
Pork: *bites the hell out of ilya, clings onto his legs with his claws, terrorizes him*

Shane: aweee my babies are bonding

1.

Ilya finds himself at the shelter, where he'd come often to happily coo at all of the dogs (his favourite animal, obviously) in sight. When one of the volunteers, super knowledgeable, and clearly very passionate, starts telling him about hairless cats, his hearing immediately sharpens. Apparently, the Netherlands had just completely banned the possession, breeding and selling of hairless cats. Interesting, Ilya thinks, and files that away immediately. He's obviously thinking of the hairless demon his beloved husband had brought into their–previously perfectly fine and *not* in need of an extra, hairless member–home.

The volunteer has Ilya's full attention now. He turns away from the fluffy dog he had been petting just to listen to her. She goes on about how breeding Sphynx cats is increasingly considered unethical due to the health problems they carry: skin issues, temperature sensitivity, heart conditions. It's kind of sad to hear, Ilya thinks.

The woman continues, explaining how the ban in the Netherlands is a good first step toward stopping unethical breeding. Ilya has a silly thought, if they lived there right now, he wouldn't have to deal with his mortal enemy. Well, maybe in that alternative universe there would still be Hayden, his brother, and commissioner Crowell… but at least none of them would be furless and named Pork.

Ilya still stands there, listening, growing progressively more horrified and slightly vindicated. He would be lying if he said he didn't also feel a little mischievous right now. Finally, he had a valid reason to hate the existence of the bald creature that had decided to hate him first.

Cue him going home and finding Shane.

He doesn't even say hi. Just sighs dramatically and goes, 'Did you know breeding hairless cats is illegal in some countries because it's considered unethical!?'

Shane narrows his eyes. 'Why do you sound like you're about to blame me personally?'

'I just think,' Ilya says, all wounded animal lover energy, 'that if someone really cared about cats, they would simply adopt a fluffy and cute cat, instead of supporting a system that causes suffering.'

Shane stares at him. 'Ilya, you went to the shelter for thirty minutes.'

'And I learned things, Shane. Is very important! You should care too.'

Shane laughed. He didn't bother arguing back or reminding Ilya that Pork had been adopted too, for the very reason that breeding wasn't right, and he'd needed better owners than the ones who bred him. There was no point. Ilya had already decided that Pork Hollander was his mortal enemy, forever, and nothing was going to change his mind.

2.

When Ilya opened his eyes, he could already feel the soreness in his body. He had bruised his ribs some weeks ago and still hadn't fully recovered. Carefully, he turned his body around, only to find the bed empty beside him. Shane wasn't there. He must've gone to the bathroom to brush his teeth, or perhaps he went out for a run, or maybe to the kitchen to make his morning smoothie–

'Awwwww, has anyone ever told you how soft you are? You know for a cat with no hair, you're awfully soft.' He heard Shane say from afar, in that baby voice of his, which Ilya did *not* want to admit he found a little cute.

He sighed. It was still early in the morning, which meant Shane had gotten out of bed early to, what, cuddle with Pork? Instead of him?

Ilya ignored the creeping rational thought that he did the same thing with Anya… a lot. It wasn't the same. Anya was sweet. Anya loved Shane. Anya never bit, or hit, or hissed at Shane! Anya was a sweet dog. Pork was… well. He was a demon. To Ilya, at least.

Approaching footsteps interrupted Ilya's thoughts. It wasn't just two, though. After years of living together, Ilya had mastered the art of recognising the footsteps of everyone in their little family. That included Anya's sweet paws enthusiastically approaching his room to lay in the bed with him (when she was clean enough that Shane would allow her to, at least). Unfortunately, it also included the steps of the demonic, naked, hairless paws of the creature that was the bane of his existence and his number one opponent in the *'Who does Shane love the most?'* battle. Ilya had learnt to recognize those, and he was hearing them right now.

Sigh.

'Goodmorning, husband', Shane smiled as he stepped in the room and gave Ilya a kiss. Shane always approached Ilya gently, and with so much care in the mornings, it almost made him feel warm inside—

'Uhm no, no, not him. Get him out of here'. Ilya waved his hand dismissively.

Shane turned away from Ilya, sitting up in the empty spot next to him, and saw Pork waddling on his little legs behind him. He was clearly walking towards the bed. Shane eyed Pork and tapped with his hand on the bed, inviting him to hop on his side.

Pork ignored him, of course.

Instead, Pork circled over to the other side, *Ilya's* side*,* to hop on the bed from there.

Ilya's life flashed before his eyes. Before he could even move, Pork was on the bed, walking over his legs, towards his chest, and then on his ribs. Settling there and making biscuits *on Ilya's ribs*. Ilya couldn't process what was happening, the hurt and ache only kicking in seconds later. He could barely breathe, and hardly yell out a sound, as his ribs were still aching and there was now a–God knows how many pounds, since Shane refused to ever disclose his actual weight–hairless demon forcing all his weight directly into his bruised ribs.

'AH- Ah-,' Ilya managed to choke out. He barely accomplished shoving Pork off his chest, heaving in pain, and out of breath.

He turned his head to the right, and saw Shane was smiling. He looked happy? Was he sick? Ilya was dying, hello?

'He loves you, oh my god,' Shane said, sounding genuinely delighted as he stroked Pork's bald head. 'He made biscuits on you!'

'YES SHANE, AND I ALMOST DIED,' Ilya exaggerated.

'Oh, right, your ribs. Oh my god, are you okay? Does it hurt? I'm sorry,' Shane said.

