent a 😂)*

**Shane:** i can have a ginger ale twin !! :)

**Matt:** you are so cute

**Ilya:** No PDA in gc pls 🙄

**Ilya:** *Carter: Like putting Ilya in a strip club with no money and handcuffs on*

↳ Do not even joke about this.

Shane and Matt arrive at Benny's at 8:45. Matt's doing of course, insistent that he go home and change his shirt he was wearing. Shane was never late anywhere before he started dating him. Whatever, everyone has bad habits. That's just one of Matt's. That and kind of being snappy to waiters.

They arrive hand-in-hand, one of Shane's closest friends and co-workers Rose in tow.

"Here they are!" Carter smiles "and they brought a friend, hello." Carter waves.

"This is Rose she works with me at the museum," Shane explains "she's had a hard day and needed a drink, plus didn't want Jackie and Aliyah outnumbered since Aliyah's friend bailed." He chuckles.

"And this is why you are my favourite out of the group partners."

"What the hell!" Jackie exacerbated, her tone not holding any real malice. "I'm telling Kip you said that when he comes."

"Baby, this is Shane and Matt," Carter introduces the pair of them to a very pretty Blasian girl, "Shane, Aliyah is half Japanese as well... discuss..." he flourishes his arms out. Both Shane and Aliyah laugh.

"Half Japanese, half Dutch," Shane supplies with a chuckle as Jackie passes him a ginger ale "thanks Jackie." He smiles.

"Half Japanese, half Nigerian," Aliyah smiles "Can you speak any Japanese?" she asks Shane who shakes his head.

“Well... a little, but nowhere near as much as I'd like to.”

“Okay good me either,” Aliyah smiles sweetly “hello Rose by the way, I’m glad I'm not the only newbie here.”

“Ignore anything Ilya says and you should be golden,” Matt supplies, placing his arm around Shane “speaking of, where is he?” he looks around the bar.

“He found an old friend over by the bar and has been attached by the mouth to him for approximately...” Carter glances at his watch, “13 minutes.”

“Insatiable freak.” Matt chuckles.

Shane doesn't need to look over to the bar, he has a drink kindly provided by Jackie. His boyfriend is right next to him and Rose is filling everyone at the table in on the new exhibit in the museum (a conversation he should be joining in on), he doesn't need to look over and he won't. His eyes will stay firmly on his friend who is telling everyone that Dr Carroway had confused the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire in front of about 20 museum beneficiaries. Funny to no one but him and Rose but everyone was still laughing anyway. He ignored the itch in his neck. The burning, annoying itch to look over.

He scratched his neck once, twice, thrice and then gave in. Turning his neck in the direction of the heat that was searing through him. It could only be coming from one person anyway. As suspected, Ilya was sat on a bar stool, a skinny blonde man attached to his neck. Shane didn't realise Ilya had his eyes open until they made eye contact.

Why was Ilya looking at him? Why was his stomach turning? Why was he disappointed that the two people he had seen Ilya with were blonde? Why the fuck wasn't Ilya focusing on twinktron3000? Why the fuck was Shane still staring at him?

“Shane?” Shane was pulled out of his thoughts by Matt.

“Yeah? Sorry,” He smiles.

“Your best friend is here.” He chuckles, gesturing to Kip.

“Oh, Hey!” Shane says excitedly. Well as excitedly as he could manage with the pit in his stomach. “How was the art show?” Shane asks.

“So good you have to and see it,” Kip says “I shed a tear.”

“Babe, we have to go,” Shane smacks Matt’s chest lightly. “*Please.*” He gives his best puppy dog eyes.

“What is Shane begging for?” Ilya asks as he finally sits down.

“Shut up.” Shane says flatly and then turns back to Matt.

“Sure but I always get bored at those things, some of that stuff shouldn't be called art. I could make it in my sleep. Remember that one that was just a white dot on a black background?”

He raises his eyebrows.

“First of all that was an expression of grief, secondly does that mean we can go?” Shane smiles.

“Yes we can go,” Matt kisses the top of his head. “Please tell me Scott was bored though so I don't feel bad.” He looks at Kip.

“He was not! He enjoyed it didn't you?” Kip looks up at Scott from underneath him.

“Of course I did,” Scott smiles while simultaneously mouthing ‘no’ and slightly shaking his head.

“Kip this is Rose by the way, the co-worker I was telling you about,” Shane introduces the pair “Rose this is the Kip who I was saying would be perfect for our Greek art exhibition.”

Shane couldn't be blamed for the way his eyes wandered to Ilya. Firstly, it was hard to ignore the constant popping coming from his mouth, and secondly, Matt had started to talk to Carter, Aliyah, and Hayden about Aliyah's job in marketing (which Shane knew absolutely nothing about other than the little nuggets he got from Carter about his own job). Scott, Kip, Rose and Jackie were deep in conversation about the new exhibit in the museum and he had been talking about that all night so he was kind of all Rome'd out. So... inevitably he looked over at Ilya, who was obviously already looking at him. His jaw was clenched around his gum, and Shane realised he wasn't exactly looking at Shane – but rather his fingers intertwined with Matt's.

“Stop looking at me like that.” Okay, so Shane was going to be the one to snap first. At least it was out there.

“Looking at you like what?” Ilya countered.

“Like you know something I don't.” He hissed quietly.

“Maybe I do.” Ilya smirked, reaching for his beer.

Shane rolled his eyes, which seemed to be the only thing his body was able to do in the presence of Ilya.

“You should not roll your eyes at people, is *rude*.” Ilya smirks.

“Like that incessant popping your mouth does.” Shane spits back. Ilya punctuates the sentence for him with a loud *pop*.

“Why are *you* looking at *me*?” Ilya raises his eyebrows “Don't you have exhi– *whatever* to be talking about, like your friend over there?”

“Don't you have a twink to be attached by the mouth to?” Shane spits.

“You are brat,” Ilya whispers “he does not know what to do with brats, probably why you sound so desperate when you fuck him.” Ilya nods over to Matt.

Shane pulls back like he's been slapped. Who the actual fuck does Ilya think he is? He can't just swan into Shane's life and dedicate how well his own boyfriend fucks him. Shane is burning with rage, he's actually growing hot, his cheeks are burning and his hands are shaking. How fucking dare this stupid, ignorant, annoying, beautiful, sexy, Russian *asshole* speak to him like that.

Before Shane is even registering where he actually is and what his purpose of being there was, he stood up from the booth, shaking Matt's arm off of him and makes his way to the bathroom. He needs to take a minute. Several if possible.

What does Ilya know anyway? Sex with Matt was *fine*. Shane was fine. He loved Matt and that was enough. Okay, so was Ilya maybe a *little* right? Sure. Shane could admit that he was a little embarrassed about asking Matt if, maybe once in a while, they could have a little bit rougher sex. But that was normal. Just because Shane was into stuff, doesn't mean his boyfriend had to be too. That's fine. Shane is fine. Everything is *fine*—

“You are having panic attack.”

“Ilya get the fuck out of here.” Shane snaps, spinning around from his previous position of gripping the sink like it owed him money.

“I need to piss,” Ilya points to the urinal “this is bathroom, yes?” He smirks

“Jesus Christ, you are *such* an asshole.”

“I think maybe you like it.” Ilya smiles as he undoes the fly of his jeans.

“What the fuck are you doing?” Shane whisper-yells. *Is he seriously dropping his fucking pants right now? What does he think is going to happen?* Shane spins back around, white-kunckling the sink again.

“Going for a piss, remember? I have to get my cock out to do this... you have used a bathroom before, yes?” Ilya says, moving to the urinal. *Oh, right. Yes. Bathroom.*

“I am dating one of your best friends!” Shane absolutely does not move from the sink. He does not want to see Ilya Rozanov's cock. He doesn't. He has a boyfriend. He is a good boy. He is a good boy. He has a boyfriend who he loves.

“I am aware.”

“So stop! stop everything you're doing. Stop making eye contact with me while you make out with random twink, stop looking at me like you want me to do something. Stop.” Shane lets out a shaky breath.

“Stop looking for me too then. Your eyes, they find me whenever we are together, I can feel you staring too,” Ilya zips up his fly and makes his way to the sink to wash his hands.

Too close to Shane for his liking. Way too close. Their arms are touching and Shane is trying to be good, this proximity is not helping.

“And next time you fuck *your boyfriend* in our apartment,” Ilya pushes Shane up against the sink “Do not put on a show for *me*. You are not a loud person, Scott and Kip said when you went to Ibiza in summer they did not hear anything from your hotel room apart from bed hitting the wall. The other night was for *me*, so maybe you should stop it also.” Ilya breathes into Shane's neck. “And fix your boner before you leave.” Ilya's eyes flick down to Shane's crotch for a second before he's reaching for the door and he's gone. Leaving Shane in the bathroom, half (fully) hard and guilty as fuck about it.

When Shane goes back to the booth everyone is laughing, Carter is deep into a story that he's already heard before. A story from the guys' first vacation together after college, sparknotes are (if Shane is remembering correctly), they had to check out of their hotel earlier than they thought and everyone had to pack everything they brought to Zante in less than 10 minutes, they had to leave a tip for the hotel staff but they only had 20 euros left and no one could find it. Not that funny to an outsider but Shane guesses it was one of them ‘you had to be there’ moments.

“Wait until they tell you that Scott left a dildo in the hotel nightstand.” Shane smirks as he nestles himself back into Matt's arms. Matt... his boyfriend. Who he loves a lot, and who is due the best blow job Shane has ever given in his entire life in order to dispel the cramp-inducing guilt he is currently feeling right now.

“I forgot about that!” Carter yells, throwing his head back. Shane smiles. There... he'd contributed to the conversation. He could sit back into Matt's arms and shut up before he said something stupid.

It takes all of 2 minutes for Matt to realise there was something wrong.

“You okay?” He asks and Shane nods,

“Just a lil' tired, that's all.” He waves off. *Please don't ask me any more questions. Please just nod so I can pretend I'm okay and I didn't have a boner 10 minutes ago because your best friend walked me into a sink and told me he knew exactly what I was doing when we fucked the other night*, Shane thinks.

God, he is the worst boyfriend in the entire world. Holy shit.

Ilya was absolutely losing it. This he was certain of. The rhythmic thumping of Matt's bed against his wall was sending every single atom in his body vibrating. He'd already smoked most of the half-pack of Players he had stuffed in his night stand when he initially stopped smoking (*just in case*), the last one sitting unlit in his hand. This was the just in case moment. And it was absolutely fucking ridiculous. He's been friends with Matt for years, he's shared dorm rooms with him, he's shared hotel rooms with him, fuck, he's lived with him in *this* apartment for 6 fucking years; the point is he's heard the man have sex countless times. This time though, it's different. This is the first time in his entire friendship with Matt he is trying to find any little excuse to cock-block him. He's considered starting a fire in the apartment

just to get the moans to stop. He's considered calling Aleks to ski mask up and pretend to rob the apartment just so he stops hearing Matt repeatedly tell Shane he's "taking it so well".

Why shouldn't they be having sex? It's their one year anniversary. If it were *his and Shane's* one year anniversary the bed would be hitting the wall a lot harder. Fuck. He's a terrible person. Look, he respects bro-code, of course he does. But Jesus Christ respecting bro code is getting harder every single day his mind is plagued with dark hair and freckles. He should be happy that one of his best friends has found someone so interesting and good looking, but all Ilya wishes is that it were *him* making Shane moan the way he is right now. He wishes so badly that Shane was squirming beneath him right now. Fuck he's such a bad friend.

