

## I Look Good On You

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# **I Look Good On You**

by [MangoTea](#)

## Summary

Shane accidentally wears a shirt with 'Rozanov 81' instead of the one with his name and number to a press event. Later they have sex about it.

## Notes

First two chapters were beta'd while I worked on the third. Thanks so much to [dntat](#), [princebutt](#) and [shanehollandertwentyfour](#)

# Chapter 1

“Wearing my team colors is very sexy of you,” Ilya said.

“Our team.” Shane said, too distracted to be annoyed by whatever game Ilya was trying to play. They were standing on the edges of a stage, still mostly hidden from the crowd that had gathered at the local mall. They were making a brief appearance at the grand re-opening following a remodel because the team’s owners had donated the project and funded the center court having a more accessible play area. It was a pretty minor event, but Shane was excited. He had just finished all his paper work yesterday and this was his first appearance with his new team, as an Ottawa player in his hometown.

“You have not played a game yet, so I think-”

“I’ve signed the paperwork. This is my hometown. Mom and Dad brought me home from the hospital in a Centaurs onesie. This is my team.” Shane felt a surge of pride at the words. When they’d first come up with the idea for Shane to sign with the Centaurs, he hadn’t realized how much playing on his home team would mean to him.

Yesterday, Harris had dropped off a pile of custom printed shirts and official merchandise items to get him ready for today and spending the next several years representing his Ottawa. He’d grown up wearing Centaurs gear. Opening the bags of shirts, workout gear and even a ridiculous looking stuffed Centaur with a felt hockey stick had reminded him of his earliest Christmas memories.

When his parents first moved to Ottawa they had tried to make the Centaurs their team but Yuna’s heart had slowly drifted back to the Voyageurs. For Shane some of his earliest memories of hockey were tangled up with the Centaurs, both attending games and also going to training camps at their rink.

“Not just my colors, but my name and number. Is like a dream I had once,” Ilya said.

It took a second for the words to sink in. Shane shifted and realized that the shirt was a touch too loose in the shoulders, like it was typically worn by someone broader than him. He turned his head and pulled at the fabric. An ‘R’ rose into his line of sight, not an ‘H’. Nose so close to the fabric he could catch a hint of Ilya’s aftershave and the scent of his skin clinging to the cotton. Earlier, he’d grabbed the shirt out of the dryer without thinking, without checking. He’s grown up wearing Centaurs gear, so grabbing this shirt had felt so natural he hadn’t given it a second thought.

Shane fought to not blush or hide his face. Everyone else on the team was wearing a cotton jersey version of their team shirt, logo on the front with their names and numbers on the back. Shane’s shirt looked right from the front, but he had ‘Rozanov 81’ across the back.

Troy leaned over to get a look at his back and said, “Oh, shit.” Then he started laughing.

Shane felt a familiar and sickening tension start to take hold. His life had been a whirlwind since his relationship with Ilya had become public. They were out now, but the habits and fears of a decade hadn't faded overnight. He didn't want these stressed out reactions. He wanted to relax, not flinch, when Ilya reached for him in public. He wanted to start living a normal life as boyfriends, settle into his new life. His old life still had a hold on him.

He also wanted to get a chance to get to know Ilya's friends, but so far they'd only been around each other briefly, in passing. He'd been worried about being awkward and making a bad impression. Now here he was, being a complete mess and only holding onto a semblance of calm because he had a decade of experience doing press events. He knew how to focus through this, retreat a bit into himself and smile for the cameras.

Fortunately, he didn't even need to speak. Coach Wiebe walked out onto the stage to take his spot at the podium and the team walked out to line up behind him. Shane looked at the crowd. So many of them were looking at him in particular and were holding photos and shirts, maybe hoping he'd sign them. He felt a stab of guilt. He wasn't expected to do a signing after or go mingle with the crowd. Usually, star players don't join the crowd at events like this because it causes too much chaos. He'd been planning to anyway. He'd brought snacks and water just in case he wound up staying for hours, being welcomed back to Ottawa. Now he was planning how to get out of here as fast as possible.

