

a polaroid love (that old-fashioned feeling)

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by [roztwofour \(swiftpixie\)](#)

Summary

Ilya Rozanov has spent years wanting Shane Hollander quietly, carefully, never letting himself reach too far. After an injury changes everything, Shane stays with him for a week, and Ilya finally learns what it means to care openly, love honestly, and choose the thing he's been afraid to want.

Or, When Shane is forced to stay with him after a hospital discharge, Ilya finds himself doing the one thing he's always avoided, loving Shane out loud. A story about caretaking, fear, constellations, printed memories, and finally choosing each other.

Notes

hii back w another hollanov fic!! 3rd and last part of the series :((hope you guys like it! tried really hard to close it off as best as i can <3

anw thanks for all the love for my 2 prev fics <3 i tried to do a diff approach for this fic, usually i prefer a narration heavy fic but for this one i leaned towards more of a dialogue centric approach, still not sure if im good at it tho so if its bad pls don't tell me i am very #sensitive lol

for the russian, i just used google so im not 100% sure if they're correct so pls do let me know so i can change it!!

lastly, english is not my first language (thankfully) so if theres any mistakes trust that i do not care

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

Ilya has never allowed himself anything he truly wanted.

He gets the girls and the fame and the money, things that people think he *wants*, but the one thing he's *truly* ever wanted, he never let himself want fully, let alone imagine actually having.

Shane Hollander came into his life unlike anything ever.

The first time Ilya saw him skating on the ice, he thought Shane looked absolutely unreal. He felt something sharp and unfamiliar bloom in his chest, something akin to envy. Ilya is good at hockey, but he doesn't live for hockey. Shane does. Shane plays like it's breathing, like it's the thing that keeps him alive. He looked beautiful and impossibly out of reach, like a one-of-a-kind painting in a museum you're allowed to admire from afar, but never touch. Never feel beneath your fingers. Never share air with. Never stand close enough to feel its warmth.

Shane Hollander became the one thing Ilya truly wanted but never allowed himself to fully have. Just enough to keep himself from drowning, never enough to truly feel alive.

Throughout the years, Ilya was sure that he would eventually end it. For years, he lied and lied and *lied* about not caring and not wanting. About not feeling immense fear forming at the pit of his stomach anytime the thought of Shane leaving crossed his mind. He convinced himself Shane would be the one to walk away, that it would be a relief on his end that he didn't need to have that difficult conversation. Nodding and agreeing whenever Shane would eventually tell him that they needed to end things, that it was just fucking, and it's gotten *boring*.

Boring.

He's called Shane boring for years. Shane, who would rather have his raging boner waiting and aching than not fold his clothes before sex. Shane, who doesn't have sex on Wednesdays. Shane, who nags at Ilya when he shows up reeking of cigarettes whenever they meet. Shane, who doesn't party or talk about fucking other people, sticks to his ridiculous diet and obsesses about what he did wrong during that one game.

Ilya calls him boring because if he didn't, he would have called it something else. And doing that would be like admitting the truth.

Shane is the one constant in his life. The one thing he could guarantee that if the world was doomed to end, Shane would stay the same. The steady voice in the chaos, grounding and anchoring him the way his mother once did.

So Ilya became a master of deflection, hiding behind cocky smiles, teasing smirks, the carefully curated *Ilya Rozanov Asshole* persona. Ever since he was forced by everyone around him to grow up before he was ready to, he learned to never let anyone see him. The real him, the one reserved only for his inner thoughts and his mother.

No one else was allowed to see the earnestness. The thoughtfulness. The way his smile tilts crooked when it's real. The fact that his idea of a perfect day is sitting near water, playing with dogs, enjoying the quiet, despite what the world thinks about him.

He likes the chaos, too. All the drinking and partying and fucking. But what he truly craves is peace.

And he's only ever found that with one person.

That person is asleep in his passenger seat.

He looks peaceful, like a baby fresh out of the womb. Delicate and to be handled with such care. Ilya couldn't help but steal a few glances, involuntarily smiling at the way Shane was making soft noises and the way his nose and forehead were wrinkling.

Shane was discharged after two days of being in the hospital. He was still under observation and was advised to wait a week before flying home.

So Shane will stay with Ilya, whether either of them is ready for what that means.

He fights it at first.

"I don't want to be a burden," Shane says, stubborn even from a hospital bed.

"You are many things," Ilya replies flatly. "Burden is not one of them."

Ultimately, Yuna and David decide it for him. Shane calls it a rigged vote. Ilya calls it democracy.

