

The Promise

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The Promise

by [WOLFSONG](#)

Summary

“Ilya, can I ask you something?”

“You have been asking things all week, Shane.”

“Have you ever thought about running away?”

—

At the cottage, Shane tells Ilya something distressing. Years later, when Hayden’s FanMail video leaks, a promise made there is tested.

Notes

Bear with me while I fight the wifi at my house while posting this.

Anyway,

This came to me in a dream and then a long think on one of my days off from work. Now that a lot of my previous projects are done, I have finally been able to focus on this over the past few days.

Content warnings: discussion of running away, depiction of an autistic meltdown and panic attacks.

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

Years ago, at the cottage...

"Ilya, can I ask you something?"

"You have been asking things all week, Shane." He said it in a warm tone, one that seemingly invited more.

The two of them were lounging in bed, getting a later start to their morning. They hadn't even gone to make coffee. They were just there, under the sheets, not quite tangled together, but not quite separated either. Their arms had loosely wrapped around one another's bodies. The sun cast half light and half shadow onto them with the blinds.

Ilya still couldn't believe he was here. He couldn't believe that this giant house was called a cottage. He couldn't believe that he had met and been accepted by Shane's parents. He couldn't believe that he and Shane were boyfriends now.

It was all so surreal and bright.

That's why he almost couldn't believe the seriousness, the sadness, and the strain in his boyfriend's voice.

"Have you ever thought about running away?" Shane inquired. It was asked as though this was a casual conversation. And, until right now, it was.

Ilya blinked a few times and shrugged, trying not to show how shocked he was by the question.

Still, he supposed he had an answer. "Is what I am doing, have done. Use hockey to get away from my father, from Russia." He wasn't sure he liked where this was going, but he made sure to keep his voice even.

"Right..." His lips pursed. "But technically people still know where you are, vaguely. You're famous."

"Mm, okay, good point." Ilya sighed. Then, he showed an almost reluctant smile. "Okay then, have *you* thought about running away?"

"Eh," Shane answered as he readjusted how he sat. "I have the urge to, sometimes, when the pressure and stress from all the brand deals, meetings with the media, and the fucking hockey politics, get too much and I just want a break..." his shoulders rose for a few seconds before quickly falling back down with a sigh. "Sometimes, I just want to go somewhere nobody can reach me, for a while. And, honestly, if I didn't have this place, I'd probably be somewhere else entirely, not just physically, but with my life, too."

The man beside him gave a hum and inquired, "Where would you have gone?"

“I don’t know.” He frowned. “Doesn’t have to be somewhere special, just... someplace nobody knew me. Probably not a big city, there’s a higher chance of me getting recognized there-“

“Oh, of course.”

It was only now that Ilya realized the distant look in his boyfriend’s eyes.

“I looked up bus tickets, once,” Shane disclosed. “I was...” his brows scrunched for a moment. “...sixteen? I even made it all the way down to the station, but then I spent hours trying to decide the destination. I got so overwhelmed that I just ended up going back home.”

Ilya’s lips pressed into a thin line. “Poor you.”

“Shut up,” Shane retorted.

“Okay, then,” he allowed. “What would you have done? You say you’d be somewhere else in your life. What does that mean?”

His boyfriend’s eyes darted around and his brows knitted together.

“It means that my life might not even revolve around hockey.” Shane said it shyly, almost as though he was unsure.

Ilya’s brows raised. “Shane Hollander doing something other than hockey?”

Now this was really concerning. Hockey is everything to this man. It would be a very sad world, Ilya knew, if Shane wasn’t at least somewhat involved in hockey.

“I mean, I’d probably see if I could coach some little league or school hockey team. I don’t know...” Shane’s lips pursed as he paused his explanation. “But if not that... I’d still figure it out. It would suck and I’d be sad for months, but I’d make my way eventually.”

Ilya hummed. His hand cupped Shane’s cheek and his thumb gently stroked the skin.

“What made you look at tickets and go to a station at sixteen?” He inquired. “That would have been a year or two before we met, yes?”

“A lot of things...” he trailed off, glancing away. He took his boyfriend’s hand off of his cheek before going quiet.

Watching this happen, Ilya frowned, and shifted closer, saying, “Lyubimyy.” It was said with caution, worry and apprehension.

Hollander blinked and his eyes refocused on his boyfriend. He smiled.