Ilya realises that he's subconsciously smoked his last cigarette while deep in thought about how terrible of a person he is. He's also rock hard again. He says *again* because (without sounding completely disgusting), he's already jerked off to the sound of Shane begging Matt to fuck him harder. Matt was doing a pretty shitty job at it, if Ilya said so himself. He'd do a much better job.

He throws himself back onto his bed and figures that he has two options; jerk off again, or mention this to Scott. He had mentioned the situation to him last week when he felt that if he were to keep it in any longer he was going to physically explode. Scott was always the wise one out of the group, always the best at giving advice, him and Christopher. Maybe that's why they worked so well. Ilya was still not going to call him Kip though.

He chose the latter because once is just letting out frustration, but twice is creeping into standing-outside-of-your-window-with-binoculars territory.

**Ilya:** They are fucking really loud. Again.

**Ilya:** I have no cigarettes left.

**Scott:** YOU'RE SMOKING?!

**Scott:** Ilya you were doing so well

**Ilya:** This is not the issue right now Scott. Get with program.

**Ilya:** I can not stay in this apartment while Shane is screaming Matt's name.

**Ilya:** I am a bad friend.

**Scott:** You're not a bad friend. We've all been friends with you long enough to realise that you always get the attention of the men and women we want. That just isn't the case this time.

**Ilya:** Say again in less fancy English pls

**Scott:** You have fucked people that all of us have liked at some point, now it's Matt's turn.

**Ilya:** I did not do any of that on purpose tho.

**Scott:** And neither is Matt, find yourself someone who looks like Shane and try and get over him.

**Ilya:** I have changed mind. I am not bad friend. You are.

**Ilya:** That is worst advice in the world.

**Scott:** Its 1am go to sleep and we can talk about it more tomorrow.

**Ilya:** I cannot sleep when they are still having sex.

**Scott:** Jesus!! Then come and stay at mine and Kips.

**Ilya:** Are you having sex? Because I cannot do this again in a different house

**Scott:** 1) no we're not

**Scott:** 2) are you saying you also wanna bang Kip as bad as you wanna bang Shane?

**Ilya:** I would never bang somebody named Kip.

Ilya swings himself off of his bed and pulls a hoodie and sweats out of his chest of draws. The sound of the bed (and the moans accompanying it) has stopped but he would still prefer to stay with Scott and Christopher right now, so he gets an overnight bag and packs his toothbrush and his suit for work tomorrow and tries to open his door as quietly as possible.

It's futile though because Shane is stood in the kitchen in his boxers holding a glass of water. His eyes immediately find Ilya's and then land on the bag hung on his shoulders.

"Were are you going at this time?" Shane asks.

"Sorry mom, will back in time for dinner tomorrow." Ilya says deadpan, walking past Shane and to the front door.

"I hope they're good." Shane spits and Ilya spins on his heel, he's face to face with Shane in two quick strides.

"What did I look like?" Ilya asks.

"What?"

"When you were imagining me on top of you instead of him," he points to Matt's bedroom door "What did I look like?"

"Get fucked." Shane spits back.

"That is plan." Ilya smirks before turning around again and leaving the apartment. He was actually going to sleep in his best friend's spare room, but Shane didn't need to know that.

“You do not have your own apartment?” Is the first thing Shane hears when he opens the door to Matt and Ilya’s apartment.

“Shut up Ilya, where is Matt?” Shane asks.

“He is at gym, he told you this.” Ilya dead pans from the couch.

“He said he was going to the gym 3 hours ago,” Shane huffs, sitting on the breakfast bar stool, because he didn’t trust himself to sit on the couch with just Ilya.

“He left hour ago, you know what he is like... what is saying about being late to funeral?” Ilya asks, his head cocked to the side.

“He’d be late to his own funeral,” Shane chuckles, “has he always been like this?”

“I only met him in college, but he was like this then too. He has gotten better since meeting you actually.”

“Was he snappy at waiters in college too?”

“He *is* snappy at waiters. I have noticed this also, is *rude*,” Ilya looks at him “your favourite word.” he smirks. Stupid smirk for a stupidly handsome man.

“Speaking of, there is a noticeable lack of popping happening right now, where is your gum?” Shane raises his eyebrow.

“I started smoking again.” Ilya shrugs and holds up his finger when his phone starts ringing “Privet, papa,” he says into the phone.

And that's about all Shane gets because he has to spend a lot of his energy trying not to melt into a puddle onto the floor. Every single second he spends in the presence of Ilya he is convinced is another nomination into the ‘Worst Boyfriend Ever’ hall of fame. But Ilya is speaking Russian into the phone to what Shane gathered must be his father, and he is talking more fluidly than Shane has ever heard him and he sounds so passionate and he's pacing around the living room and... he's kind of yelling? And that's also kind of hot. Shane is actually going to hell.

He's going to hell because Matt is a *good* guy. He’s done absolutely nothing wrong, well... apart from introducing Ilya into Shane’s life in the first place, but the way that Ilya stares at Shane, and the way it makes Shane’s chest feel hot and his stomach feel tight absolutely isn’t his fault.

“Sorry that was *rude*,” Ilya smirks

“Your dad?” Shane asks.

“You speak Russian now? Along with your perfect French?” Ilya shoots back.

“The word papa is universal,” Shane rolls his eyes “and how do you know I can speak French?” Shane raises his eyebrows.

“You speak it with Matt, Hayden and also Scott.” Ilya waves his hand.

“You noticed that?” Shane asks.

“Is hard to not notice when someone is speaking a language you don’t understand... makes you turn off, like how you turn off when Matt, Carter and Me start talking about cars.”

“Cars are boring.”

“No cars are fun, they are only boring if you drive boring car, like a Toyota.”

“What’s wrong with a Toyota? They’re reliable.”

“You have Toyota?” Ilya asks and Shane nods, which makes Ilya chuckle “I rest the case or whatever that saying is.”

They fall into a silence after that, Shane having nothing more to say to Ilya besides ‘stop looking at me like that’ and at this point that request has clearly fallen on deaf ears. Ilya will not stop looking at Shane like that, and Shane will not stop noticing it. Shane sits at the breakfast bar, his phone in his hand but he's not really looking at it. Ilya’s presence is too noticeable, too palpable, too hot, too all consuming. It's so all consuming he can feel Ilya get up from the couch and move to the kitchen, without looking up he feels him behind him, feels the air shift into something dangerous.

He should leave, he should leave and come back when his boyfriend is back from the gym like a good boy, like a good boyfriend. But he isn’t moving, and neither is Ilya from a few feet behind him. His legs physically will not stand him up to leave the chair. He can do nothing but will that Ilya doesn't move an inch, preferably doesn't even breathe lest they both do something they can never take back.

“You are becoming a problem for me.” Ilya is the first to speak, Shane turns the stool around to look at him.

“What?”

“I want to be a good friend to Matt but is becoming hard when you're around here all the time.” Ilya is holding a can of coke and his curls are falling perfectly around his face... and Shane should really leave.

“Please stop talking.” Shane manages to breathe out.

“Are you scared you will not be able to resist me anymore?” Ilya smirks, walking around to Shane's side of the breakfast bar, spinning his chair around so Shane is facing away from him. He's still seated, he's not going to get up because if he does, he cannot guarantee his clothes will stay on.

“Ilya please stop, I want to be good.” Shane lowers his head.

“You are being good, you are being so good,”

“But I like being bad,” Ilya says, running fingers down Shane's neck. Fuck this is bad. This is really bad. This is really fucking bad. “Tell me to stop and I will.” Ilya says.

Shane doesn't say a word.

“You want me too, yes? As badly as I want you?” Ilya smiles, his mouth inches away from Shanes.

“Stop,” Shane says finally “I love Matt, I want to be a good boyfriend.” Ilya pulls away and looks at Shane with a sadness in his eyes that Shane has never seen on another person before. He almost looks like Shane has punched him in the gut, like it was the first time he was hearing that Shane was dating somebody else.

“I am sorry I cannot be him.” Ilya steps away, retreating back to the sofa. Shane lets out a shaky breath. That was the right thing to do. He hasn't done anything wrong yet, *technically*. He definitely should leave and come back later because there is a burning in his chest that is clawing its way up his oesophagus and he *knows* it's going to leave his mouth in the form of a request for Ilya to come back and touch him the way he's been dreaming about for weeks.

He slides off of the chair with a trembling legs, he is so distracted by the thoughts of Ilya swimming in his mind, about how badly he regrets telling Ilya to stop and the guilt that comes with that, the thoughts of how bad he feels for Matt, thoughts about how bad of a person he is, that he doesn't even notice the bulge in his pants or the door of the apartment opening.

“What the fuck died in here?” Matt's voice makes Shane jump a little “You two still haven't learned to get along?” He walks over to Shane giving him a quick peck on the lips

“We have nothing in common apart from you.” Ilya shrugs.

Shane could not tell you one singular thing that happened for the rest of the day until Ilya's friend comes around while he and Matt are cuddled up on the couch together.

“Hey Sveta, long time no see.” Matt smiles from beside Shane.

“Hello Matt, hello Shane,” she smiles “Is he in his room?”

“He is.” Matt says. Who is this girl and how does she know who Shane is? Does Ilya talk about him to his friends outside of his and Matt's group? What the fuck would he even be saying about him? Is this Ilya's girlfriend? Why does Matt seem so familiar with her?

“Who is that?” Shane couldn't stop himself.

“Svetlana, she's been hooking up with IIs for years, don't know why he doesn't just ask her to be his girlfriend yet, he clearly loves her,” Matt says “She's the only person he can see as much as he sees us, she works in the same dealership.”

“Oh... didn't realise he was the type to see someone like that more than once.” Shane hopes he's coming off calm and collected, because the pit of anger that is currently stirring in his stomach is suggesting he isn't.

“She's different,” Matt shrugs. “Like I said, I'm pretty sure he's in love with her, probably just too scared to talk about his feelings, very Ilya way of thinking.” He chuckles, Shane's not laughing though. He cannot see what's funny about Ilya being in love with this supermodel who clearly loves cars as much as he does, and not wanting to make the leap with her. If not her, then who?

“You know what, it's getting late and I have a thing at the museum early tomorrow, I forgot...” Shane says. He kind of feels bad about leaving earlier than they had planned, but Ilya's bed has started to creek and Shane is guessing that this is only the start of the most cramp-inducing night he's ever had in this apartment, and if he wants to keep some kind of semblance of normality with Matt, he is going to have to get out of here immediately.

It's different when he and Matt are having sex, Ilya knows that Shane's mind wanders to images of Ilya's bare chest and massive tits. He knows that Shane closes his eyes and imagines a thick accent telling him he's being *such a good boy*, growling in his ear for him to *take it*. He's made it very clear he can see right through Shane's antics. But Ilya isn't that kind of person, Ilya is a hedonist and Shane knows it, he won't be thinking about Shane. It would be different if one of Ilya's regular Grindr hook ups had come around, Shane could savour every word that was slipping through the crack of Ilya's door and pretend it was for him. He doubts he'll be calling this supermodel ‘good boy’.

Halloween is the beginning of the end really. It starts with an invite to Kip and Scott's (apparently) annual halloween party.