All he had to do was stand there like a prop and smile while Coach Wiebe read something about community. Shane was good at polite smiles and looking like everything is fine while in public. Once he was backstage, he was probably going to fall apart, further embarrassing himself. Right now, all he had to do was not over think having shown up a complete mess, or the fact that wearing Ilya's name across his back felt good, a weird mix of sexy and comforting. The shirt was soft from wear, a little loose from being stretched over Ilya's broad, muscular body. Now that he'd noticed the hint of Ilya's scent in the fabric, he was all too aware of it.

And why shouldn't it feel good? Wearing your boyfriend's shirt, especially when your boyfriend plays sports, is a normal thing. Soon, they'd be married, but it felt like they'd barely had any time to just be boyfriends and do cute boyfriend things. Harris had worn a Barrett jersey to a big fund raiser at a local gay bar. Shane had grown up here, but hadn't even heard of the bar until Ilya had posted pictures from the event. He remembered seeing the pictures of Troy and Harris dancing, surrounded by members of the local gay community, something he didn't even know anything about.

His heartbeat picked up a little. He knew Ilya was enjoying his little laundry mix up. He hadn't looked directly at Ilya since he'd realized the problem. He was worried that if he saw Ilya's expression his media-friendly mask would crack. He knew his boyfriend and how this would appeal to him. And dammit he liked doing things that appeal to Ilya. Indulging his boyfriend, pushing his own boundaries to really, really please Ilya always left him feeling so good, good in a way that lingered. It was also a way to express love for Ilya, his devotion. Maybe it was weird, but for so much of their time together he'd used sex to express his feelings towards Ilya, make him feel cared about. For a time, it has been the only way to express how he felt.

His heartbeat had also picked up because there was the fear, the stupid illogical fear that still clung to him. He didn't have a reason to be afraid anymore, but he was so used to being afraid of things like this, slipping up, being spotted. He tried to tell himself that his mistake didn't carry the danger it would have even just a few weeks ago.

He took a deep breath and rolled his shoulders. He didn't know which of the emotions sloshing through him was worse, but he refused to think about it anymore. He could feel himself on the edge of a spiral and back to pull himself back. Then, he felt Ilya's hand squeeze his firmly. When Wiebe paused for applause, Ilya leaned in close to him.

"Hollander, this will be over in a moment," Ilya spoke softly, but firmly. Ilya was grounding him, not pushing him. Shane focused on his voice. "You are fine. No one will know. Troy and I will cover you leaving the stage. Will be easy, you are short." Ilya and Troy had his back, of course they did. They literally had his back in this case, because it was that side of the damn shirt that was a problem!

Wiebe made one or two more remarks and then the presentation was over. Wyatt and some of the other players jumped down into the crowd to mingle with the fans. Shane fled to the makeshift backstage area with Ilya and Troy covering all angles.

Harris was waiting for him holding a cheesy Ottawa tourist shirt that he must have gotten from one of the mall's stores. He was running the event on behalf of the owners. Shane was sure he'd kept his cool, externally at least, on stage. Shane didn't know if Harris noticed the problem or if Ilya or Troy had gotten his attention somehow, but when Harris tossed him the shirt he felt relieved. He pulled off the Rozanov shirt, tossed it to Ilya, and pulled the new one on.

"Thank you. I promise I'll actually be prepared for these events in the future." Now that he was offstage, the blush he'd trying to hold back bloomed across his cheeks. He could feel how hot his skin was.

"You're fine!" Harris said. "Listen, considering how hard it can be to wrangle hockey players, I should probably carry some spares. There's a reason we don't trust you to wash and remember your game jerseys." Harris was all smiles and friendly words, but his eyes told a different story. Shane could see sadness in his eyes. He felt like a terrible disappointment.

Fuck. He'd harbored a hope that once he was settled here in Ottawa that he'd become close to Ilya's friends. Ilya clearly cared about them and Shane really wanted other gay men in his life, ones he could talk to. He knew he was bad at making friends, but before he'd even had a chance to try to figure out how to reach out to them, he was coming off like a hot mess. Hayden and Ilya irritated the shit out of each other, maybe it was unreasonable to think that Ilya's friends would like him.

"Still, sorry. I'll venmo you for the shirt." Shane picked up the bag full of snacks and extra sharpies he'd brought for signing. "See you later."