“What’s *that* mean?” Shane asked.

Ilya searched his face for a moment before relenting. “Is pet name. Like, eh, darling, beloved or favorite.”

Hearing that, his smile grew wider.

“I’m your favorite?” He guessed.

“Maybe,” Ilya replied, giving him a brief smile of his own. “Answer question please. What made you want to run?”

His boyfriend’s lips slowly uncurled as he tightly grasped the hand that used to hold his cheek.

“You’re scared I’ll run again?” Shane asked.

“I think people who have wanted to run before sometimes want to run again.”

Ilya’s mother had wanted to, sometimes, before she chose a different route. He had discovered her abandoned plans in a notebook just like he had discovered her body.

But, this man was not his mother, Ilya had to remind himself. He was here. He was talking to him.

“I told you,” Shane said as he sat up, gesturing around them. “I have this place. If anything happened, I’d just come here.”

Ilya followed, lifting his upper body off the bed as he asked, “And what if whatever happened was too large for this place? What if you came here but still felt trapped so you moved on?” Then, he hesitated before adding, “Or what if you never made it here?”

The man frowned then. His eyes became glossy and Ilya could tell by the way the irises moved, Shane’s mind was working overtime.

“Would you tell me at least?” Ilya asked as he tentatively reached out, lightly grasping Shane’s shoulder. “When you’re going? Or where you’ve gone once you’re there?”

Shane stared into his eyes, shifting between focusing on the right one and the left one. He took in a breath and left his mouth open. Any words he might have said died there. So, he swallowed.

Then, he said, “Of course I would.” One of his hands reached up and took hold of Ilya’s. “I promise.”

Shane blinked and the tears started flowing freely.

“You mean that?” Ilya asked.

“I do,” he said with an almost shaky voice. “I swear I do.” He gave his boyfriend’s hand a squeeze. “I will tell you.”

“Because you know how dangerous that could be. What if you got hurt or worse and no one could help you because we didn’t know where you were?”

“I know,” Shane said, voice tight. “I know.”

Rozanov took to studying him again before eventually saying, “Okay, moy lyubimyy.” He leaned forward and gave him a quick peck before fully enclosing him in a tight embrace. “Okay.”

His boyfriend’s breathing was shaky now.

“I’m sorry,” he said, beginning to sob.

All Ilya wanted to right then was scoop him up and keep tucked beneath his ribs.

“No, Shane, hey,” Ilya cooed. “It’s alright, moy lyubov. No sorries.” He kept one arm tightly wound around him. The other moved so his fingers could soothe as they ran through his boyfriend’s hair.

“I ruined our morning.” Shane’s voice was barely above a whisper.

“No. Is still a perfectly good morning. It is.” His hand dropped down to hold his boyfriend’s chin. “Maybe is time for coffee now, yes?”

Hollander didn’t respond. Instead, he swallowed again and made the tiniest nod.

“Okay,” Ilya exhaled and untangled himself. It took all of his willpower to not stay right there with him forever.

The entire time the man spent making coffee, was also spent in emotional distress. He hadn’t even finished making the first one before his thoughts started spiraling.

Shane had just told him that he almost ran away at sixteen. Before they would have even met. There seriously could have been a world without Shane Hollander The Hockey Star in it. If that were reality, Ilya would have been in a very different place right now. He would be in Russia for the summer. He would not have gotten the chance to meet someone who may as well be the love of his life. And, he might have endured it, but he probably would have never truly lived.

Did his parents know? They must, right? There was no way they wouldn’t have noticed his absence.

Ilya’s eyes widened a fraction when he remembered to breathe. He inhaled deeply and shakily sighed. Next, he shook his head, wiping a tear from his cheek.

“Finish the coffees, idiot,” he told himself and got right back to work.

After he returned to the bedroom, sat down, and gave Shane his coffee, it took seven minutes of silence and drinking before either of them spoke again.

“I had gotten into my head that day,” Shane explained, holding his mug close to his mouth. “All the pressure of preparing for the prospect cup while finishing high school, and starting to

understand the expectations I was under... It was a lot. I didn't quite know how to deal with it all."

He frowned and took another sip before continuing, "I don't even remember getting to the station but there were... too many options. Then, I started wondering what the fuck I was actually doing, leaving my home and my family without much of any money, by the way. And, I didn't have much work experience. I had only had, like one job before then, and--"

Shane huffed, then swallowed nothing.