### **Where is the €20??**

*In this group: Matt, Hayden, Carter, Kip (+2 more)*

**Kip:** Annual halloween bash at our place is a go :)

**Kip:** from 6pm on halloween onwards, bring whoever you want :)

**Kip:** @Ilya please dress up this year 😊

**Ilya:** Nobody called Kip will tell me what to do

**Scott:** ????????

**Scott:** Apologise or you're not invited and I will not introduce you to my coworker.

**Ilya:** Christopher I am sorry, I will have costume :)

**Carter:** "I will have costume" bro didn't know what where/were/wear to use 😭

**Ilya:** Yes make fun of the immigrant. You would be cancelled if you was famous.

**Ilya:** But in case I didn't know which one was right....

**Hayden:** Wear

**Matt:** wear

**Matt:** also Shane and I will be there @Kip :)

**Carter:** @Shane Aliyah has requested your coworker Rose be there

**Carter:** So please invite her.

**Shane:** @Carter i'll invite her :)

**Ilya:** She was at bar the other week?

**Ilya:** Invite her she was hot

**Scott:** Okay so my coworker can just go fuck himself then?

**Ilya:** Bisexuality Scott.... I can have both ;)

**Hayden:** Thats not bisexuality thats whoreism

*(Scott, Kip, Matt and Carter sent a !!)*

Shane couldn't physically care less that Ilya had called one of his closest friends hot because he has adopted a new mentality. He will no longer look for Ilya in a room full of people, he will no longer think about him while having sex with Matt, and if at all possible; he'd like to not think about him at all. He can chalk this whole thing up to a little bump in the road of his relationship with Matt, he can wash his hands of the entire thing and never ever bring it up to Matt. Ultimately he's going to put Ilya (and the way he makes his stomach feel) into a locked box in his brain and never mention it to *anyone*. He was calling it: Operation Stop Wanting to Fuck His Boyfriends Best Friend.

And the plan was working, it was fine. A couple of days before Halloween he had met Matt in his apartment while he finished getting ready to be his date to a gala for the museum, and he didn't look at Ilya once. He knew he was in the room, but he didn't acknowledge him.

Granted he was in the apartment for a grand total of 5 minutes and he was only there to rush Matt out of the door, and he also kept his eyes mostly on the floor or in the direction of Matt's bedroom the whole time. He counted it as a win regardless. He had successfully been in his own boyfriend's apartment without thinking about his best friend in any sort of sexual manner.

Halloween night he was optimistic that he would be able to get through the evening without so much as a 'how do you do?' to Ilya. Matt had met him and Rose at Shane's apartment, clad in a bright orange jumpsuit. They were a prisoner and a cop. Very unoriginal, however trying to even get Matt into a matching costume to begin with was hard enough. Shane would take whatever he could get.

Rose was dressed as Daphne from Scooby Doo, which Shane was sure Ilya would be all over and why shouldn't he be? Rose was gorgeous and smart and funny and every other adjective that didn't describe Shane. Well, maybe he was a *little* smart. If you asked him about Ancient Greece or Rome he would seem like the smartest person you'd ever had a conversation with.

Wait, did that count as thinking about Ilya? Maybe. Okay he wasn't going to think about Ilya starting now.

"Ready to rock and roll Mr Officer?" Matt smiles.

"Sure am." Shane winks and punctuates his sentence with a slap of his plastic baton to Matt's ass.

"I'm staying here tonight, I don't want to hear anything happen with that baton in the middle of the night." Rose fake gags, picking up her bag and phone and making her way to the door.

"Like you wouldn't want to hear that." Matt chuckles following Rose out of the apartment as Shane locks the door. This was going to be fun and he wasn't going to even acknowledge Ilya's presence.

Scott and Kip's house was beautiful, and quite big was the first thing Shane noted. It was also decorated like Spirit Halloween threw up on it. Kind of like a weird amalgamation of every haunted house he'd ever been in.

"Hello Mr Officer." Kip greeted Shane with a hug and wolf whistle.

"Hello to you too, Mr... Top gun man?" Shane says, the tone more of a question than anything.

"Close enough," Kip chuckles, "look at you guys! You look amazing, Rose."

"Thank you for having me, the place looks incredible!" Rose says with a big grin.

"You're welcome any time, Aliyah and Carter are in the kitchen, the rest of the gang aren't here yet, but feel free to mingle. Half of the fucking finance sector of Montreal are here, blame Scott, if anyone starts talking about buying low and selling high just back away." Kip says

“That's the real Halloween scare.” Shane rolls his eyes playfully as he's ushered into the kitchen by Matt.

He's deep into a conversation with Aliyah and Rose about the stresses of picking a costume, Aliyah matching his frustration about the matching costume situation because apparently Carter was just as apprehensive to wear matching costumes with Aliyah as Matt was with Shane (she had managed to wrangle him into a devil costume to match her angel one but that was as much as she was getting) , when he feels a shift in the air. He knows Ilya's arrived, but he doesn't care. He's not looking for him and he won't. He's going to stay in this corner with Rose and Aliyah and complain about their boyfriends (and the guy from Hinge Rose went on a date with last week).

Shane really was staying strong until the guys moved into the living room to join in on their conversation, and that's when he looks at Ilya for the first time, and all of the air was punched out of him.

*This fucking asshole is in a gladiator costume.*

Shane is a good boy. But holy shit. *Holy fucking shit.* And Ilya is fucking smirking because he *knows* what he's done. A fucking gladiator! This has to be a sick, sick joke. God if you are listening he is *not* your strongest soldier.

“Oh you are matching with Matt! Is so cute.” Ilya sits right next to him. Too close for any of his plans to ignore him tonight to manifest properly. So close in fact, that Shane can smell the body oil off of him. Fuck this whole entire night.

“Are you two gonna get along tonight?” Carter asks, motioning between Ilya and Shane.

“Depends if the gladiator is as big of an asshole as regular Ilya.” Shane lets out a tight lipped smile. Did his voice just break? No. He's a grown man, his voice doesn't break. Granted, he's a grown man who is very, very turned on right now but he's a grown man nonetheless.

“Ahhh!” Ilya grabs his chest “You wound me Shane, one day you will see I am cool and nice and not asshole,” He pinches Shanes cheeks “Hello Rose by the way, nice to see you again.” He reaches over Shane to hold his hand out to Rose who takes it with a smile.

“Nice to see you again too, Ilya.” Rose says. Shane is about to fucking lose it, his patience is hanging by fishing wire and is getting thinner with every passing millisecond. And when Ilya pulls his hand back from Rose's and brushes Shane's crotch, the wire snaps.

He downs his drink quickly and stands up to go to the kitchen to get himself another one. Fuck pacing himself, and fuck Ilya Rozanov. Fuck this entire night to be honest. How is he supposed to ignore Ilya and be a good boyfriend to Matt when he looks about the closest to an actual Roman gladiator he's ever seen? Shane swears Ilya has oiled up his chest specifically to send Shane's brain into some kind of evolutionary overdrive that makes him want to take his clothes off immediately. Shane's clothes, that is. Ilya can keep the costume on. Actually he would prefer he did.

Shane takes a moment to steady his breathing over the sink, counting to 10 -- matter of fact *fuck that*, he's counting 5 things he can see, 4 things he can touch, 3 things he can hear, 2 things he can smell, and 1 thing he can taste. It's not working though, alls he can think about is Ilya in that stupid fucking costume, and the stupid fucking way he looks at him, and his stupid fucking perfect curly hair, and his stupid fucking accent, and his stupid fucking muscles and the stupid fucking fact that Ilya could probably throw him around the room.

"You are having panic attack again." Ilya says, walking up behind him.

"Ilya go away." Shane says, but he doesn't turn around. He can't. If he turns around and Ilya is face to face with him in that costume, he cannot confidently say he will be able to control himself.

"Or what, will you arrest me?" Ilya purrs into his ear.

"Ilya, *please*." Shane whines the last word. Any sense of dignity he had left was gone the second he met Ilya anyway. He has no time to feel embarrassed now.

"Please what? Please touch you or please go away?" Ilya whispers into his neck.

"I..." Shane breathes "I don't know." and finally turns around to look at Ilya.

"Figure it out and find me later," Ilya says, backing away from Shane "you have a boner by the way." He says, leaving the kitchen fully. Yeah, that tracks with just about every time Ilya is in his personal space.

He should find Matt, he should find Matt and try to remember why the fuck he has been fighting this urge for so long. Because right now, his brain is reverberating one thing and one thing only – Ilya's name. Ilya's name over and over again like the single 4 letter word is a prayer. He wants to be a good boyfriend but Ilya is making it impossibly hard to do so. He downs a shot of tequila, and then another, and one more for good measure and goes back into the living room.

"He should have brought Sveta, we all like her." Matt is deep in conversation with Carter, Hayden (who had somehow appeared in the time he was in the kitchen) and Scott. Kip, Jackie, Aliyah and Rose are sat off to the side of the boys and after hearing Matt's comment, he figures it's best to sit with the girls (and Kip).

"I think you're massively overestimating how serious his thing is with Sveta." Scott says to Matt but he's watching Shane as he takes a seat next to Jackie.

"You look so good! What are you though?" He chuckles.

"I'm Midge! She was pregnant Barbie in the 90's, first ever pregnant Barbie doll!" She smiles

"That is adorable, you matching with Hayd?"

"He's Ken." She gives him a cheeky grin.

“Did he have any resistance to that by any chance?” Aliyah asks.

“Are you joking? It was his idea.” Jackie rolls her eyes playfully.

“So it's just our boyfriends that are party poopers? Cool.” Aliyah gestures between her and Shane.

“Was Scott happy to match with you Kip?” Shane asks and Kip nods enthusiastically “No yeah it's just us Aliyah.” Shane feels someone tug on his sleeve, and he whips his head around at the speed of light, just to realise it's only Matt.

“Come sit.” Matt pats his thighs. What is Shane supposed to do? Say no? *‘Thank you so much for the offer my dear boyfriend, but I actually want to fuck your best friend senseless... So no thanks!’*? He smiles at Matt and moves over to sit in his lap, Matt pulls him in close and holds him in a way that used to make Shane feel floaty, but he feels nothing right now. He feels absolutely numb to it, and maybe it's because they're coming out of the honeymoon period, maybe that's what this entire thing can be chalked up to. Maybe they're falling into routine and Shane is a little bored. But also... maybe, there is a lap of a Russian man currently dressed like something out of teenage Shane's fantasies he would rather be in instead.

“You okay?” Matt whispers and Shane and he nods into his chest.

“I'm a little bit drunk I think.”

“That's what parties are for, glad you're not drinking ginger ale for once.” Matt chuckles. Shane buries his head into Matt's chest and hopes he can just will the whole thing away. He can hear Matt talking to someone, maybe Hayden, about something but it's kind of muffled. He honestly prefers this, the familiar scent of Matt filling his brain and momentarily blowing away any thoughts of the hot gladiator somewhere in the house.

Shane doesn't know how long has passed, it could have been a couple of seconds but it also could have been a couple of minutes, but eventually Matt guides Shane's face up to his lips in a kiss that is far more heated and far more frenzied than the way Matt usually kisses him when they're just sitting together. This is the type of kiss that initiates something. No. This is the kind of kiss that *proves* something. Matt's tongue is frantically trying to meet Shane's, its open mouthed and its *dirty*. His hands are woven into Shane's hair and he's tugging ever so slightly, and Shane can't bite back the small moan that leaves his mouth. And he shouldn't, because this is his *boyfriend*. He pulls back with several small pecks to Matt's lips before he realises that Matt has averted his gaze. Weird. Shane gives Matt another quick peck before following his eyeline.

Ilya is staring from the couch opposite from them.