He walked out, cheeks burning, and struggling with a swirl of emotions. Ilya followed after a beat, like he hadn't expected Shane to take off so fast.



## Chapter 2

Once inside the car, Shane buried his face in his hands. Ilya got in and sat next to him, hand on his shoulder. Shane shook his head and said, "Let's get home." Ilya nodded and pressed the ignition.

Shane wanted to get home before they talked, but about ten minutes into the drive he suddenly burst out with "If anything you've been wearing MY team colors all this time." He wasn't ready to face what was really getting to him.

"You grew up as a fan of this team. Did you fantasize about the players? Think maybe you'd score with one someday?" Ilya gestured at himself and winked.

Shane laughed, a release of nervous energy rather than humor. Their familiar banter was a much needed comfort. "No, I never thought about that. I didn't know who I was yet. I had all these magazines of the players and all these saved photos that were just... I was just studying hockey physiques. It was just part of training, staring at locker room photos, Men's Health articles of their work out routines..."

Ilya laughed. "Yes, very good student. Wait, did you have these photo collections of anyone who is on our team?"

"Nope, good thing Jarle retired or I would be sharing a locker room with someone I used to stare at as I fell asleep. God, his workout routine was... inspiring, gave me some amazing dreams."

"Jarle? You were hot for Jarle?" Ilya's voice was full of fake shock. The Norwegian player had still been on defense for the Centaurs in Ilya's first year with the team. The man had aged very well.

"He's why I got into deep stretches, really pushing myself on hip flexibility."

"I will send him a thank you note," Ilya deadpanned.

Shane laughed again, with a bit more humor this time, and relaxed back into the car seat, ready to start picking apart his mess of a brain. Joking with his boyfriend let him drain off his nervous energy. When Shane went quiet, Ilya put on some music, turned down low, just enough to make the silence comfortable. Shane hated that fear still had a grip on him. He knew he wasn't going to shake all of it overnight, but he also wasn't going to let it run his life.

When they got out of the car, Ilya pressed the shirt into Shane's hands with a teasing smile. Shane made a grumpy sound and went inside, right into the bathroom. He had an idea of how to reclaim something from this shitty day, push back against the fears he was trying to shake. He reached into the dryer again and found a pair of Ilya's workout shorts, a pair he'd had for a while. Shane walked back out only wearing Ilya's shirt and the dark gray shorts.

“This what you want?” Shane asked.

“I always want you, but yes, this is very good,” Ilya looked up and down his body.

“I can just wear this now. I can go out wearing my boyfriend’s clothes, your merch. I could even go for a run right now, like this, unless of course I had a better offer?” Shane said the words casually, like his arousal wasn’t obvious. The loose fabric of his shorts, Ilya’s shorts, were visibly tented. He clearly wasn’t wearing anything underneath them. He enjoyed the effect he was having on Ilya, saw the sharp intake of breath, the way his body language shifted.

Ilya tilted his head for a moment, as if considering calling Shane’s bluff. Instead he walked close and whispered in his ear, “What do you want?”

“You, inside me, filling me, on top of me. Just you, looking up at you.”

Ilya’s eyebrows raised in surprise. Shane knew it was an odd request. They fucked often and here he was begging for it like he was sex-starved. Shane never got enough of Ilya taking him.

Ilya grabbed his hips and pulled him close, his thigh going between Shane’s legs and pressing into his erection. “You want me to take you, make you feel like you are mine?”

“Yes.” Then after a beat, “please.”

“You would really wear this running, not today, but another day?” Ilya slid his hand down, over his ass and under the leg of the shorts, cupping his right cheek.

“Running, shopping, out getting a burger. I wish I hadn’t panicked earlier. It should have been funny, embarrassing, but a funny, silly mistake because we’re finally really together. The shit that happens when two hockey players fall for each other.” He rocked against Ilya shamelessly. He could feel Ilya’s body hot against his own, feel how fast his breath was.

Ilya pulled back enough to kiss him, gentle at first like he was making sure Shane was really with him, and then deep with a slight growl in the back of his throat. Shane just sank into his own need and enjoyed the slide of their bodies for several long moments before backing up to lead Ilya to the bedroom. Shane reached for the hem of his shirt as if he was about to take it off.

