“你搞定了吗，廖莎？”叶甫根尼问道，背着自己的包从长凳上站了起来。  
Alexei nods, hands behind his head. "Have you thought of a place?"  
阿列克谢点了点头，双手枕在脑后：“你想好吃饭的地方了吗？”  
Evgeni slides into his jacket, a few drops of sweat still on his forehead after the strain of practice. It's late, and they've been working all day; the thought of sitting down to eat is heavenly. "I heard there's a Japanese restaurant close to here. Do you like sushi?"  
叶甫根尼披上自己的外套，在强度很大的训练后，他的额上依然挂着汗珠。天色已晚，他们整整练习了一天，能坐下来享受晚餐无疑是美妙的想法：“我听说离这儿不远有家日本菜，你喜欢寿司吗？”  
Alexei shrugs, swinging his bag idly from his hand and waiting for Evgeni in the doorway. "Sure."  
在门口等着他的阿列克谢耸耸肩，手上随意的甩着自己的包：“当然。”  
Evgeni smirks at him, and Alexei's not sure he had a choice in the matter anyway. "Good. I'll drive."  
叶甫根尼冲他露出一个得意的笑容，这让阿列克谢不确定自己在这件事上还有别的选择。然后他听到叶甫根尼说：“好，我来开车。”  
Evgeni has a nicer car than he does. That doesn't seem fair, but Alexei settles into the squashy passenger seat anyway, without protest. He still can't quite believe where he is, without having even asked Evgeni out himself. It feels too easy, like he's missed a step, but after all he is paying for dinner.  
叶甫根尼的车比他的还高级，这看起来不太公平，但阿列克谢毫无抗拒的把自己沉入副驾驶位柔软的座椅里。他还是不太确认自己在哪里，甚至也没有问叶甫根尼。这感觉有点太容易了，像是跳过了某些步骤。不过无论怎样，今天的晚餐是他买单。

ho is that violinist, anyway?" Alexei asks, because it's weighing on his mind far more than it should.

“对了，那个小提琴家是谁？”阿列克谢问道，这个问题在他心上已经萦绕的太久了，不问不快。

“哦，你是说埃德温？”

他们的关系已经达到直呼其名的地步了？阿列克谢在心中对自己皱眉，告诉自己这样很傻，但这毫无用处。

“他是我的朋友，上个赛季我的自由滑是他编曲，我们就这样认识了。”叶甫根尼朝他露出一个久违的微笑，放松的忽略了前方路况，即便他还在开车：“我真吃惊，你居然没有听说过他，他是那么出色。”

m, Edvin?" They're on first-name terms. Alexei frowns to himself and tells himself that he's being stupid. It doesn't help. "He's a friend of mine. He arranged the music for my free skate last season, that's how we met." Evgeni glances at him with an absent smile, comfortably ignoring the road as he drives. "I'm surprised you haven't heard of him, Lyosha. He's brilliant."  
  
"*Brilliant*," Alexei repeats, and then bites his tongue. "… Really."  
“**出色**。”阿列克谢重复了一遍，然后咬到了自己的舌头：“……真的。”

"Yes. He's - well, you'll hear it for yourself." Evgeni hums something under his breath as he turns a corner, squinting through the windshield. "Keep an eye out for sushi, Lyosha."  
“是的，他……好吧，你会自己听说的。”叶甫根尼咕哝了些什么，拐过一个角落，眯着眼睛往挡风玻璃外瞄着，“注意看看寿司的招牌，廖莎。”  
*Right. Sushi. Unlike Edvin,*I'm*going on a date with him.***好吧，寿司。不像埃德温，我是在和他约会。**

**不，并不是他称为的那种约会。** *Not that he calls it a date.*  
  
"You're quiet today," Evgeni observes, slowing to a stop at the light and peering around at the neon signs outside the various stores nearby.  
“你今天可真安静。”叶甫根尼注意到了这一点。 他放缓了车速，慢慢停在灯光明亮的地方，检视着附近各种店铺的霓虹标志。  
"Am I?" Alexei asks, sort of defensively. Of course he is.  
“我有吗？”阿列克谢有点防备的反问道。但他确实是。  
"Mm," Evgeni says, looking over at him with a grin. "Thinking about your girlfriend, Lyosha?"  
“恩，”叶甫根尼打量着他，咧开了嘴：“在想你的女朋友，廖莎？”  
"Um," Alexei says. *Yes. Kind of. If you wore a dress again.*  
“唔~”阿列克谢搪塞着。**是的，某种意义上是的，如果你再次穿上那条裙子。**  
"Ha," Evgeni says. "You're more romantic than I thought. Ah, there!"  
“哈，”叶甫根尼说：“你比我以为的还要浪漫呢，啊，在那里！”  
Alexei hasn't really been looking, so he's baffled for a moment, until the car grinds to a halt against the curb and he looks up to a gleaming, newfangled sushi restaurant. It looks expensive. The thought really makes him happier than it should.  
  