"I was a coward for running, and then a coward for turning back."

"No, Shane-" Ilya began to say, but then got interrupted.

"I was," Shane insisted. "I-" His jaw tightened, then his face softened all together as he studied Ilya's. "And I'm giving you something else to carry, and that isn't fair." He pouted. "Are you okay?" He tapped Ilya's chest. "And don't give me the fake, easy answer."

His head tilted and his lips pursed, but eventually, he said, "Is scary to hear this. I will not lie. But... I am glad you're here, instead of wherever you could have ended up."

His boyfriend said nothing in return. His eyes simply lingered on Ilya's features.

"Shane," he tried again, saying his name in a firmer tone.

His boyfriend's eyes focused again.

"You were sixteen," Ilya continued, placing a hand on Shane's back to soothe him. "You were overwhelmed and you didn't have the tools then that you have now."

His boyfriend's eyes brimmed with tears as he argued, "Still, I--"

"Stop," he pleaded, bringing him closer.

Shane's face was brought to his chest. The hand on his back wrapped around and held on tighter.

Ilya kissed his hair.

"I'm glad you told me," he said. One of his hands moved to card his fingers through his boyfriend's short strands. "Means I can better prepare to help."

He felt tears on his skin. So, Ilya lifted him to better see his face. He gently kissed Shane's tears away, right over his freckles.

"Don't cry, lyubov," Ilya muttered.

Shane's breathing hitched as he bit back a sob.

"I love you," Shane choked out.

“I love you too, malysh,” he said sweetly, leaning in to kiss him properly.

Shane melted into it.

When they broke apart and touched their foreheads together, he promised again, “I *will* tell you.”

“I know.”

Now, in Montreal...

Hayden’s video was everywhere.

His stupid FanMail vid wishing Brad a happy birthday somehow caught Ilya and Shane making out in the background. It was all over the internet by the time Ilya was made aware of it.

And, other than cursing out Hayden Pike, the only other thing he had done all morning was try and get a hold of Shane.

He wasn’t there when Ilya woke up. The man didn’t even feel Shane get up from the bed. He wished he had. Maybe then, Ilya would have been able to stop him. But he hadn’t.

Shane was missing and not answering his phone. He didn’t even take his car, which Ilya couldn’t decide was worse or better. On foot, Shane theoretically couldn’t be far. Yet, he was also more in danger.

It was 8:23 when Ilya finally decided to ask for help. Unfortunately, getting a hold of family and friends had proved useless. Shane’s parents told Ilya that their son wasn’t with them in Ottawa. Jackie, Hayden, and J. J., have all also told him that his fiance wasn’t with them either.

The only thing that made him feel better was that everyone had promised to go out and look for him. Ilya would have gone out as well, if J. J. hadn’t convinced him to stay in case Shane came back.

Ilya then resorted to looking through social media. It was hard to block out all of the posts being made about the video, negative or positive. But if he was out there right now, surely someone could have seen him and posted about it, right?

Yet, as of 9:54, Ilya had nothing.

His fiancée hasn't been seen by a single soul known to Ilya in hours.

Hours.

He hadn't even said goodbye.

"You promised, lyubov," Ilya muttered as he stared at his phone, hoping for any kind of new message or notification. "Come on."

He sat on the couch with tears streaming down his face. Anya, who Ilya was very thankful to have with him, sat in his lap. The dog made a sound and licked his face. It only made the man hold onto her tighter.

There was this numbness inside of Shane, sitting there like a constant ringing in the ears. It started when he woke up much earlier than he normally would have. Shane tried to beat it by finding a different sleeping position, but he couldn't. So, he carefully got out of bed, and put a hoodie on. Then, he took his phone from his nightstand and wandered toward the living room couch.

It was only then that the feeling settled in his chest and his brain. There were so many social media alerts on his phone, all of them mentioning some kind of video involving him, Ilya and Hayden.

Shane wished he had left those notifications be.

Better yet, he wished that this video wasn't leaked at all, or that Hayden had actually checked the background before sending it to 'Brad.' Both happenings gave him this acute anger. Though, of course, if everyone online could stop being so opinionated about his and Ilya's lives, that would be great too.

To process this news, at first, Shane felt like he had to pace. He had gotten up from the couch, lacing his fingers behind his hair as he circled the space. However, the more he thought about it, the worse everything got.