Ilya grabbed one of his wrists. “Keep my shirt on. I want to look down and see my name written across you while you kneel before me, while I take your mouth. You like wearing this, yes?”

“Yes.” The shirt did feel good, and so did Ilya being demanding. Shane just wanted to melt into this feeling.

“These can go,” Ilya said and pushed the shorts down. They slid easily off of Shane’s hips. Ilya took his hand and led him to the bedroom, leaving the shorts behind.

Once they were by the bed, Ilya stepped behind him. “Stay there, I want to look at you.”

Shane heard the sounds of Ilya undressing. He didn't stay totally still, he shifted his hips in a slow circle that he hoped looked good. Ilya made a nice sound, so he assumed he at least appreciated the effort.

"On your knees, moya lyubov."

Shane complied quickly, turning around and sinking to the carpet. Ilya was fully hard, so he wouldn't be there long. He pulled Ilya into his mouth and moaned.

"Arch your back a little, yes, there is a nice view of your ass. So good you are, and all mine. Mine..."

Arching his back to give Ilya the view he wanted was awkward, but the low rumble that entered his voice when Shane obeyed was so sweet. He lived for that. Ilya's cock was thick and heavy in his mouth, and Ilya rocked in very slowly.

No matter how slow Ilya wanted to take this, to savor this new bit of spice to their sex life, Shane was more than willing to stay right there for as long as Ilya wanted, enjoying Ilya's pleasure and the slide of his cock against his tongue. He could get lost in pleasuring Ilya like this, he had on many nights. But he also knew that Ilya was going to fuck him, just like he'd asked.

Ilya pulled back and guided Shane onto the bed. Shane lay back on the pillows as Ilya grabbed lube from the bedside table. Ilya kissed him messily as he reached down and pressed a finger to his opening. Shane whimpered as Ilya explored him without pushing in yet. It felt so good, but he also wanted Ilya to get on with things. Slowly Ilya pressed in one finger and began fucking him with it.

"Please, please fuck me already. Ilya, please..."

"Need my cock so badly?"

"Yes! Fuck..."

Ilya pressed a second finger in and that was better at least. Shane pushed back against the fingers as much as he could. Ilya kissed his neck as needy little gasps slipped from Shane's open mouth. Then he finally, finally pulled his hand away and pushed his cock against Shane's opening. He slid in slowly but steadily and didn't stop until he was all the way in, and Shane could feel Ilya's balls against him. Ilya stayed that deep for a moment to push the shirt Shane was still wearing up, exposing his stomach and chest. Then Ilya pulled back a little and pushed into him again and again.

Ilya lifted Shane's legs over his shoulders and leaned forward. Shane was filled, could feel a stretch in his thighs from Ilya folding his body, could feel Ilya's breath as they kissed. Shane opened his eyes and looked up to see Ilya looking down at him. He was filled, surrounded and overwhelmed by Ilya.

"This what you need, love?" Ilya said.

“Always,” Shane breathed.

Ilya’s thrusts slowly grew harder and harder. Shane reached up and pressed his hands to Ilya’s sides just wanting to touch whatever skin he could, feel connected as he sank into pleasure.

“So good, the way you take me is so good. Fuck, Shane...” Ilya groaned and then sounds instead of words spilled out of him. Shane could feel Ilya take the occasional deep breath, a tell that he was struggling to last, keep from coming too soon. Shane knew how good he was making this for Ilya, and that Ilya was focused on Shane’s pleasure, making sure he was thoroughly fucked and came first.

Ilya shifted an arm and gently stroked Shane’s cock in time with his thrusts. Shane barely needed anything to tip him over into orgasm. He cried out as it hit, a wave through his body. He felt his own come splatter across him, then the familiar feeling of Ilya’s hips slamming in as he gave in to his own orgasm.

Ilya roared with release. His muscles flexed and relaxed, then his chest heaved as he panted, utterly spent. Shane watched through the haze of his own bliss. Wearing the shirt had really gotten to Ilya, as had Shane’s teasing. They were definitely going to play with this some more.