Shane staying with Ilya meant that his parents could go back home, though this presented another problem. Ilya would have to miss most practices if he were to take care of Shane. However, before Shane could even utter a single word, Ilya was already on the phone with his coach, manufacturing a lie about taking care of a family emergency. They then dropped off Yuna and David at the airport. The goodbye was brief; Shane's parents insisted on leaving on their own, careful not to be seen with Ilya.

Ilya drives them home in silence, the kind that isn't uncomfortable but isn't empty either. Shane sleeps through most of it, head tipped slightly toward the window, mouth parted. Ilya adjusts the temperature twice and slows down whenever the road gets rough, even though Shane doesn't stir.

When they finally arrive, Shane wakes up disoriented.

"Are we...home?" he asks, voice thick.

"My home," Ilya corrects gently. "For now."

Shane blinks, then groans softly as he tries to sit up too fast.

“Easy,” Ilya says immediately, hand bracing his chest. “You are not indestructible. Stop pretending.”

“I hate that you’re right,” Shane mutters, but he lets Ilya help him out of the car.

Shane hates being taken care of.

He hates it the way he hates sitting out games, the way he hates missing practice, the way he hates feeling fragile. So the first few days will be tense, to say the least.

Inside, Shane looks around like he’s seeing the apartment for the first time. He’s been here before, plenty of times, but never like this. Never with the unspoken rules lifted. Never without the clock ticking in the back of his head, counting down how long he’s allowed to stay.

“I can walk,” Shane insists, leaning heavily on the kitchen counter as Ilya hovers behind him.

“You are walking,” Ilya says mildly, hand already at Shane’s elbow. “Just very badly.”

“Ilya.”

“Solnyshko,” Ilya counters, sweet and infuriating. “Just let me. I do not want you face planting in my kitchen. I just cleaned.”

Shane rolls his eyes but with no real heat to it, he eventually lets himself be guided anyway. That’s the difference now. He grumbles, but he complies.

Ilya guides him to the couch anyway, grabbing a blanket before Shane can protest.

“I can tuck myself in,” Shane says.

“You will do it badly,” Ilya says, draping the blanket over him. “Let me.”

Shane goes quiet at that. Watches Ilya’s hands, careful and steady. Lets himself be handled.

“You don’t have to watch me sleep,” Shane mutters.

“I am not watching,” Ilya says from the armchair, eyes absolutely on him. “I am supervising.”

Shane snorts. “Creep.”

“You love me.”

The words still feel fragile when they land between them.

Shane goes quiet, then softer, “Yeah. I do.”

Ilya’s smile is slow, reverent. Like he’s memorizing the moment.

That afternoon sets the tone for the week.

Shane tries to be normal. Ilya refuses to let him.

“I can get my own water.”

“You can barely stand,” Ilya says.

“I stood by myself yesterday.”

“You stood for five seconds and then sat down dramatically.”

“It wasn’t dramatic.”

“You sighed.”

“I was in pain, Ilya!”

Ilya stood up, “Sit down, I will get it.”

“Ilya, I am not made of glass.”

“You are concussed glass.”

Shane laughs despite himself. “You’re enjoying this.”

“I waited years for permission to take care of you.”

Shane stills. “...Oh.”

Ilya softens instantly. “Is that too much?”

Shane stands up slowly, moving closer, then presses his forehead to Ilya’s shoulder. “No. It’s just... new.”

“I can stop.”

“Don’t. I don’t want you to stop.”

Ilya exhales, wrapping his arms around Shane carefully. Like something precious.

They stood there for awhile before Ilya went and got the water.

“Now drink.” Ilya says.

Shane playfully glares but takes the glass.

“Bossy,” he mutters.

Ilya smiles. “You like it.”

Shane rolls his eyes, then sarcastically says, “Don’t get ahead of yourself, *babe*.”

Ilya laughs so hard he has to sit down.

They fall into something easy. Something soft.

Ilya makes Shane food and pretends not to notice when Shane eats slowly just to watch him. Shane complains about being bored and then refuses to let Ilya turn on the TV because *the silence is nice*.

On the third day, Shane is half-asleep on the couch, head tipped back, freckles scattered across his skin in the low light, and the blanket kicked halfway to the floor. Ilya watches him for a long time before moving closer.

He then sits beside Shane, careful, reverent.

He reaches out without thinking.

His thumb traces the bridge of Shane's nose, then his cheek. Shane hums softly but doesn't wake.

Ilya studies him, really studies him. The freckles scattered across Shane's skin, uneven and familiar.

They look like stars.