He looks between Matt and Ilya and Matt is smirking like he's won something. Like he's won Shane. He knows. Matt fucking *knows*.

“You okay Rozy?” Matt asks with a smile that doesn't quite reach his eyes.

“I’m good.” Ilya nods, downing whatever was in his cup before wiping his mouth.

Shane gets up from Matt’s lap, this dick measuring contest was not going to happen in front of him. No thank you. He needs air, he needs to think about what he’s going to say to Matt, because it’s obvious he knows. How do you even begin to explain something like this? They haven’t done anything wrong yet. Yet . Saying *yet* probably won’t help, getting out of infidelity on a technicality is probably just as bad as if he had cheated on Matt.

The air in Scott and Kip’s back yard is cool, and it’s helping Shane collect his thoughts. These are the facts; Shane has not cheated on Matt, Shane would really like to fuck Matt’s best friend, said best friend is currently dressed as a gladiator, Shane cannot think about that fact for too long because he will get rock hard in his cop costume, Matt knows Shane and Ilya have this weird... thing going on—

“I’m sorry,” Shane turns around and Matt is approaching him, a weary smile on his lips “I’m sorry but he needed to be put in his place.”

“Matt I..” Shane begins. What the fuck does he say now? “I’m sorry I wasn’t going to—”

“What do you mean you *weren’t going to*? You weren’t going to what?” Matt asks. *Oh.*

“What do you know?” Shane tries.

“What the fuck? Is there something I *should* know?” Matt spits.

“No!” Shane says quickly. Too quickly. Like he’s admitting guilt for something he hasn’t even done.

“See, I had a feeling, because I’ve known Ilya for a very long time, I had a feeling he might be into you, but you— Ha!” Matt barks a laugh “God I am so fucking stupid! You’ve already done it haven’t you? You’ve already fucked him.”

“No!” Shane says, he tries placing his hands on Matt’s chest but Matt steps away from him “Nothing has happened! I haven’t touched him! Matt please – we can fix this, we can work this out, please just—”

“I don’t believe you!” Matt yells “I’m not stupid Shane, I’ve seen the way you look at each other!”

“Matt I’m sorry! I’m so fucking sorry, please can we just—”

“The funny thing is that when we started dating you told me you couldn’t do casual hook ups and stuff, that you were a relationship person—”

“I am!” Shane says reaching for Matt’s hands but he pulls away,

“Then what the fuck Shane! You think that’s what *he* wants?” Matt laughs dryly “He’s been fucking Svetlana since college and he’s still not made her his girlfriend! He doesn’t do relationships! You’re throwing our year-long relationship for someone who can never give you what you want!”

“I’m not throwing away anything Matt, I haven’t done anything *wrong*!” Shane says, his voice definitely cracks on the last word. Matt isn't listening to him and he's telling him things he already knows, he knows Ilya doesn't do relationships, he gathered that when he referred to his hook-ups via numbers. He knows all of this, Shane never said he wanted to marry Ilya for fucks sake.

“You’re cheating on me Shane! How is that not wrong?”

“I haven’t touched him!” Tears are falling from Shane's eyes, and he tries to wipe them away and focus his eyes, but it's futile because they're not stopping.

“Have you thought about fucking him?”

Shane lets out a shaky breath,

“Yes.”

“Then you’ve cheated on me! You can’t do that in a relationship, Shane!” Matt yells “You know what? I can’t do this right now, I’m drunk and I’m going to say something I don’t mean,” Matt runs his hands down his face “I need space to think, I’m not breaking up with you, I just need to think about this. Stay if you want but I'm leaving.”

“Matt please let's just—” Shane tries, oh god is he trying, but Matt has turned away and he’s making his way into the house. Shane collapses onto Scott and Kip’s deck, crying into his own lap. He’s a terrible person, he is absolutely terrible and Matt doesn’t deserve any of this. He is a good guy, and Shane loves him – and now he’s fucked it all up. Over what? A tall, sexy Russian who will never want him longer than a night?

“You are crying?”

“Ilya, please not now.” Shane looks up at him, and Ilya’s eyes widen ever so slightly.

“You are a pretty crier.” He sits down next to Shane bumping Shane’s knee with his own.

“Matt knows,” Shane says, wiping his eyes. Ilya doesn't even try to hide his cheek-splitting grin. “You can at least try to act like you care about that.”

“But I do not,” Ilya says "Maybe I care that I was not the one to make your eyes this miserable and pretty, but that is all.”

“I cheated on Matt.”

“With who?” Ilya asks.

“With you!”

“We have not even kissed, this is not cheating.”

“Matt said it was.”

“Well no offence but Matt does not know about these things.” Ilya says “Are you broken up? Can I kiss you now because I am fucking burning.”

“No we’re not broken up and no you can’t kiss me! I will not end my year-long relationship for someone like you!” Shane yells

“Someone like me? What does this mean? You still think I am asshole?”

“I know you're an asshole!” Shane stands up “You’re an asshole who just wants somebody to fuck, and I can’t do that. I’m not a hook-up kind of guy, I cannot do casual sex, I am not what you want Ilya, please just leave me alone.” Shane turns away to maybe find Rose and tell her he’s leaving, maybe to sit back down and get more drunk – he's not sure yet.

Ilya grabs Shane's wrist,

“You think this is what I want? Just a one night stand with you? That I will kick you out of bed in the morning and never want to see you again?”

“That’s kind of your whole MO.” Shane spits, pulling his arm out of Ilya’s grasp.

“On Grindr is my MO, whatever this means, but you think that I would lose one of my best friends for something I can already get whenever I want?”

“Seems like something you would do.” Shane says and turns on his heel to go back into the house.

Shane ends up leaving Scott and Kips not long after that, unable to continue the festivities with the ambiguous status of his relationship hanging in the air. He ends up spending a good 3 hours explaining the entire situation to Rose while sitting cross legged on his bed, who is probably one of the most supportive people he has ever met. She doesn’t make him feel like satan incarnate, she doesn’t judge him for his very evident and very severe lapse in judgment, she just makes him feel human. He is a human being that fucked up and that’s okay, it happens to everyone.

“Shane you are quite literally one of the least malicious people I have ever met, there is no universe in which you would set out to purposefully hurt someone you love. No one, especially me and more importantly Matt, would ever think you did this on purpose. Ilya is a very good looking man and sometimes you can get lost in the attention of it all, Matt will understand this was all just a mistake, I promise.”

“I don’t deserve you, or Matt.” Shane sighs.

“Yes you do,” She pulls him down into her lap and runs her fingers through his hair “You deserve every good thing in the world, you can fix this... if that's what you want.”

And they do. Kind of. The first few weeks are hard, but Shane is willing to do anything that will make Matt see that he is serious about their relationship. They start by setting a few ground rules;

1. Shane blocks Ilya on everything, even things they don't even follow each other on.
2. Shane and Matt will only exclusively meet in Shane's apartment from now on.
3. Shane is no longer invited to group hang outs in which Ilya is present and vice versa.
4. Open phone policy.

4 simple rules that were supposed to fix everything, 'supposed to' meaning that there is no longer any temptation in their relationship. Shane considers it completely fair, after all, he was the one that fucked up not Matt. He supposes that Matt and Ilya have gone back to normal too, he gets that information from Kip, because Matt won't even speak Ilya's name in front of Shane, as if he's some kind of beetlejuice-esque character and speaking his name would make him apparate in the room and immediately start fucking Shane right in front of him. That is going a little far, Shane thinks. But if it helps Matt get over the situation then he's more than happy to comply.

Things are relatively back to normal, as normal as they're ever going to get back to anyway. Shane and Matt start doing weekly date nights again, they start hanging out at Shane's apartment on the weekends, they even go to Benny's one night with the rest of Matt's friends (minus Ilya obviously). Granted, that particular hang out was at the request of Aliyah because 'She feels like a child of divorce and they should set up some kind of weekly visitation thing with Shane', but Shane was grateful for it regardless. He loves Matt's friends, and he really had missed them. He was a little worried that Scott, Hayden and Carter would no longer like him, having split the entire friendship group down the middle for no reason at all, however that didn't seem to be the case. They had managed to go an entire night without even talking about The Situation, and it was fun.

Would Shane be lying if he said that he hadn't noticed Ilya was missing? Yes. Of course he did. Ilya was such a big part of the group and seemed to genuinely be the beating heart of all the anecdotes and stories, always adding a funny part that Carter had missed out, always settling debates, always having *something* to add to a conversation. He obviously wasn't the only one who had noticed it either, it was a very obvious elephant in the room – one that no one dared to address. But ignoring that little part, it was a fun night, and he was glad he and Matt were putting that hiccup behind them.

Ilya didn't know how long he could keep up this charade with Matt for. The pair had barely spoken about Halloween night at all, instead opting to pretend like the whole thing had never happened in the first place – which, opting to not talk about your feelings is an avenue that ordinarily Ilya would have sprinted down, but for the first time in a while, it was starting to grate on him. This harmony they had created in the apartment by acting like Ilya had never even met Shane, like Matt was seeing a stranger – leaving the apartment with a 'I'm going on a date, be back tomorrow' or 'Just meeting Shay' like Ilya hadn't heard this elusive 'Shay'

moaning and gasping and fucking *screaming* in this very apartment just a few months ago, absolutely was not sustainable in Ilya's opinion. Maybe it was time to move out, maybe he should just move in with Svetlana, she had a room for him, that much she had always made clear. He and Matt absolutely could not keep this up forever, something had to give. Ilya didn't know what it was yet, but there was definitely something that had to give.

"We should talk." Ilya starts and Matt looks up from his phone,

"If you're about to tell me you want to fuck my boyfriend, I hate to break it to you Ils but I already know," He chuckles slightly "Sorry its probably too soon to joke about that."

"Too soon, yes," Ilya nods "I think I should move out."

"Wait what?"

"We are ignoring this big problem—"

"There is no problem." Matt interrupted Ilya.

"There *is*! We cannot pretend like Halloween did not happen. We have not even spoke about it, you just went back to act like how everything was before, before you introduced Shane to everyone. Before you introduced him to *me*." Ilya sighs.

"What is there to talk about? It's not like it can change, I would feel sick every time you two were in the same room, how is that fair to *me*?"

"Maybe you should work on that then," Ilya suggests "Because Shane is a good looking man and people will have crushes on him so what are you going to do? Put him on leash like dog?"

"I don't care that random people think he's good looking, I care that one of my best friends does, so much so that he would make passes at him while I'm literally right there."

"I tried to ignore it Matthew! I tried really hard but every time I saw him my chest would burn, it was impossible to ignore! I am sorry that he is your boyfriend but is not personal. And is not fair that if Aliyah or Christopher or Jackie or *anyone* wants to see Shane I have to not be there, or if I want to hang out Shane cannot be there. This is not long term solution."

"So what is the long term solution then?"

"You trust that Shane loves you, that he picked *you*. And I move out."

"How will you moving out fix that? It feels like I'm losing my best fucking friend man, that's why we came up with this solution, because I didn't want to lose either of you."

"You will not lose me, if I move out it will help you get space to think. If I stay here and we keep ignoring this, we will end up having fist fight. It will build up and up and up and one day I will drop a plate and you will stab me." Ilya chuckles lightly.

"Where are you going to go?"

“Svetlana’s house, she has room for me, and is closer to the dealership.” Ilya shrugs.

“If that's what you want, then you can move out. But I want you to know that you don’t have to.” Matt says and Ilya nods.