After cleaning up and getting some water, they lay on the bed and held each other. Shane had swapped the thoroughly soiled Rozanov shirt for a fresh one from the dryer, wanting to carry that energy into their afterglow, just in a tidy way. The sun sent late day light across the room. Shane liked fucking early in the day like this and just laying about with Ilya, breathing in sync with him. As the light grew dimmer, Shane knew they’d be up soon and deciding on dinner. He thought back to this morning and sighed.

Ilya turned toward him. “Everything alright?”

“I’ve made the worst possible impressions on your friends. I was a complete mess.”

“Don’t worry. You will be seeing a lot of them once everything calms down.”

“Will they even want to deal with me after today? The way Harris was looking at me... He was trying to be nice but he was clearly disappointed. One of the few chances he’d had to speak with me, and I was a high strung wreck that bolted for the door.”

Ilya rolled onto one side and put a hand on Shane’s chest.

“Shane, I promise Harris doesn’t think bad of you. He is going to take time to get to know you. He wants to take you out to the family farm and feed you cider and cake. He wants to find a way to get you onto the porch on a warm afternoon for hours to learn about the man his friend is so desperately and completely in love with, that is what he thinks of you. Trust me, he has told me many times. Troy is a bit quieter, but he was glad to have your back earlier. That is how he is.”

Ilya was silent for a moment and then continued. “Troy... I have a feeling he understands what you are going through. The way he’s reacted to a few things I’ve said, there is a story

there I don't know yet." When Shane didn't respond, Ilya continued. "Please, this is the last thing to worry about. Neither will rush to any judgment. They are so happy for me and to have you here."

Shane fidgeted a bit. He wanted to believe it, but he couldn't shake the feeling he'd let everyone down this morning. There was no changing what happened, so he just had to move forward and hope Ilya was right, something he often was when it comes to people. "Okay, but I want to find a way to mingle with some of the fans, soon. Ottawa fans, I grew up as one of them."

"I know. I am sorry, you had plans for today that were important to you. I have a few ideas."

Shane shifted and snuggled into Ilya, grabbing a few more moments of quiet intimacy before they got up.

## Chapter 3

Shane and Ilya took off their sunglasses, ball caps and jackets, Ilya juggling Anya's leash as he did. They had just arrived at a queer artist pop-up to help people get ready for Ottawa Pride, which was still a few weeks away. Here people could get their fits together for the upcoming parades and events by shopping local artists rather than buying things online from big corporations. There were several dozen booths set up with pins, stickers, silkscreened hoodies, collared shirts made from custom printed fabric, hand knit toques in the colors of various pride flags and so much more. Scattered among the usual offerings were stickers and pins of centaurs with rainbow colored hair or wearing pride-striped headbands. There was a good sized crowd of people shopping and talking. A sno-cone vendor near the front was doing brisk business.

Jacket stowed, everyone could see Shane's new official Rozanov jersey bought from the team store. It was expensive, but well made and worth it. Ilya was wearing a shirt with Shane's face plastered all over it amid little pink hearts that he'd found on some god forsaken corner of the internet. Shane had been horrified when the shirt arrived in the mail, but of course Ilya had to take things a step further.

They were immediately recognized, and people starting gasping or laughing at their outfits. Someone in mushroom-print overalls rushed forward to ask for a picture. Ilya pulled Shane close and they had their first fan selfie with them as a couple.

Now that one fan had gotten a picture, dozens of people quickly came forward hoping for their own, forming a very long and wobbly line. Some people also asked for pictures with Anya. Ilya was delighted that Anya was also a star and she soaked up the attention, tail wagging so hard her butt wiggled. Once they got through the initial line, they were able to move around a bit between pictures and try to make it to the booths. Ilya spotted one that sold pride flag bandannas and ball caps for dogs and went nuts buying Anya a whole wardrobe. Once she had a rainbow stripe bandanna around her neck, even people wanted even more pictures with her.

"Now that she has all this fashion, she needs her own instagram," Ilya said.

"Now that you mention it, I'm surprised she doesn't have one already," Shane said, picking her up for yet another picture. She wiggled and licked him. After the photo another booth caught Ilya's eye.

"Ah, come here, I found you a shirt!" Ilya pulled his arm and Shane kept Anya in his arms just to navigate the chaos easier.