Ilya had almost appreciated the concern, if it hadn't been for Shane saying it *while* still petting, caressing and never looking away from Pork. Shane seemed more worried about the emotional wellbeing of the bald creature for getting rejected by Ilya, than the physical survival of his husband. Ilya narrowed his eyes, and realized he was never losing this war to that stupid, wrinkly cat.

3.

After the disaster that had happened years ago, Ilya couldn't eat tuna melts for a long time. He could barely stand to see anything tuna-related, if he were honest. It reminded him of the sickening shame that had settled in his stomach after Shane left him all alone, the Tupperware and dirty dishes still waiting to be washed.

Now, however, there is nothing he enjoys more than cooking for his husband. Tuna melts are the perfect simple meal, and when he feels even an ounce of the gut-wrenching ache he used to feel back then, he can simply go to his husband and let him kiss it away. So, tuna melts it was for today.

While Ilya assembled the ingredients, Shane stretched out on the couch, dutifully petting Pork so Ilya could work in peace.

Once the sandwiches were done, Ilya joined him on the couch. The second he sat down, though, Pork sprung into action, launching himself at Ilya and immediately licking the tuna straight off his sandwich.

‘Are you kidding me?– Get him off! Shane! Help me!,’ Ilya desperately yelled out.

Shane, meanwhile, sat in complete serenity with his sandwich in his hand, completely calm and unbothered. He was taking slow, peaceful bites while watching Ilya attempt to wrestle his food away from the cat. He started bursting out in laughter, which pissed Ilya off even more. His cat was stealing Ilya’s food and Shane was laughing?

‘I thought you were distracting him!’ Ilya snapped. He looked down at Shane's sandwich in his hand, ‘You have tuna melt too, why does he not attack you!,’ he yelled out, while still trying to push Pork away.

‘He’s not *attacking* you, Ilya. He just wants a bite from your sandwich. It’s a cat, they like fish,’ Shane said mildly, trying to pull Pork back and scratching Pork behind his ears as he made another attempt to grab the tuna on Ilya’s bread.

‘Okay, so he can have your fish! Not mine,’ Ilya said while pointing at Shane’s sandwich, that he was still able to eat in peace, without getting terrorized by Pork.

‘I would give it to him if he came to me, he just prefers you, I guess,’ Shane said laughingly.

Ilya sighed, because somehow, that made it worse.

He’s never making tuna melts again.

4.

‘If I was a cat, would you love me as much as you love Pork?’

‘What?’ Shane said, blinking at his husband’s sudden question.

‘You heard me.’

‘If I was a cat, would you moisturize me? Hug me? Talk to me in that baby voice you do? Buy me special, expensive, high-quality food? Give me more attention than your own, very real, human husband?’

‘Ilya, you *are* my husband. If you were a cat, I’d have no husband anymore. Or I’d have a cat-husband? I don’t know. That’s weird. You’re asking weird questions.’ Shane felt his brain short-circuit a little as he tried to process it.

‘Is not weird, I think you know the answer. You just don’t wanna say.’

Shane sighed, he was considering answering seriously, as much as his husband's question was unserious. Or, wait, Ilya wasn't *actually* jealous of a cat, right?

Ilya could see the consideration in his husband's face. It was easy for him to read, like all of Shane's emotions and feelings he wrongly thought he was good at keeping inside, but were so overt to Ilya.

'Well?' Ilya asked, snapping Shane out of thought.

'Oh, well, uhm, if you were a cat, you'd be a black cat. So you wouldn't need moisturizing. Or no, actually, an orange cat. You have the energy.'

That wasn't at all answering the question Ilya had asked Shane, but Shane had already drifted off, clearly lost in thought as he imagined his husband as a cat. And Ilya would be lying if he said he wasn't at least a little intrigued now.

'Cat energy? What does that mean?'

'Orange cat energy. You're like an orange cat that crawled through a chimney and came out covered in soot.'

'Hollander. What? Chimney? Soot? What are you saying?'

'Like, on the outside, you have black cat energy. People who don't know you think you are this mysterious, intimidating big Russian hockey star. But everyone who knows you on the inside knows you are totally an orange cat. You're chaotic, silly, kind and you love teasing the people you love. Total orange cat energy!'

Wow. Ilya's brain paused for a second, that was actually kind of sweet. His husband really *did* know him, in a way no one else ever had or even tried to.

'Okay. So black cat energy is mysterious and scary, orange cat energy is chaotic and silly. Hairless cat energy is what? Ugly demon who hates Ilya Rozanov? Because then Hayden has hairless cat energy!'. Ilya *hated* the fact that Hayden was Pork's second favorite human. And Hayden wasn't even particularly nice to him. They must have just bonded over their hatred for Ilya together. Pork probably sensed Hayden's ugly hairless cat energy.

'Oh, right, I forgot this conversation started because of your hate for Pork–', Shane spat out.

'I would not hate him if he did not hate me!'

'That's a lie! You called him a rotisserie chicken even before the first time he attacked you!'

'Oh! So now you agree he *does* attack me!'

'Well– I mean, no! He just likes to play with you! He loves you, okay.'

'He does not *love* me.'

Shane sighed. He knew there was some truth to that, Pork wasn't always the kindest to Ilya, he guessed.

'But I do, and I love Pork, so you have to love him too. And, I would love you too, you know, *if* you were a cat.'

Ilya purposely ignored the first part of what Shane had said, because he was never going to love Pork. He might, in a very far future, learn to tolerate him at best. If the fucker learned how to tolerate him first, of course.

'More than Pork?' he asked.

Shane laughed at Ilya's question, and decided not to answer that.