It would just be easier, for everyone. Ilya’s own apartment had been taken over by Shane the second he opened the door to him. It’s not like it wasn’t before, there were signs that one of the occupants had a serious boyfriend, much like every apartment in which that was the case. There was a toothbrush for him in the bathroom, sometimes he would leave clothes there, or gifts he had given Matt. But the difference was that before Ilya had swung open the apartment door to him in late August, he had never connected them to *Shane*. He knew Shane by only the Instagram handle Matt would tag in stories, or the photo on Matt’s lockscreen, so it didn't matter to him really. However, now he knew Shane, he knew how much he liked the olden times, how much he liked ginger ale, what his orgasms sounded like, what made him tick (usually whispers), he knew that he hated the sound of gum chewing. He knew Shane. So when he sees fresh flowers in the apartment, or Matt comes home in what Ilya obviously knows is Shane’s jacket, it hurts. It’s a constant reminder that probably for the first time in his adult life, Ilya had been rejected by someone he wanted. Shane had picked Matt, and it fucking hurt.

The holidays had almost passed without incident for Shane and Matt, they had hung out with Matt’s friends in Benny’s the weekend before Christmas and it was fine, apart from a small hiccup – Kip hadn’t meant to start the... mini argument?(Shane wasn’t really sure what to call it), he had assumed that Shane knew. But you know what they say about assuming,

“You must be excited about having the apartment to yourself Matt.” Kip smiled.

“Yeah, it’s gonna be weird though,” He nodded. “It’s for the best really, we were going to end up hating each other.”

“Wait what?” Shane asked quietly.

“Oh does he not... sorry forget I said anything.” Kip says, the booth went silent. As in, Shane could literally hear his own blood pumping kind of silent.

“No what, what's going on?”

“Ilya is moving in with Svetlana.” Matt shrugged.

“Ilya is moving out?”

“That’s what I just said, yeah.” Matt nodded, his voice flat.

“Why?”

“Oh I don't know Shane, maybe because of the whole he emotionally cheated with my boyfriend thing?” Matt spit. Shane pulled back slightly, he still didn't like hearing that phrase. He didn't speak for the rest of the night. He nodded along to conversations, he checked his phone, he played with a loose bit of string on his sweater, everything but speaking. In fear he would start crying or something. Matt hadn't fully let it go yet, which was okay with Shane because again, he was the one who fucked up not Matt. And he couldn't just tell Matt that he felt like Matt had had enough time to process and get over The Situation, that decision wasn't Shane's to make.

Matt had apologised on the way home though,

“Look I'm sorry I didn't tell you about him moving out, it's just... I don't know. I still find it hard to talk about him with you. But I should have told you, even just like, a little bit of gossip in my life, something interesting that's happening.”

“It's okay, I get it,” Shane nodded. “I just would have liked to know that there was something like this happening in your life, that's the type of thing boyfriends share with each other.”

“I know, I'm sorry. But hey, I said his name to you in the bar and the floor didn't open up and swallow me whole.” Matt pointed out with a smile.

So that was the Christmas hiccup that had happened. But besides that, it was fine. Shane didn't even really think about Ilya anymore. Other than when it was very clear that he was missing from a hang out, and even then he only really thought about him for a second before he pulled himself back to reality. Okay so maybe the fact that he had finally taken the leap and clearly made Svetlana his girlfriend was playing on his mind, but that was only because he was happy for him. Svetlana looked like a cool girl, and they had their interest in cars in common, and also their place of birth in common. It was good – Shane was happy for him. Maybe now that he was in a relationship with Svetlana, they could finally hang out together and the group wouldn't be so separated. That would be nice. *Shane was happy for Ilya*. Good for him. He was happy. This was a good thing. The pit in his stomach was just still leftover guilt. It wasn't jealousy, because that would be ridiculous, it would be ridiculous and stupid because things were finally good with Matt again.

The rest of the holiday period was fine, better than fine really. Kip had texted him a selfie with Scott 2 minutes after midnight on New Years Eve, Kip was holding up his left hand and his smile was massive, a beautiful thick gold band with a diamond in the middle perched right on his ring finger. Very beautiful and very Kip, Scott had done well. So there was another thing to celebrate. And if Shane knew Kip at all, which he liked to think that he did, there would be a party to follow.

However, if Halloween was the beginning of the end then early January was, what some may call, the main event. Kind of. The text from Rose was just the start...

**Rose:** Will you be busy in 20 mins (pls say no) 😊

**Shane:** no why?

**Rose:** Liv needs a new car and we need a man with us

**Rose:** So they don't scam us #patriarchystrikesagain

**Shane:** so you text the gayest man you know? 🙄

**Rose:** I know precisely 2 men that I like enough to spend the day with and one is you and the other is Miles ...

**Rose:** Gay men is all I got brother

**Shane:** ok i will come but i know like literally nothing about cars

**Rose:** Its okay!! Me, you, and Liv are all well educated people, I'm sure we can put our heads together.

**Shane:** ah yes the mcgill classics and ancient history dept really prepped me for this moment

**Shane:** do you think that the dealership person will wanna hear about marcus aurelius?

**Rose:** If they're cool they will #nerdsunite 😎

**Rose:** Plus you don't even need to talk, just bring your penis

**Shane:** ahh could be a problem... i forgot where i left it last

**Rose:** In the hand of \*\*\*\* most likely

**Shane:** for my own sanity im gonna assume that is matt

**Rose:** That was like an ink blot test... who did you think of first 🙄

**Shane:** i will see you in 20

**Rose:** Answer the question Hollander...

**Shane:** I WILL SEE YOU IN 20

“Ready to go car shopping?” Rose smiles as he steps out of his car in front of Rose’s apartment building.

“Why are we going to the dealership downtown, does the museum pay you differently than me Liv? Should Rose and I have gone into Egyptology this whole time?” Shane raises his eyebrow.

“My dad is paying.” Olivia smiles brightly.

“But what a thought eh ... hieroglyphics... the *big leagues*.” Rose laughs.

“Waa waa, I like the classics, I’m boring and I like murder.” Olivia mocks.

“I do love murder.” Rose nods with a smile.

“Okay so I like philosophy and democracy. I don't really know what she's talking about, we took very different things away from the Greek and Roman empires.”

“Boring.” Olivia blows a raspberry.

To Shane's credit, it's not his fault he didn't know what car dealership Ilya worked at. They had never talked about that, and whenever Ilya did mention his work, it was always to people like Matt and Carter who actually gave a fuck about cars. So when he walks into the dealership and he sees Ilya in a fucking suit, standing next to an Audi with a grin on his face as he was clearly trying his hardest to sell the car to the blank faced older gentleman and what Shane guesses must be his daughter, he doesn't really know what to do.

“Oh shit is that...” Rose says.

“That is.” Is all Shane manages to say before they are being approached by... Ilya's fucking girlfriend. “Andthatishisgirlfriend.” He says to Rose quickly. What does he do in this situation? Does he text Matt and tell him that he and Ilya are in the same building? Does he wait to tell Matt in person? Does he not tell him at all? He can't do that because if Ilya mentions it before Shane does then it will look suspicious. Is it getting hotter in here? Why is his hoodie suddenly suffocating him? Why isn't Ilya looking at him? Can he not feel that Shane is in the room anymore? Why does Shane even give a shit? He figures it's probably best he tell Matt asap.

**Shane:** went to buy liv a car with her and rose

**Shane:** guess what dealership liv has brought us to 🙄

**Matt:** ilya's one?

**Shane:** ding ding ding

**Matt:** is he talking to you?

**Shane:** no he seems busy, svetlana is tho ...

**Matt:** #awky lol

**Matt:** thanks for telling me <3

**Matt:** also wtf why can liv afford a car from there???

**Shane:** lol i said the same thing, her dads paying

“...Shane?” Rose smacks him.

“Huh?” He looks up from his phone and Svetlana is smiling at him.

“Svetlana was talking to you.”

“Oh sorry, Hi Sveta,” Shane smiles “Congrats by the way.”

“For what?” She asks.

“You and Ilya.”

“Me and Ilya what? Moving in together?”

“Yeah, must be nice to finally tie him down.” Shane nods with a smile.

“HA!” Svetlana barks a laugh “Ilya wishes.” *What?*

“You and him aren’t...”

“We love each other but we aren’t in love.” Svetlana shakes her head “He is... he’s not what Matt probably tells you he is, the boys... they know him well but they don’t know him like I do. There are certain things he can only say in Russian – anyway we are here to buy a car right?” She claps her hands. Shane isn’t really paying attention, Svetlana knows who he is so he doubts she’s going to overcharge one of his friends. Even if Svetlana wasn’t the one handling them, he wouldn’t be able to pay attention anyway because there is a 6’3 Russian in this room he is spending all of his energy trying not to look at.

“Does Matt know you are here?” He hears from behind him. Of course Ilya makes the first move, he always does. Shane turns around.

“He does, I uh.. Didn’t know you worked here.”

“Have you come to get rid of your stupid Toyota? I can show you a Mustang if you want.” Ilya grins.

“Uh no, Rose and Liv... they uh.. Liv wanted a new car.” Jesus Christ he needs to get it together. He’s never had a problem talking to Ilya before, why is he stuttering now?

“So you will keep boring Toyota?”

“I couldn’t afford anything here anyway.”

“Here I was thinking you were millionaire,” Ilya chuckles. “That is why I was so attracted to you, thought you could have been my sugar daddy.”

“Was?” The word spills out of Shane’s mouth before he can get it back in. He hadn’t meant to say that out loud, he hadn’t meant to even think it. He should leave, Rose and Liv were in good hands.

“Yes *was*, I am only interested in being rejected by you once, sorry.”

Shane shakes his head, he considers just tuning around and going back to Liv and Rose before he can say something else he shouldn't. But unfortunately he just clearly couldn't help himself.

"You didn't give me time to think, you just... assumed."

"You made it very clear that you wanted to fix things with Matt."

"Maybe he didn't give me time to think either, maybe I didn't give myself time to think, my brain was pretty clouded by the fact you were dressed as a gladiator."

"I thought you would like that one," Ilya smirks "olden times Rome, thought it would get you going."

"It did."

"What happened to good Shane, why are you being bad now? You are still dating Matt, yes? That has not changed since the New Years Eve story he posted on Instagram of you two?"

"Shut up." Is all Shane can say to that, because he didn't even know the answer to what Ilya was asking. Was it seeing Ilya in a tailored suit? Was it seeing him surrounded by all these fancy cars... his natural habitat? Was it the fact Ilya could tell you everything about every car here? Would Ilya feel the same if he saw Shane in the museum? If Shane was being honest it was probably because he hadn't seen Ilya in a while, and seeing him now was kind of short-circuiting his brain.

"Matt was smart to make you not see me anymore, I don't think you would have been able to control yourself anymore, you almost didn't on Halloween."

"You were dressed as a gladiator."

"That has really made an impression on you, do you think about it a lot?" Ilya leans in to whisper into his ear.

"No." Shane shakes his head.

"Liar," He whispers, and then pulls away "I would love to chat more Shane but I have job to do. I will see you at Scott and Kip's engagement party, yes?"

"You're going to that?"

"They are my best friends, why would I not?"

"Right... yeah well Matt and I are going so, yeah you will see me there."

"I might dress up." Ilya winks and turns away.