Ilya picked up a bright pink shirt that said 'Trophy Husband' and held it up to Shane's shoulders as if checking the size. "My trophy husband, so true."

Shane actually gaped at Ilya for a moment and then scowled. Around them, the crowd took pictures and laughed. They thought they knew why it was funny, but there was more to joke

than they understood. Ilya's smirk had made it clear he was thinking of a night they'd spent in Shane's trophy room.

"Not a chance," Shane said.

"But it's perfect for you, *reminds you of who you are*, yes?"

"In your dreams, Rozanov," he said and went to the next booth. He heard Ilya laugh and wondered if the menace he planned to marry was buying it anyway.

The event was chaotic, but fun. Crowds and excitement followed them as they tried to shop. As private as Shane was, he enjoyed signing things and taking pictures with fans. He was a hockey fan, had grown up as one. He empathized with the excitement fans had, but the energy here was different. They might not be the first gay hockey players, but being here at a local queer event as a couple clearly meant a lot to people.

He'd felt so isolated from queer community, even after word had gotten out that he was gay. Attracting attention at an event wasn't the same as the personal connections he hoped to form, friendships he'd hoped to make, but the outpouring of joy all around him was amazing. He was used to his presence in public causing a stir, but he wasn't used to way him and Ilya were being thanked, the type of excitement some of the fans had and the way some people were quiet and looked at them with gentle expressions.

When Scott had come out, he and Ilya had felt dozens of emotions at once. Shane felt like he saw echoes of that same hope and joy in the faces of some of the fans they talked to. He kept thinking about seeing Scott and Kip on magazines covers or hugging after a game, that bright and painful feeling like maybe better things were possible, maybe they could hold onto each other.

When Scott came out, he'd felt dozens of emotions all at once. Shane felt like he saw echoes of that same hope and joy in the faces of some of the fans they talked to. He kept thinking about seeing Scott and Kip on magazine covers or hugging after a game, that bright and painful feeling like maybe better things were possible, maybe they could hold onto each other. Some of the reactions he felt like he understood, others were a mystery to him. He just did his best to give some time to everyone, listen to the fans and also encourage people over who seemed a bit shy.

One lady came up and said, "My son he... you, you boys just mean a lot to him." She left before they could respond to offer her anything to give to him, she was too overcome with emotion.

Eventually, they needed a break, so Ilya grabbed coffee and cupcakes from a local bakeshop that had set up there. The cupcakes had striped icing in different pride flags. Ilya was excited to see one was the bi flag. Anything that was specifically bi representation made him light up, so Shane decided to not object to the cupcakes even though the table had less sugary options. They found a nice spot on the grass far enough away from the event that hopefully they'd be able to catch their breath a bit.

"You spent time with lots of fans," Ilya said. "Feel better?"

Shane laughed. "I feel exhausted, but good. I'm glad we're here." He drained half the water bottle from his bag before taking a sip of his coffee.

"We could go, now that we have a chance," Ilya said.

"I'd like to stay for a bit, if that's okay." He wasn't sure if he was up for another wave of fans, but he wasn't ready to leave. "But maybe we stop causing as much of a crowd."

"You've got your press face on a little, even now."

Shane nodded. "Yeah, just a lot of emotion out there. I'm going to be thinking about today for a while. What we mean to some of them, it's so much, I don't even know how to process that."

Ilya tore off a chunk of his cupcake with a good bit of striped frosting on top and held it out to Shane.

"What, isn't that the same flavor as mine?"

"You are used to having bisexual in your mouth. Thought it might help ground you."

Shane glared at Ilya, who had a hint of challenge in his eyes. He thought it was too much in public, for a moment, but he'd seen couples do far more in public his whole life. A rebellious feeling rose up and he quickly leaned forward and took the whole chunk into his mouth and then leaned back to chew. He heard someone squawk nearby, probably someone who'd watching them. He was sure someone had caught that on video. Ilya's eyes widened, delighted.

His boyfriend was right, the bite had grounded him, just for a different reason. It felt good to push back against all the fear and rules that had dominated their lives. And surprising Ilya like that, rising to his challenges, always felt good. He'd tried to take the chunk cleanly, but was pretty sure he had frosting on the side of his mouth.