Ilya's chest tightens.

He traces them gently, mapping invisible lines between them. Orion. Cassiopeia. Constellations only he knows how to read, laid out on the most beautiful canvas he's ever known.

"Moya zvezdochka," he murmurs. "They look like stars"

Shane stirs. "What are you talking about? My face?"

Ilya startles. "You were not supposed to hear that," he says, but continues, "Yes. You are so beautiful, you know this right?"

"That's the cheesiest thing you've ever said to me."

"Shane. Do not ruin this moment."

Shane smiles, sleepy. "Say it again."

"Moya zvezdochka," Ilya murmurs, brushing his thumb gently over them. "Little stars. All mapped out under the most beautiful canvas in the universe."

Shane's smile goes soft. "You're gonna make me cry."

"Good," Ilya says. "You deserve to be cried over." Ilya leans down, presses a kiss to his lips. "Now go back to sleep, lyubimyy."

The following day, Shane is asleep again, sprawled fully across the couch, one arm dangling, the other curled into his chest, hair a mess.

Ilya's couldn't help but stare at him.

Then, quietly, he retrieves the Polaroid camera from the drawer he pretends he doesn't keep it in.

He clicks the button. Then, the flash goes off. *Shit*, he forgot to disable before taking the picture.

"What the hell—" Shane jolts awake, blinking wildly. "Did you just take a picture of me?"

"Uhh... Yes?"

"You're insane."

"But you were very beautiful, moy dorogoy," Ilya says, unapologetic.

"I was drooling! Delete it, Ilya!"

"I cannot. It is analog." Ilya smirks, "So I will treasure it forever."

Shane tries to lunge at Ilya, but Ilya being taller and faster, manages to dodge.

"Give it to me!"

"No."

"You're evil!"

"You love me," Ilya says easily.

Shane freezes, then sighs. "Unfortunately."

They watch the photo develop together. Shane pretends not to care, but he leans in close, shoulder pressed into Ilya's.

Later that night, Ilya tucks the photo away carefully into a box from his closet. Shane pretended not to see, but still curious, he can't help but think about what's inside the box.

The next day, Shane gets his chance to take a look at the box.

Ilya's at practice for the first time since the hospital, texting Shane every twenty minutes like a lunatic.

A few hours later, Shane ends up in Ilya's bedroom, then the closet.

And then he finds the box.

It's unassuming. A plain blue box. Tucked behind winter coats and old jerseys. Shane opens it absentmindedly.

And freezes.

Photos.

Photos of them. Of him.

Printed. Real.

Him, asleep on a random hotel room.

Them, at Shane's apartment laughing at some show.

Selfies and random photos he sent to Ilya over the years, all materialised at his hands.

Years' worth of moments Shane didn't know were kept.

Loved quietly.

Safely.

Permanently.

They had agreed early on that it would be best if they kept little to no evidence of their *situation*. Taking and sending videos and photos but deleted them right away.

Shane didn't know how long he's been sitting in Ilya's closet, going through all the photos, some of them he barely remembers. With tears falling in his eyes, he felt a hand at his shoulder.

Ilya finds him sitting on the floor, box open, photos spread like evidence.

"Oh," Ilya says quietly.

"You—" Shane's voice breaks. "You found a way to keep them even though we agreed to delete every trace of us,"

Ilya swallows. "Yes, it's smart, phones can get hacked or stolen, but not this, well not as likely"

"So you printed them."

"Is just for me. I didn't want to forget," Ilya says quietly. "You know, if something happened. If you left me,"

Shane stands and crosses the space between them in two steps, hands fisting in Ilya's shirt. "Why didn't you ever tell me?"

Ilya's voice is barely there. "Because if I said it out loud, it would've been real. I probably would have said something stupid"

Shane presses his forehead to Ilya's. "Be real with me now, say that *stupid thing*. I want to hear it,"

Ilya exhales. "Okay. I want to be *your* boyfriend. I want you to be *my* boyfriend."

Shane laughs through tears. "Yeah. Yeah, okay. *Boyfriends*,"

Shane reaches out to him and kisses him slowly. Carefully. Like he's memorizing.

This time, when they touch, it isn't frantic.

It's deliberate.

Ilya's hands map familiar territory like he's learning it for the first time. Shane presses close, trusting, unafraid. They move together with an ease that only comes from knowing, really knowing, someone.

There's no rush. No proving.

Just warmth. Just love.

Just the quiet certainty that this isn't something they're hiding from each other anymore.

End Notes

thanks for reading! feedbacks/comments are appreciated <33

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