Jesus, what was Shane doing? He had walked into Ilya's place of work and any semblance of sanity had not made it through the door with him apparently. This was bad, and a good boyfriend would mention the interaction to Matt, with some details omitted of course, but

clearly Shane wasn't a good boyfriend, clearly he was a very very bad boyfriend. What would he even say— *'yeah so I did see Ilya and funny story... you're gonna laugh... I actually flirted with him by accident! Yeah the thing that almost ended our relationship... I did it AGAIN!'*? Was this cheating? Shane didn't even know anymore, at this point that word has lost all meaning. Shane was very clearly unable to control himself around Ilya and any normal person would admit that to their boyfriend, apologise and voluntarily not go to the party he *knew* Ilya would be at. That was the right thing to do, that was the mature, responsible thing to do. Tell Matt, promise it won't happen again, and celebrate Scott and Kip's engagement with them separately; maybe with a nice dinner.

Walking into Scott and Kip's house again, after the disaster that was Halloween, was nerve-racking to say the least. Shane had already apologised to them after his shocking performance, but they had assured him that he had nothing to apologise for. He still felt bad though. And maybe embarrassed.

They had arrived to the party late because of course they did. Only part of that was singularly Matt's fault though because Shane had also been kind of freaking out about seeing Ilya again. Shane thought that Matt would have been just as worried, but he wasn't... for some reason? Shane still hadn't figured out why yet, maybe he was completely over The Situation. Maybe it was because when Matt had asked how car shopping had gone, Shane had lied through his teeth and now he felt comfortable with the two of them being in the same room again.

Shane was actually going to hell.

"Congratulations!" Shane and Matt both yelled when Kip opened the door. "Let me see!" Shane adds and Kip lifts his left hand quickly with a big grin.

"It's beautiful, I want one like that." Shane winks to Matt.

"Dually noted." Matt rolls his eyes playfully.

They make it inside, and even manage to sit down with everyone else without incident. Shane was sure that Matt, and pretty much everyone in their circle, was waiting with baited breath to see how both Shane and Ilya were going to play this. But if Shane was being honest, he didn't even know how he was going to play it, and he couldn't guess what was going on inside Ilya's head on a good day, so only God knows how *he's* going to play it. Shane congratulates Scott when he joins them who greets him with a big smile. Shane couldn't be happier for both of them, they are the most compatible and loving couple he could think of.

"Were you nervous?" He asks Scott who chuckles,

"I was shaking," he confirms. "I knew he was going to say yes, but he was silent for like a second too long and it freaked me out."

“I was overwhelmed! And there were so many fireworks.” Kip interjects, a silly smile on his face, as if the concept of him saying no to Scott asking him to marry him was the most ridiculous concept in the world. Which, it kind of was.

Shane hadn’t made eye contact with Ilya yet, he had to psych himself up for it first, however Matt was chatting to him like they hadn’t ever been apart, like Ilya still lived with him. Like it was *before*. Shane felt bad about it, because well, it was still the same. He could at least admit that clearly whatever was happening with him and Ilya had not gone away over the couple of months they hadn’t seen each other. A good person would probably tell Matt that. The worst part was, he wasn’t even drinking tonight, literally just ginger ale. All of these thoughts were completely sober Shane talking.

He doesn't talk to Ilya for at least another hour, he converses with just about everyone but him; he’s even chatting to one of Scott’s co-workers about how the Montreal finance sector is going to rival Wall Street at some point soon. He knows nothing about finance and even he highly doubts that. But the conversation was a good distraction.

He couldn’t avoid Ilya all night it turns out, and eventually he saunters over to Jackie and Shane while they’re in the kitchen.

“Hello guys, are we making ginger ale’s on rocks?” He smiles.

“Sounds delicious,” Jackie chuckles. “Oh the baby’s woke up, let me go find Hayden.”

“How do you know she’s awake? She’s still inside of you.” Shane asks.

“Shes kicking me.” Jackie says, grabbing Shane's hand and putting it to her belly “See?”

“Oh ew that feels weird.” Shane says when he takes his hand off.

“Well Hayden made me promise I’d find him every time she kicks, so farewell.” She smiles. And then they’re left alone. Ilya is smirking like he already knew this was going to happen, like he had fucking prophesied the whole thing.

“We are alone, someone should tell Matt.” Ilya smirks.

“Shut up.”

“Ahh, I think you like when I talk,” Ilya shakes his head. “You were saying a lot of stuff the other day.”

“Was I? I don’t remember.” Shane lies.

“I will remind you,” Ilya smiles, *of course he will*. “Something about how my costume on Halloween got you going, Matt didn’t give you time to think about stuff and you were upset that I used past tense when I said I was attracted to you.”

“Okay! I get the point.” Shane whisper-yells.

“Do you want to know a secret?” Ilya asks, moving closer to Shane.

“What?” Shane breathes out. God this man is some kind of fucking sex sourcer or something, how does he do this?

“I am still *very* attracted to you,” He whispers into Shane ear “And I could still fuck you better than Matt could.”

“Doubt it.” Shane tries to deadpan his voice, but that seems to be impossible when Ilya is this close to him.

“You are the worst liar I have ever met.” Ilya chuckles, pulling back from Shane's ear. Shane wants to grab him, pull him back, and tell him to describe all the ways he could fuck him better than Matt ever could.

“Tell me what you want from me Shane.”

“I don’t... I don’t know. You confuse me.” Shane admits.

“And you confuse me so now we are even,” Ilya says, “I think you want me but I think you are scared to hurt Matt, you are scared that I am asshole and I will just fuck you one time and never again, but is not what I want.”

This whole thing is exhausting Shane. Part of him wants Matt to walk in on them, see how close they are and freak out so the decision is made *for* him. Part of him wants this whole thing to have never happened in the first place, and part of him really *really* wants to fuck Ilya; as soon as possible preferably.

“I want to kiss you.” Shane says and Ilya smirks.

“So do it, maybe Matt will see and the choice is simple because he will leave you and then I can have you.”

And may God strike him down if he’s lying, but Shane has fucking tried. He has tried to fight this, he has tried to be a good boyfriend, he has tried to turn the feelings off – he has *fucking tried* goddamn it. It’s all for nothing though because it is physically impossible to resist Ilya Rozanov. Like Shane said, he is clearly some kind of sex sorcerer. So, against his better judgement and momentarily forgetting who this *Matt* Ilya speaks of even is, Shane leans in.

The kiss is frenzied, it quick and, *fuck* – Shane should have broken up with Matt months ago. Ilya has pinned Shane to the kitchen island with his thigh in between Shane’s leg, one of Ilya’s hands is on his ass, and his thigh is adding a pressure to Shane’s crotch he is vaguely convinced he might be able to cum from this alone. Ilya is moaning into Shane’s mouth and Shane cannot bring himself to even give half of a shit about his boyfriend right now. Ilya is kissing Shane like he's the only person in the world that matters and Shane is half convinced that Ilya *is* the only person in the world that matters.

Ilya is the first to pull away, he smirks at Shane and gives his ass a light slap before speaking,

“You have decision to make.”

“My mind is kind of... I can’t think right now, I feel drunk.” Shane says.

“Ah,” Ilya nods, “you feel floaty. You are easy to put down, but I already thought you might be.”

“Matt is going to hate me.” Shane says quietly, looking up at Ilya with wet eyes. Ilya’s eyes soften and he pulls Shane into a hug and kisses the top of his head.

“Is okay,” He says “will all be okay.”

Shane thinks that it was probably best that he find someone he could trust before he tells Matt what he’s done. Because he will have to tell Matt at some point tonight, but he maybe needed to test the water on someone else first, to kind of plan out what he was going to say.

“Kip, I need to talk to you.” Shane says quickly, pulling Kip away from the conversation he was having “Sorry I hope that wasn’t an important conversation.” He adds while dragging Kip lightly by the arm around his own house.

“Just Scott’s assistant, it’s fine.” Kip brushes off.

He and Kip find themselves in the laundry room of the house, Kip is staring at Shane expectantly and Shane realises he actually has no idea what he’s going to say or how he’s going to explain himself.

“Okay I want to start this by saying that I believe your house has bad energy as every time I am in it I clearly forget myself,” Shane starts and Kip laughs, throwing his head back and placing the drink he was holding in his hand down on the counter.

“What did you do this time?”

“Something bad, something *very* bad.” Shane runs his hands down his face.

“Did you suck Ilya off in the bathroom or something?”

“Uh...”

“Oh my god! Did you actually? Scott is gonna love this—” Kip starts, his smile wide, Shane guesses he’s about 10 seconds away from clapping his hands together.

“No! No, No, No nothing like that,” Shane shakes his head quickly “Well... kind of something like that, we kissed.”

“When! Where? How—”

“Kip calm down,” Shane places his hands on Kip’s shoulders “It was just then, about 5 minutes ago, in the kitchen.”

“Oh my god finally! I mean like, that sucks for Matt, but we’ve all agreed in the event of a divorce we wanna keep you and Ilya,” Kips says “Obviously if possible we wanna keep all three of you, but if we *had* to lose someone... Matt has unfortunately been voted off the island.”

“When was this agreed?”

“When *The Situation* happened, we all spoke about it in a separate group chat we made without you, Matt and Ilya.” Kip gets out his phone to show Shane and sure enough, there is a group chat with many *many* messages about The Situation.

They all seem to be mostly Scott defending Ilya, Kip and Aliyah pointing out that they get the impression that Matt doesn't seem to take a genuine interest in Shane's life or the things he likes, which yeah, Shane has kind of noticed too. He's noticed the way he introduces Shane to people with 'he works in the museum' and very little other information, kind of like he doesn't really know what Shane's job actually is. Shane has noticed that he warns people when they actually do ask what he does, or if they already know and they ask him a question about it, that they shouldn't ask him 'stuff about the olden times because he never shuts up'. He has noticed that Matt hates going to art shows, that he makes fun of Shane for not really drinking alcohol. It's funny because Shane could tell you the names of the people who Matt sees most in an average work day; his boss Andrew, his assistant Julia, Max and Mike who share offices either side of him. He knows when Matt has a presentation the next day and he will know what it's about. But gun to Matt's head – He couldn't even tell you what Shane's job *is*.

And it hits Shane all of a sudden that he's been lying to himself about his relationship with Matt for months – it wasn't the honeymoon period ending, it wasn't them falling into routine, it wasn't that the sex was kind of boring, it wasn't familiarity... he just didn't like Matt that much. They just weren't that compatible.

“I should find Matt,” Shane nods “I'm sorry this is happening in your house... again”

“Baby I'd be mad if it wasn't happening in my house.” Kip smiles.

Shane finds Matt sat on the kitchen island, he's talking to Carter and Aliyah while Carter is making three drinks,

“Hey babe, where did you get to?” Matt asks.

“Had a conversation with Kip, we need to talk.” Shane says. *Well no time like the present.*

“Oh this sounds serious...” Matt says as he slides off of the island, reaching for Shane's hand.

“Yeah, kinda, can we go outside please?” Shane asks, leading Matt to the back door anyway.

“What's up?” Matt says as soon as they are outside.

“What's my job?” Shane looks Matt in the eyes. He seems confused, which, yeah. Not the way Shane had wanted to start this conversation, but it was kind of the thing that was at the forefront of his mind.

“What?” Matt asks, his head cocked to the side slightly.

“What is my job? What do I do for a living?”

“You work at the museum?”

“Doing what? What do I do at the museum?”

“Shane, why are... is this what you wanted to talk about?”

“You don’t know, do you? You have no idea what your own boyfriend does every single day, that’s a problem Matt.”