Ilya reached out. "You have some bisexual on your lips."

Shane pushed his hand away. "Yeah, typical day for me." He leaned in for a kiss and let Ilya lick the frosting off.

Ilya pulled him down as they kissed. Shane went with him, just for a moment. He didn't want a full on make-out session surrounded by people holding up their phones like they were checking messages, acting like it wasn't painfully obvious they were recording. A little teasing he could do, but anything more than that he wanted to be in the moment and focusing just on Ilya.

Then a dog licked the side of his face.

"Chiron, no!" Harris said.

"Chiron yes, I agree. I like to do the same." Ilya sat up, causing Shane to fall to the side, and then rubbed the head of the biggest dog Shane had ever been close to. Right behind him,

Harris looked embarrassed and Troy was just smiling.

“Seriously?” Shane propped himself up on his elbows and glared at Ilya.

Anya was up and bumping against Chiron to demand his attention. The two of them started to jump and sniff and play around each other as much as their leashes would allow. Shane sat up and elbowed Ilya before settling against him.

“You two seem to be enjoying yourselves!” Harris said, and sat down next to them. Troy followed and sat right next to his boyfriend. “Sorry, Chiron wanted to join in.”

“No, puppy has good taste.” Ilya said. “Did you see all the different Centaurs designs at the booths?”

“I am starting a whole collection of gay fan merch for the team. It’s amazing,” Harris said.

“He’s not kidding,” Troy added. “He’d already planning a display wall. Good to see you guys.”

They fell into friendly chatter for a bit. Shane wanted to relax, but the other day was still weighing on him. During a pause in the flow of the conversation he said, “I’m sorry I bolted the other day.”

“Why?” Harris asked. “A mix up like that, fuck, that must have been your worst nightmare for years. I barely know a drop of what you boys have been through and it breaks my heart.”

Oh, that’s why Harris had looked so sadly at him, Shane realized, he’d been concerned about him.

“Shane has been worried. I’ve been telling him not to worry,” Ilya said.

“You’re his friends and it looked like I was having a meltdown over being visibly gay in public.” Shane said. It was only as he said that words that the final piece of why this had been bothering him clicked into place.

“Even if you had, what you’ve been through isn’t going to disappear overnight,” Troy said. “Now here you are, out and living your best lives. It’s good to see.”

“At some point I am going to sit on Ilya until he gives me at least a general outline of what the fuck happened, the real history of the famous rivals,” Harris said. “I’ll kidnap him if I need to. Actually, I have kidnapping plans for both of you. Ilya, you’ve been keeping Shane all to yourself!”

Ilya gestured as if to say ‘see?’ Then he said, “No need, I promise.” Ilya raised his hands in surrender. “I’ve wanted to tell you everything, and for you to know my Shane.”

Shane could hear the emotion in Ilya’s voice and felt a swell of love for him.

“And remember, if either of you are having a rough time, you’ve got us,” Harris said and reached over to squeeze Ilya’s hands.

“Thank you,” Ilya said simply. Shane swallowed and nodded, not sure what to say.

“Now, more importantly, Ilya where did you get that amazing shirt and is there any chance there’s one of Troy?” Harris asked.

Ilya ran freed a hand and ran it proudly over the horrible shirt covered in images of Shane and pink sparkles. “Custom made. I will send you a link to the artist I worked with.”

“Wait,” Shane said. “You had someone make that for you? That’s even worse!”

“None of the ones on Esty really captured my feelings,” Ilya said as if that explained anything.

“It’s beautiful. I can’t wait to get one of Troy!” Harris laughed.

Shane groaned and put his face in his hands. He heard Troy lean forward and softly say “Help.”

Shane cracked up and Troy joined him a beat after, while their boyfriends talked like Ilya’s shirt was clearly high fashion, was art in T shirt form, and they were weird for laughing. He felt tension deep in his shoulders finally melt away. The Troy and Harris in front of him started to click with the Troy and Harris from all the stories Ilya had told him, and he felt like he knew them a little. He managed to catch his breath. This city was both his old and his new home. He felt a sense of peace, knowing he had so much support here, and he hoped he’d find a way to support his new friends in return.

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