They go inside, and a friendly Japanese girl with no apparent accent leads them to a booth in the corner. Evgeni slides into his side of the booth with a sigh, slouching against the wall; he rests his chin in his palm as he reaches for his menu, flashing Alexei a quick smile across the top of it.  
  
"So, tell me about this girl," Evgeni says, perusing the menu. “Is she rich? A skater?” He glances around the restaurant and leans closer, grinning. “Or maybe a waitress?”  
“好吧，跟我聊聊那个女孩。”叶甫根尼一边浏览着菜单一边开口：“她有钱吗？也是滑冰远动员？”他扫视了一下餐馆，倾身靠近阿列克谢，坏笑道：“或者是个女服务员？”

Alexei takes a deep breath. *There is no girl, you idiot.* "She's… it's complicated, Zhenya." He looks down at his menu without managing to read any of the words written on it, working the fingers of one hand through his hair. "We work together, me and… this girl, and if I ruin our friendship as it is - well, I don't want everything to fall apart."  
阿列克谢深深的叹了一口气，并没有什么女孩，你这个傻瓜。“她……这不是三言两语说的清的，热尼亚。”他低头看菜单，但实际上一个词也没有看进去，“我们一起工作，我和……这个女孩，这会毁了我们的友谊，如果我……好吧，我不想把一切都搞崩了。”

“你们一起工作？”叶甫根尼好奇地问，阿列克谢实在无法明白为什么他对这件事这么有兴趣。

“……是的。”阿列克谢最后迟疑的回答道，考虑着到底能深究自己到什么程度：“这也是我如此担忧的原因。”

“你告诉她你有多喜欢她了吗？”叶甫根尼继续问。

“没有。”阿列克谢停顿了一下，注视着他：“完全没有，我想她还不知道。”  
"You work together?" Evgeni asks curiously. Alexei can’t think of a good reason for him to be this interested.  
  
"… Yes," he agrees hesitantly, wondering how deep he can dig himself. "That's why I'm worried."  
  
"Have you told her how much you like her?" Evgeni asks.  
  
"Not exactly." Alexei pauses, glancing at him. "No, not at all. I don't think she knows."  
  
"So *tell her*, Lyosha. She won't be angry at you for that." Evgeni looks oddly annoyed with what he’s saying, but he reaches over anyway and pats Alexei on the arm. "If you're dreaming about her, it must be important to you."  
  
"It is," Alexei says faintly.

Evgeni nods decisively, settling back in his chair and looking over the menu. He's smiling vaguely, but it looks put on, and there's a disgruntled kind of tension in his shoulders. Alexei stares at him, trying to understand. The way Evgeni's acting now doesn't exactly fit in to how Alexei thinks he should be feeling.  
  
And after all these years, he still doesn't think Alexei can tell when something's wrong.  
  
"Hey," Alexei says, reaching over and patting him on the arm. Evgeni jumps a little, looking up like a startled bird; Alexei hunts around for something to say, his eyes finally landing on the menu. He smiles. "Zhenya, don't hold back like you did last time, okay? I can pay, you don't have to order something cheap."  
  
Evgeni frowns. "But last time, I ordered the most expensi--"  
  
He cuts himself off with a snap when he realizes what he's saying, too late, and just stares back at Alexei for a moment, his face turning red. Alexei grins at him, squeezing his arm lightly.  
  
"Lyosha," Evgeni begins, and then hesitates awkwardly. Alexei can admit to himself that he would have paid a lot more than the bill just to see Evgeni blush like this. "Lyosh, I - … sorry. I'll, I should pay you back"  
  
"No," Alexei says firmly, sort of taking this as opportunity not to remove his hand from Evgeni's arm. As long as Evgeni is blushing too much to notice. (Alexei is fairly sure he's a terrible person, and it's a good thing that Evgeni can't see the inside of his head.) "It was good, wasn't it?"  
  
"Yes," Evgeni mumbles, averting his eyes. "Still--"  
  
"Still, I deserved it. I dragged you out with me." Evgeni looks up and opens his mouth, probably to deny this; Alexei smiles at him and he falters a little. "You didn't even walk out on me - so we're even. And you took care of me while I was sick," he adds, and why does that make Evgeni blush harder? "So I owed you this one."  
  
"And don't forget you woke me up," Evgeni says, half-smiling, a fraction of the tension easing out of his eyes. He glances down at his menu again. "All right, Lyosha."  
  
Alexei grins, reluctantly letting go of Evgeni's arm and settling back on his side of the booth. "And don't hold back, I mean it." He flips his menu over, searching for the drinks. "You like wine, don't you?"  
  
"Yes," Evgeni answers automatically, and then eyes him over their glasses of water. His face is still tinged pink, and Alexei is happier than he should be. "I have to drive."  
  
"Can't you handle one glass?" Alexei goads him. He knows it doesn't take much for Evgeni to feel challenged.  
  