“Okay,” Matt runs his hands down his face “Okay, no, I don’t really understand what your job is, I’m sorry. I should pay more attention to that, but when you talk about it you use words like... you use long words in different languages that I don’t understand and I kind of turn off.”

“Do you think I know what the fuck an SLA is? You have been talking about them for a year and I still have no idea what it is, but I listen. You hate them, whatever they are.”

“Shane, what are you trying to say?”

“That we are different people, we aren’t compatible, and I think you know that, I think we both know that and we have been pretending not to see it.”

“Shane—”

“And I have something else I need to tell you,” Shane takes a breath. *Time for the motherlode*. Fuck Matt was actually going to hate him. “I want to firstly say that it seems like this was planned, and believe me, it wasn’t—”

“What have you done?” Matt interrupts him.

“Huh?”

“With *him*. What have you done? Did you fuck him in the bathroom or something? The first fucking time you see each other after months of no contact and you just fucking fold like a cheap card table, am I on the right lines?” Matt spits.

“We kissed.”

“Right, okay.” Is all Matt says before he’s walking back into the house. Shane chases after him,

“Matt! Stop!” He yells, but Matt isn’t listening to him. He clearly has a goal in mind, and Shane asking him to slow down was not going to help.

“You fucking *asshole*!” Matt yells at Ilya.

“What did I just say?” Ilya yells to Scott and Carter, he stands up from where he was sitting on the couch between the pair to meet Matt halfway, “I knew he would put blame on just me!”

“You’ve got into his fucking head, he’s convinced I don’t care about him now! Does it fuck you up that much that I have something you don’t?”

“He is not a *thing* Matt! He is person, and if *he* thinks you do not care about him, how is that *my* fault!” Ilya yells “Tell him truth Shane! Tell him that you leaned in to kiss me first!”

“I didn’t blame you at all!” Shane defends.

“Guys not that this isn’t entertaining, because it is, but can you take it outside cause my boss is here.” Scott says from the couch.

“If I take it outside I’m gonna fucking hit him.” Matt says.

“No you’re not! No one is hitting anyone!” Shane tries to yell but his voice cracks, his throat is scratchy and he knows he’s on the verge of crying. He could already be crying for all he knew, this wasn’t how this was supposed to go. He wasn’t even sure how he wanted it to go at all, but Ilya and Matt physically fighting about it definitely wasn’t how it was supposed to go.

“He is blaming me for his own boyfriend wanting to fuck me! Maybe if you did better job his eyes would not be wandering.”

“Out.Side.Please!” Scott yells “There are delicacies in this living room that Kip would kill both of you for breaking.” Scott and Carter both stand up, Scott grabs Ilya and Carter grabs Matt and the pair of them remove both men from the living room, leaving Shane stood there wide eyed.

“Come here,” Aliyah grabs his hand, pulling him down gently to sit. “Don’t worry they’ll talk it out and everything will be fine.” She smiles, rubbing his back.

“I’ve fucked everything up, everyone is going to hate me.” Shane says.

“No one hates you babe, absolutely no one.” Aliyah reassures.

Scott and Carter come back in a while later, if Shane had to guess, he’d say they were outside for about an hour. Scott is the first one to speak,

“He uh, wants to see you,” He says “Kip said you worry sometimes, that maybe we’ll blame all of this on you and not like you anymore, but we don’t. It’s no one’s fault, sometimes shit happens.”

“I’m sorry.” Is all Shane can say. What the fuck else is he supposed to do? More importantly, why does Matt want to see him after all of this?

“Nothing to be sorry for buddy,” Carter smiles and pats Shane on the back “He’s out the front, just hear him out.”

“Lord knows I don’t wanna hear about it anymore.” Scott laughs.

It's not Matt that wants to see him, it turns out. It's Ilya, he's sat on the front steps, he's holding his shirt to his nose and Shane's brain can supply the context. Someone did hit someone after all.

"He got one good hit." Ilya says.

"Let me see," She sits down next to him. Ilya removes his now blood stained shirt, his nose is already swollen, the blood mostly seems to have stopped but it's still kind of wet and it's also kind of all over the bottom of Ilya's face. It's also kind of hot, but that is immoral and Shane should not be thinking that. "Oh Ilya..." Shane kisses his teeth, "Looks painful."

"Is worth it, he was being a child," Ilya waves off "I said mean things probably so he could be mad at me and not you."

"What did he say?"

"That I made you think he was not... um... interest-ed in your job or you as person, that I was probably texting you this whole time, we both lied on Halloween and we had already had sex... he was spiralling it was a little funny."

"So what the fuck do we do now?" Shane says.

"Scott said that in divorce they want to keep me and you so I think we can do what we want now." Ilya nods, Shane chuckles,

"Kip said the same thing, you know they have a group chat without us in it?"

"Yes! This is *rude* and we must be invited in to it!" Ilya says with a smile.

Shane looks at him and dear god he is beautiful. Shane had kind of forgotten just how beautiful Ilya was, his very strong jaw, his curls that seemed to always fall just perfectly (even after he had been in a fist fight), his eyes that almost seemed to sparkle whenever he was happy, his bare chest that had imprinted itself onto Shane's brain the second he met Ilya. He was absolutely fucking beautiful.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Ilya asks.

"You're just really beautiful, it's kind of crazy you're into me enough to want to get your nose broken over it."

"I have never wanted anybody the way I want you, Shane."

"Do you promise?"

"I promise," Ilya nods "Give me kiss." Ilya pouted his lips out.

"You're covered in blood..." Shane pointed out, scrunching up his nose.

"Yes, so you kiss better for me." Ilya grins and Shane rolls his eyes and gives Ilya a peck regardless.

From that point on the pair of them are absolutely relentless – like seriously... they could not stop fucking.

“You look good in my bed.” Shane says from the doorway, he’s dressed in one of Ilya’s black t-shirts, it was a little old and worn out so the neckline was exposing Shane's collar bones, and the hickeys that punctuated both of them. Like he said – relentless. Ilya is spread out lazily, his hands behind his head and his boxers are hanging low on his hips, Shane can see his bulge and it's kind of making his mouth water. The idea that he is doing this to Ilya by literally just existing is, quite frankly, enough to make Shane cum on the spot. Ilya pats next to him on the bed, like he's inviting Shane onto his own bed, it makes Shane chuckle slightly. At this point whatever Shane owns is half Ilya’s anyway, and has been since the day he swung that apartment door open. When he stood there popping his gum in Shane’s face, his chest bare, Shane was gone. He can admit that now. Ilya had entered his bloodstream that day and it was stupid to try and fight it, Ilya had taken over his entire mind, body and soul, had etched himself permanently on to Shane. Every breath he took since that day in August was half Ilya’s.

Shane crawls onto the bed, stopping when he's level with Ilya’s chest, peppering kisses all over it like he's marking his territory.

“You are perfect,” Ilya breathes, guiding Shane’s face up to his own and placing a messy, open mouthed kiss onto Shane's lips. Shane bites Ilya’s lip which releases a sound akin to a growl out of Ilya and not even a second later Shane is flipped onto his back and Ilya is staring down at Shane like he is his favourite meal. Which he *is* actually. “But now unfortunately I have to ruin you.” He fake pouts.

“You can try.” Shane squirms from underneath Ilya, desperately trying to get some friction on his achingly hard cock. Ilya stills him though, seeing right through what Shane was doing.

“You take what I give you, yes? That is how this works, Shane.”

“Then fuck me and I wont have to try and take what I want.” Shane rolls his eyes, to which Ilya raises his hands, as if to ask for permission. Shane gives him a wicked smile, the kind of smile that would make Ilya give him whatever he wanted, and nodded. Shane’s cheek stings so good he almost asks Ilya to do it again, and then he realises he doesn't have to do that. “No wonder Matt broke your nose if that's how you hit.” Ilya smacks him harder this time.

“Brat.” He says before ripping Shane's boxers off.

“Fuck Ilya – fuck right there!” Shane’s moans are choking their way out of his mouth, his legs are already shaking as he fucks himself down on to Ilya hard and unrelenting, Ilya meeting him halfway with thrusts that Shane is fairly certain could break his bones. God it felt so good to be fucked the way he had wanted to be for so long. He’s dripping with sweat, Ilya’s shirt had long been forgotten, his hair is all over the place because of the change in positions and right now he could not think of a place he’d rather be more than on top of Ilya.

“Say my name again, tell everyone in the building who is fucking you like this.” Ilya groans like he's in pain, and *fuck* Shane loves when Ilya begs him to declare that he belongs to him.

“Il-ya” Shane chokes “Ilya fuck – fuck I’m gonna–”

“Say it louder and I might let you cum.” Ilya places his hands on Shane’s hips.

“Ilya! Fuck – *Fuck!*”

“Louder.” Ilya growls “Who’s are you?”

“*Ilya!* I’m yours – I’m yours – Fuck just yours *please!*” Shane begs.

“You can cum.” Ilya says and Shane shoots all over Ilya’s chest untouched. He rides his high out slowly onto Ilya and before long Ilya is stilling and pulsing inside of him.

Ilya collapses on the bed next to Shane nestling his nose into Shane's damp hair whispering the same word over and over: “Mine, mine, mine, *mine...*”

They both become a *little* obsessed with being the only person in each other's lives. It becomes like a game for the two of them, every time they're fucking they compete to see who can get the other devote themselves to the other the most.

“Tell me – *fuck* – tell me I’m the only one who gets to have you like this.” Shane says from on top of Ilya. The sheets are a mess and the room is thick with the smell of sex, it smells of sweat and lust and Ilya’s expensive cologne... and the cherry lube Shane likes.

“Just you Shane, no one else.” Ilya groans squeezing his eyes shut, it's a guttural and curdled groan that sounds like it came straight from his stomach. Almost like he was in pain, which there was a fine line between pleasure and pain – especially when it came to him and Shane.

“Tell me again,” Shane pants “Who fucking owns this cock?”

“Fuck Shane– you do, is yours.” Ilya whines. Shane absolutely loves when Ilya loses it like this.

“Fucking look at me Ilya,” Shane demands, moving his hips in circular motions that was kind of making it hard for Ilya to remember English words. But he *is* looking at Shane, holy shit is he *looking*. This beautiful man on top of him, fucking himself down onto Ilya’s cock like he's going to win a prize for it – all possessive and wild and *completely undone*. Ilya can’t believe there isn't a painting of this exact moment hung up in Shane’s place of work. It’s a fucking travesty as far as Ilya is concerned, why would anyone want to look at anything else? Shane was an absolute work of art. His hair dripping with sweat, his chest glistening and pulsating with how out of breath he was, his lips swollen and red, his eyes filled with tears – Fuck this was the *only* thing Ilya wanted to look at for the rest of his life.

“Tell me that I’m gonna be the last person you ever fuck – the last person who *ever* gets to ride you like this.” Shane whines, needy and desperate.

“The only one I want to be inside of Shane, you are *everything*.” Ilya pants

“Fuck – I’m going – ah fuck Ilya! Fuck, fuck–” Shane waffles a string of profanities as he stills his moments from on top of Ilya.

“Baby I’m going to explode in I guess 30 seconds, so in or on?” Ilya asks

“In, but in my mouth, I wanna taste you.” Shane says breathless, clumsily getting off of Ilya with shaky legs and Ilya slides to the edge of Shane’s bed. Shane (somehow) gets the strength to kneel on the floor in between Ilya’s spread legs. And Ilya wasn’t kidding, it takes Shane holding his tongue out patiently and so beautifully obediently and *maybe* 4 strokes from his own hand for Ilya to cum all over Shane’s tongue and chin. Shane swallows everything he can with a wide smile.