After all, he had completely lost control of the narrative. The world now knew not only that he was gay, but that his boyfriend was Ilya Rozanov. There was no denying it. The two of them and their actions were clear as day.

They were so close. So close. He and Ilya had worked so hard for this plan to work. They had almost gotten to the point where they were safe enough to tell people, and the universe just had to rip that chance away. It was literally one of his worst fucking nightmares.

Their safety nets were gone. They weren't secure. The consequences waiting for them would most likely be dire. Not only that, but this moment would probably completely overshadow anything they do.

After he had that thought, he had to sit down again. Though, of course, he wasn't close to the couch, so he leaned against the wall and slid down to the floor. His mouth released quick, short breaths as his hands moved their way into his hair, pulling at the strands.

His eyes bore holes into the floor.

Oh, god. He was completely unprepared for how his teammates were going to react to this. Not to mention his coach, or even the league in general. He also had no way to know when Russia would start to really become a problem. Granted, Ilya had already begun the process of Canadian Permanent Residency, but there were so many what ifs, Shane didn't want to discount it.

He didn't know what to do. He just wanted it all to stop.

There was pain on his scalp, probably from pulling at his hair.

He remembered that that apartment felt too closed in, that he had to get out.

He remembered to take a jacket. He didn't even check to see if it was one of his or one of Ilya's. He just took it.

Yet, as he stepped outside, even that seemed like too much. The darkness, and even the sounds of the city, down to the buzzing of the nearest street lamp seemed off.

Shane remembered turning back toward his house and just... staring at it. He dug through his pockets only to find an absence of house keys. And, getting back in through the garage would surely wake Anya and Ilya back up. So, he walked to his car, only to find that he couldn't get in. Of course, he had left his car keys inside as well.

There went his shot at driving up to the cottage.

His breathing started to become labored again. He took one look at the house, frowned, and then just started walking.

What he didn't remember, however, was how exactly he got to where he was now. Unfortunately, it wasn't really an area of the city he recognized, even with the sun now fully illuminating his surroundings

Yet, somehow, he was standing right outside of a Tim Hortons. He could get himself a coffee. He probably needed one, if he was being honest. Otherwise, he might crash and end up somewhere dangerous or just in a dangerous situation in general.

But, he wasn't hungry. He barely even felt thirsty. And, he was sure he couldn't quite handle any kind of human interaction at the moment.

So, Shane walked away.

Two blocks later, he found himself in front of Gare d'autocars de Montréal.

Shane made an amused huff and shook his head with a groan. He had found himself in front of a bus station, once again. This had to be some kind of cruel trick on him. It had to be. So much time had passed between that day at sixteen, and now at thirty years old.

How the hell he managed this, he'll never know.

Shane stayed across the street from the building for a long while. He watched varying numbers of people walk in and leave, carrying differing kinds of luggage. Buses came and went as the sun rose higher into the sky.

During that time, Shane thought about crossing the road and entering the building. He could, really. There were probably buses that would still take him up into Lanaudière, to his cottage. If he caught one soon enough, he'd be there by mid afternoon, probably. Or, at least, he'd be as close as he could get without having to call an Uber or a cab to take him the rest of the way.

It was doable, really.

Then, he thought about all the people he would need to interact with and exist around. He would have to buy tickets from them, wait in line with them, sit with them, for hours. So many individual people. How many of them would recognize him? How many would shove insults in his face for loving Ilya Rozanov, enemy of the Montreal Metros? How many would just stare, or whisper? How many would question him?

His stomach twisted.

Maybe the cottage wasn't the answer after all. Or the bus. He had wanted to believe they were, but they weren't. Not in this moment.

Shane checked his phone again. The time read 10:02. And, the number of notifications present had nearly tripled since this morning. Unread texts, missed calls, news, and social media alerts.

For a brief moment, he considered shutting his phone off completely. That would certainly quell the second bout of overwhelm bubbling in his brain. Knots formed in his stomach.

And yet, he forced himself to look at them. Really look. Most of the notifications were from Ilya.

He frowned. His heart started hammering again.

God, his fiancé must be so worried.

One press. That's all it would take and then Ilya would know where he was.

"You promised, Shane," he said to himself, squeezing his eyes shut for a moment.

Why did he have to get up so early? Why did he have to see the state of the internet when he did?