Evgeni huffs faintly. "Of course. We just aren't getting a bottle."  
  
"Fine," Alexei says.  
  
Their waitress chooses that moment to return, a big smile on her lips. "Hey, guys!" she chirps, and Evgeni looks up. "Can I take your order?"  
  
Evgeni clears his throat and makes his order; Alexei glances down at the prices on the menu while he's speaking. Good. At least Evgeni isn't ordering the cheapest things on the menu.  
  
Alexei orders next, and sends the waitress off with a request for two glasses of red wine. Evgeni shoots him a reproachful look as soon as she's gone. "Now you're choosing for me?"  
  
Alexei shrugs. "It looked good."  
  
Evgeni snorts, but a reluctant smile is tugging at the corners of his mouth. Impulsively, Alexei rests his elbows on the table and leans toward him. "Do you have a girlfriend, Zhenya?"  
  
Evgeni cocks an eyebrow at him. "Not right now. Why?"  
  
"You seem to know so much about them, that's all."  
  
Evgeni shakes his head, downing another quick sip of water like he would something alcoholic before he continues. "No. I haven't met anyone who even seemed like she might be the right person in a long time." He drops his chin into his hand, smirking bitterly. "I'm almost jealous of you and your blonde girl, Lyosha."

[[muah, sorry these have been taking so long, everyone! <3 Why does real life have to get in the way of writing fanfic? But on the plus side, EDVIN.]]  
  
  
  
"Zhenya, are you lonely?" He asks it without thinking.  
  
Evgeni lifts his eyes suddenly, something startled and frail flashing across his face before he catches himself; his face goes blank and he looks down. "Sometimes," he says, with fake nonchalance. "But I have friends. I have Mishin. I don't need a girlfriend right now, anyway."  
  
*That's not what I had in mind anyway*. "I think I do," Alexei says.  
  
And for a moment, Evgeni just looks at him, odd and curious.   
  
Their waitress comes back with the wine at that moment, setting the glasses between them; Evgeni flashes her a quick smile and immediately takes a drink. "You do?" he asks Alexei, the smile lingering. "Well, go on and tell her, then."  
  
"I'm going to try," Alexei decides. He lifts his glass.  
  
"That's my boy," Evgeni says, and chimes his glass lightly against Alexei's.   
  
But it's easier said than done, Alexei realizes, when he really starts thinking about it. He doesn't know how to say - *I know I used to hate you but I loved you at the same time and now I think I might just love you and I'm sorry I never told you but in my defense you would have killed me*, well, that's the truth but he's still fairly sure that Evgeni would kill him for saying so. Even if he didn't kill him, where would that leave them?  
  
And for that matter, where are they now, and did Evgeni really ask him out to dinner just to talk about Alexei's dream girl? It's not as if Evgeni needs Alexei to buy him dinner. It feels like payback for all the times that Alexei might have helped him when Evgeni *did* have nothing.  
  
He wonders if that still matters to Evgeni. Does Evgeni remember as well as he does all the things Alexei did or didn't do to make his life a little harder? Does he care as much?  
  
It's all on the tip of his tongue, but he can't, he can't quite. Evgeni is smiling at him, talking idly as he drinks his wine and nibbles at his sushi, and this is the best they've ever been together. Maybe he'll tell him after the championship, Alexei thinks, when there's no chance of ruining their teamwork. He's worried enough that Evgeni will be furious; if he costs them (and Russia) the medal they're chasing, Evgeni will never forgive him.  
  
In the meantime, he tries to be content with the wine.  
  
--  
  
Evgeni drops him off in front of his apartment at a quarter past nine, and Alexei is abruptly thankful for Evgeni's insistence that they didn't drink much, because he needs all his inhibitions intact when Evgeni turns to him in the moonlight shadows of the car and says goodnight. For a moment, Alexei *wants* so much that he can't even speak.  
  
(He wants to kiss him. He wants Evgeni to walk him to his door and kiss *him*. He wants to wake up next to him again. He wants Evgeni to know. And part of him just wants to hold Evgeni's hand, just for a while.)  
  
But he manages, "Goodnight," before the silence becomes improbable, and Evgeni's eyes wrinkle at the corners when he smiles.

Whoever this girl is, Evgeni thinks, she cannot *possibly* be worth the amount of time that Alexei seems to spend moping about her. Evgeni doesn't understand it. Alexei was perfectly, obnoxiously happy when they started training together; now, after he and Alexei have settled (learned to ignore) their differences, Alexei's apparently fallen in love with some impossible woman. Evgeni presses him about it a few times, asking where and when they met and how long they've known each other, but Alexei won't say.  
  
"You'd know who she is," he says, with a rueful little smile, and Evgeni replies exasperatedly*that's the point*. Alexei just shakes his head and smiles.  
  
Evgeni tries not to dwell on it. It bothers him more than it should.