“Is my favourite view in the world when you have your tongue out like that,” Ilya pants throwing himself back onto the bed “Do you need help getting back on bed? Are your legs okay?” Ilya asks, sitting himself up on his elbows momentarily.

“No, I’ll be up there in a second.” Shane says from the floor, his back leaning against the bed.

“Good because I do not think I can move, you have killed me, Hollander.” Ilya chuckles, collapsing onto his back again “I want a cigarette.”

“No smoking! Your disgusting gum is in the nightstand.” Shane says from the floor.

It’s not just in Shane’s apartment either, they are absolutely insatiable pretty much everywhere. Any chance they get to be all over each other, they take it. Take the club for example; What had started as a re-do of Kip and Scott’s engagement celebrations (minus Matt because well... The whole breaking Ilya’s nose thing) in late January had quickly spiralled into Shane sucking Ilya off in a fire exit hallway.

Shane had done it on purpose if he was being honest. The fact that Ilya had awoken this bratty side of him, the side of him that always wanted to push Ilya to breaking point just so he would take it out on him later, was exhilarating to Shane. He had opened Pandora’s box and so really, Shane wasn’t to blame – Ilya was. Ilya and his sex sorcery.

Shane was dancing with Aliyah in front of the VIP booth that Scott had booked for everyone when a tall, clean-cut looking guy had approached him, clad in just a white shirt and black slacks. Before he had met Ilya, this guy would have been his type. He looked like he worked in finance and went skiing in the winter with his family. But he *had* met Ilya now, and he couldn’t actually look at another person in that way ever again. Men almost kind of repulsed him now.

“Hey, sorry, I saw you dancing from my booth over there and had to come and talk to you, you are the most beautiful person I think I’ve ever seen.” The guy had said. Shane knew Ilya was watching, he had been before the guy had even approached Shane, both him and Carter and Shane guesses they were probably gushing to each other about him and Aliyah.

“Uh, thank you, that's very kind, but I’ve got a boyfriend.” Shane says.

“Funny, I don't see him anywhere.” The guy smirks. Shane chuckles and points at Ilya who has now sat forward in the booth watching the two of them intensely.

“Ahh,” The guy says

“Yeah and he *will* kick your ass if we continue this conversation, but thank you for the complement anyway.”

“Can I at least buy you a drink for being so beautiful?” The guy asks.

“Doubt he’ll let me take it, but you can try.” Shane chuckles.

The chuckling is clearly *enough* for Ilya, who is now making a b-line for Shane and unnamed guy.

“Hello, can we help you?” Ilya asks from behind Shane, he had his arms wrapped around his waist and his head was resting on Shane’s shoulder.

“Sorry man, was just offering a free drink to your boy, don’t worry he told me he was yours.”

“We do not take drinks from strangers, is dangerous,” Ilya gives a tight lipped smile “I pay for his drinks so every drink is free to him. Bye bye.” Ilya waves off, turning Shane around by his belt loops.

“You were acting like that on purpose. I know how you are.” Ilya stated.

“Acting like what? The guy called me pretty and I thanked him.” Shane feigned ignorance.

“What else did he say?” Ilya asks.

“Oh y’know, the usual, could he buy me a drink, could he have my number, could he fuck me in the bathroom.” Shane smirked.

“You are being a brat.” Ilya tutted.

“Oh yeah? So what if I am?”

“Okay, come with me,” Ilya states, taking Shane’s arm.

“Where are you two off?” Kip asks.

“We will be back in second – Shane is being a brat.” Ilya smiles quickly before pulling Shane off to a corner of the club, he presses the fire door exit open and gestures for Shane to go into

the hallway.

“Get on your knees.” Ilya states the second the door is closed.

“Why don't you get on your knees?” Shane quips.

“Because is what you want, and we are not doing what you want tonight, we are doing what I want.”

“Maybe—”

“I did not say talk, I said get on your knees.” Ilya strokes Shane’s hair, and that's all it takes really. What Ilya said at Scott and Kip's original engagement party about him being easy to put down was the complete truth, all it usually took was a gentle caress from Ilya and his mind started to feel floaty and he forgot about everything that wasn't Ilya and the weight of Ilya’s cock on his tongue.

So Shane sank to his knees in this club’s fire exit, the concrete floor was not going to be kind to his knees but he kind of liked being reminded the day after. He pulled Ilya’s pants down, nuzzling Ilya’s bulge in his briefs.

“If this was what you wanted you only had to ask,” Ilya purred as he interwove his fingers through Shane’s hair, pulling him back roughly making Shane whine at the loss of contact to Ilya’s cock. “You do not have to be a brat to get what you want.” He says

“You like when I’m a brat.” Shane protested with hooded eyes.

“I also like when you use your pretty mouth the way it was supposed to be used, so *suck*. We have to get back to our friends soon.” Ilya reminds him, taking his cock out from his briefs presenting his now fully hard cock to Shane.

Shane places one hand on the base of Ilya’s cock and the other snakes round to grip Ilya’s ass firmly. He rotates his hand while sucking just past the tip into his mouth and swirling his tongue around in the way he knows drives Ilya crazy. Then he sucks most of what he can manage of Ilya’s, quite frankly, huge dick into his mouth, bobbing his head like he’s getting paid for it.

“Good boy – fuck Shane – so good at this.” Ilya babbles from above him, Shane can only look up at him through his wet eyelashes, a sight that makes Ilya throw his head back. “I used to dream of having you like this.” Ilya moans. Shane removed his hand from the base of Ilya’s cock placing it on his thigh instead and takes Ilya right down to the base, the sounds are... pornographic. That's the only word Shane can think of. He’s gagging and its wet and messy and – fuck Shane is leaking in his pants.

“Fuck Shane you are taking me so well – So good for me,” Ilya’s accent is getting thicker, which Shane knows means hes close, he’ll start speaking Russian soon and thats basically Shane’s warning that its either down your throat or you get off right now. “Fuck my good boy – all mine ... *moj sladkiy mal'chik*.” There’s the Russian. Shane pulls off slightly, his hand

finding Ilya's balls, tugging lightly and rolling them like he's trying to genuinely milk the cum out of Ilya... which he is, really. Ilya cums down Shane's with a stifled moan.

Like Shane said –relentless and insatiable.

By the time spring was coming to an end and summer was on the horizon, Ilya had opened up to Shane about what his life was like in Russia. He had told Shane that his mom had died when he was 12, that father was sick and also probably going to die soon, and that the idea of his dad dying didn't really upset him as much as it should. He had some trouble trying to explain it properly in english but Shane was patient – and also learning Russian so that kind of helped too. He had learned that Ilya's father wasn't very kind to him (or his mother) when he was growing up, and so he had mixed feelings about his dad's health.

“In some ways is better, I like talking to him more when he is confused, he does not remind me so much that he is disappointed I never played for KHL, or that I moved to Canada, or that I am not cop like him and my brother.” He had said.

Shane understood, well maybe he didn't understand everything, but he understood that Ilya must have conflicting feelings about his father's health and his life in Russia. He promised he would be there for Ilya whenever he wanted to talk about it, and made sure he knew that he was always welcome at Shane's apartment if he decided that he didn't want to go back to Russia in the summer. Shane thought Russia sounded horrible, at least the way Ilya described it.

So when Grigori Rozanov died in May, Shane wasn't surprised that Ilya didn't cry much, or that he had only returned to Russia for a couple of days just for the funeral.

So that summer, for the first time since living in Canada, Ilya gets to experience a famous Canadian summer. Shane can't recall ever meeting anyone who was so excited to see 27°C in his life. It was unbelievably cute. Every weekend Ilya was certain they had to go to the park to 'absorb the sun before winter gets us'.

He was holding Ilya's hand as they walked to said park (for the second weekend in a row) to meet their friends, Ilya swinging their intertwined hands between them.

“Fuck Rozy this is the first summer we've seen you in years.” Carter chuckles as Ilya and Shane make their way to the group.

“The evil man is dead, I do not have to go back.” Ilya smiles, sitting down, “Give me baby.” He says to Jackie who smiles and hands Jade over “Is your favourite uncle, hello beautiful.” Ilya coos at the small child in a pastel yellow sundress.

“We are having 20.” He looks at Shane who rolls his eyes,

“We are not having 20 kids Ils.”

“Yes, I will get you pregnant 18 times, is happening.” Ilya nods with finality.

“Why 18?” Hayden says at the same time Scott says “That math is not right brother.”

“We have two sets of twins, one is two girls and one is a girl and a boy.”

“No,” Shane shakes his head. “I am not pushing out 20 children.”

“Why was the maths the thing you two corrected and not the whole male pregnancy thing.” Aliyah asks inside of Carter's crossed legs.

“If anyone is going to discover male pregnancy its those two,” Scott says “they fuck enough I’m convinced that's what they’re trying to do.”

“Yes and is because I want 20 of these little things.” Ilya holds Jade up to emphasize his point.

“I thought you wanted like 8 dogs as well.” Shane points out and Ilya rolls his eyes, blows a raspberry at Shane and to complete the ‘get under shane’s skin’ holy trinity, pops his stupid gum in Shane’s face before speaking,

“Yes we will have 8 dogs *and* 20 children, what is so hard to understand?”

“Right okay, sorry.” Shane relents, a smile on his face, because while that is quite literally *never fucking happening*, the fact that Ilya thinks of Shane when he imagines his future family – his future kids, still makes Shane giddy.

“You two are so married already it kind of makes me feel sick.” Hayden says.

“I’ll second that.” Scott nods.

“Where is Sinclair?” Ilya asks passing Jade back to Jackie (reluctantly).

“Late as usual, I’m not waiting for him anymore, get up boys.” Carter says rolling the soccer ball that was next to him into the middle of the circle and tapping Aliyah as a signal for her to get up. Scott, Hayden, Ilya and Carter pull their shirts off and move to the side to play their game of soccer.

“What a fucking view.” Shane whistles.

“The jogging moms also agree.” Aliyah points to a group of women who *were* jogging but have now become stationary.

Shane leans back on his elbows, watching his boyfriend play soccer, his skin already glistening from the sun, his curls bouncing every time he ran for the ball, the sunglasses still perched on his face – he would be hard-pressed to find a better way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

Matt arrives an hour later, hand-in-hand with Max from the office. Shane had met Max in passing once when Matt had forced him to go to a company retirement party for Matt’s old

boss, and again a couple of weeks ago when Matt introduced him to the group as his boyfriend. Shane had expected it to be awkward, but it wasn't really. Mostly because, while he was rather possessive, Ilya was a very secure man, and so there wasn't a set of eyes on him whenever he looked at Matt, and also because Shane had made peace with the fact that he and Matt were just never going to work out anyway. It was obvious now, with hindsight, that the second your eyes start to wonder in a relationship, it was over, there was no going back from that.

That was probably the biggest difference between his relationship with Ilya – he could never imagine his eyes wandering at all. Ilya was everything Shane had been looking for since he started dating, he was everything Shane imagined his future husband to be when he was little. Ilya was it for Shane, he was certain of that.

## End Notes

Translation for the Russian: moy sladkiy mal'chik - My sweet boy (according to google lol)  
Thank you so much for reading 22k words of Hollanov yearning, I love them so very dearly.  
Also this fic was kind of inspired by Ilya wearing the gladiator costume in TLG and me  
pondering about what if Shane was an Ancient Greece(and Rome) gay and how he would  
absolutely lose his damn mind because of it.

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