Would Ilya hate him for taking this long? For making a mess of things? Would he still be able to crawl back into his fiancé's arms and stay there?

Before he could entertain those thoughts, Shane pressed on one of Ilya's missed call banners, making his phone call the number back right away. It barely rang once before it was picked up.

"Ilya?" He asked.

"Shane!" His fiancé replied immediately. "Lyubimyy. Where are you? Are you okay?"

"I'm okay," Shane told him. "I'm just right outside a bus station, if you can believe that."

"Don't go in!" Ilya said urgently, a twinge of panic present in his voice.

He could hear various rustling sounds, and Anya barking in the background on top of Ilya muttering in Russian.

"I will come get you, moy lisichka," he continued.

"Little fox?" Shane guessed.

"Da, very good. Which terminal, er, station?"

"Gare d'autocars."

"Got it. I'll see you soon."

"Okay," he said softly, smiling to himself a little. "See you soon."

Shane hung up and put the phone back into his pocket, shoving his hands in there with it. That only lasted a few minutes until Shane realized how cold it was.

'Why didn't he bring any gloves?' he wondered as he rubbed his fingers together and blew hot air into his palms.

Thirty minutes later, Ilya's car pulled around the corner. The tires skidded to a stop right in front of him. His fiancé exited the vehicle with haste and ran to him.

They collided together in an embrace, releasing huffs on impact. Not a second later, Ilya was holding his face, then his shoulder, and arm, as he checked Shane over.

"You're okay," Ilya exhaled.

"Yeah," Shane confirmed. "I told you."

His fiancé smirked, despite everything. “Seeing is believing, no?”

“Shut up,” he chuckled wetly. He tried to smile, but his mouth wavered. “You’re here.”

“Of course, I’m here,” Ilya soothed. “I will always come get you, lyubimyy. Always.” He then turned his attention to Shane’s hands. He held them with care. “You’re freezing,” he remarked.

“I know.” Then, he ducked his head, angling his hair to shield his face. Tears were spilling out of his eyes. “I’m sorry,” he choked out. “I’m sorry. I’m so sorry.”

“No, solnyshko, shh,” Ilya soothed gently, bringing him into another embrace. He wrapped his arms tighter around him this time.

They swayed. Ilya sweetly kissed his freckles, his cheeks, his nose, his chin, and finally his lips. He poured as much care into them as he could.

“Is okay,” he continued, moving a hand to cup his cheek. “You called, hmm? Told me where you were. You kept your promise.”

“I did,” Shane said, lip quivering. “I’m still sorry. You were probably worried sick.”

His fiancé shrugged and pursed his lips. “A little.”

“Only a little?” Shane found it within himself to tease.

“Okay, a lot,” Ilya amended, playfully rolling his eyes. He then turned and used the arm still wrapped around him to make him follow. “Come on, we should head home and tell the others to stop looking.”

That made Shane stop in his tracks. “Oh.”

He really did make a mess of things, huh?

“Malysh,” Ilya gently reminded him.

He swallowed and nodded before allowing his fiancé to walk him up to the passenger side of the car. Ilya opened the door for him and he slipped inside.

A bark sounded and Shane turned to find Anya in the backseat. Her whole body wiggled as she saw him. She then moved to place her two front paws on the center console in order to lick his face. Shane tolerated it for a few seconds before gently pushing her away and giving her head pats.

In that time, Ilya sat in the driver seat. He stared at the two of them.

“She missed you,” he remarked, before turning to face the steering wheel and turn the car on. “Seatbelt,” he instructed gently.

“Right,” Shane muttered, turning to buckle himself in.

Anya steadied herself in the backseat.

Then, they were off.

After arriving home, Ilya put his man under several blankets. Shane watched as he then placed both of their coats in the hall closet.

After that, Ilya proclaimed, "I will make tea."

"Thank you," Shane replied with a small voice. He turned his ear toward the kitchen.

As Ilya heated up the water in the kettle, he pulled up Yuna's contact, then Jackie's, then J. J.'s. One by one, he told them the news.

It was only after that was finished that Shane's phone started to buzz with a call waiting for him. It was his mother.

"Shane. Thank god. What were you thinking?" Yuna questioned.

"I- uh," was all he managed to get out before he felt the familiar prickle of tears. This was exactly how a conversation with her went at sixteen. "It was a lot to take in, mom. I got overwhelmed. I'm sorry I scared everyone."

"Oh, honey," she said, voice softening. "I'm just glad you're okay. And that you're back safe."

Meanwhile, messages from his friends poured in. He had flinched at them at first before electing to ignore them. Then, Anya appeared, hopping onto the couch to snuggle. Shane let her lean against him and he absentmindedly started giving her pets.

"I'll talk with Farah and we'll draft a few different things, okay?" Yuna suggested. "For now, you just rest. Take the day. You need it."

"Mom," Shane started, but was interrupted. A lump settled in his throat.

"Listen to your mother, Hollander," Ilya said as he reentered the room with two mugs of tea. Then, he added softly, "Please."

"Okay," he sighed, giving his fiancé an appreciative expression as he accepted one of the mugs. "Mom, I'll call you later."

"Oh course, Shane, bye," Yuna said before ending the phone call.

He set his phone down, intent to ignore it for the rest of the day, and tested the temperature of the beverage with his mouth.

“I tried to make it how you like,” Ilya informed as he sat down next to him on the non-dog-occupied side, lifting the blankets to be as close to him as possible.

“No, it’s good,” Shane responded, taking a sip. “Is this Asian Pear?”

“Yes,” he said before sipping from his own mug.

Shane smiled. He glanced at the drink and then at the love of his life.

“Thank you, for, uh, everything,” he said somewhat awkwardly. “I love you, you know.”

Ilya gained a smile of his own. “I love you too, Shane.”

They sat there like that for a few moments, enjoying their tea. Slowly but surely, feeling returned to Shane’s fingers. The adrenaline of the morning soon started to melt away, getting replaced with a kind of exhaustion so complete that almost felt unfamiliar.

Then, Shane somehow found it within himself to frown as he admitted, “I almost turned my phone completely off.”

“Why?” Ilya inquired as he blinked a few times. His eyes had widened and his brows knit together.

The lump in Shane’s throat seemed to fight him for a moment before he could get the words out. “All the notifications. I was starting to get overwhelmed again.”

“I think you should delete Twitter off your phone,” he suggested.

“Probably.” Shane took another sip.

Ilya regarded him then and his lips formed this sad smile. “... You almost didn’t call.”

“I still would have,” he said, making sure to look him in the eyes. “Eventually. It’d have just taken me a bit longer.”

“I believe you.” Ilya reached over and stroked his cheek then.

Fresh tears spilled over as Shane admitted, “It was one of my worst fears, Ilya. And it came true.”

“Malysh,” his fiancé cooed. He set his tea down on the coffee table, faced him more fully and snaked his arms around him. “Is very scary. I know. I’m scared too.”

“What if that’s all we are to people now? That video? All our accomplishments gone out the window, just-“ he sniffled.

“I know,” Ilya muttered. “Some people will only see that.”

Shane’s face fell.

“But they are wrong,” he continued. “So we remind them, yes?” He started rubbing soothing circles on Shane’s back. “We keep winning, keep scoring the most goals, and play the best we can. Then no one will be able to deny it.”

Shane huffed. “What do you think I’ve been doing my entire life?”

“And you’re very good at it,” Ilya said before giving him a quick kiss. When he pulled back, he gave him a soft smile. “We will face it together. You and me.”

“Yeah,” Shane agreed, scooting so he could lay his head against Ilya’s chest.

Anya made a small protest, staring at them while her throat made a noise that wasn’t quite a growl. Both men glanced at her and chuckled.

“What?” Shane asked her, setting his tea aside on the coffee table.

Anya then proceeded to stand up, turn, and resettle herself high in his lap, resting her chin on his stomach with a dramatic sigh.

“Aussies,” Ilya tutted. “Very clingy.”

“Oh, like you?” Shane joked, turning to look up at him with a smile.

“Maybe,” the man replied, leaning down to kiss him again.

Afterwards, the two settled back into the couch together. One of Ilya’s hands carded through Shane’s hair. The other hand was occupied holding one of Shane’s.

“We’re okay, right?” Shane asked.

“Da,” Ilya replied. “We’re okay.”

End Notes

In one of my other HR fics, I touched on autistic eloping (a sudden, overwhelming urge to leave something stressful and overstimulating). It is something that I as a neurodivergent person myself has done, and that one or two of people I have known in my life have also done, to the point of being away for hours. That was my main drive for this.

But anyway,

Thank you for reading! Hope you enjoyed!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!