

betrayal (never comes from your enemies).

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by [Jooocccc](#)

Summary

“You know - my biggest fucking fear came true on a *huge* scale. The entire *planet* found out I’m gay, Ilya can never go back to his home country again, my life blew up, and none of you asked if I was okay. I can’t believe I almost gave him up just so I would never have to face this *exact* reaction from people who yesterday I would’ve considered family. I can’t believe what I almost let you all cost me.” And then, quieter, “I can’t believe how little it took for you to throw me away.”

Hauling his bag over his shoulder, Shane stared around the room, one more glance at the men he’d given the best years of his career to.

“Best of luck next year without me.”

OR

Hurt by the team's accusations that he let the Centaurs win, Shane gets his pain off his chest before leaving the Voyageurs' locker room for good.

Notes

eeee, i'm nervous - hi new fandom!!! I (like many other people on rwrbtwt) read the Game Changers series and it altered me physically, mentally, and emotionally. shane is my sweet prince who deserved so much better from his team, and i felt like he deserved to let them all know to their face that they'd lost their captain, and I also wanted to dive a pinch more into the conversation about him joining the Centaurs!!

please be aware, there is a bit of implied homophobia in the way the teammates talk to Shane right after the game!

<3 i hope you enjoy!

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

Ilya: I love you.

Shane: I love you, too.

Shane: How's your team taking it?

Ilya: [1 image attachment]

A pang of longing and jealousy struck Shane in the chest, *hard*. He smiled softly at his screen, at Ilya beaming at the camera, Troy, Bood, Wyatt, and Harris smiling behind him. Harris was forming a heart with his hands, Troy was flashing a thumbs-up, and Bood and Wyatt were patting Ilya on the back. Some kid that Shane thought was named Dylan? Or Tanner? Tanner Dillon? was hanging a pride flag in the locker room. It warmed Shane, knowing that Ilya had that support. He deserved it. It's just...

Shane wished he had it, too.

His teammates - the men he'd come to view as *family*, as *brothers*, had turned their backs on him at the first chance. But Ilya had it - Ilya had teammates who cheered him on, and Ilya deserved that. He'd sacrificed so much for their relationship. *He deserved it*.

Ilya had believed that their careers would be okay, that their friendships would survive the scandal.

Ilya's had.

And Shane was *so* happy for him. So relieved that Ilya had finally gotten a break from pretending that he didn't even find any joy in being proven right. Because he *had* been right. At least halfway. The video had upended Shane's career, his friendships, his *life*, and he was struck with the almost constant urge to scream, or cry, or vomit.

Shane: You deserve it <3

Ilya: How is your team taking it?

Shane: They're certainly not the Centaurs.

Shane: It'll get easier. They're supposed to trust me, and now they know I've been lying to their faces.

Shane: They're hurt.

Ilya: Is okay if you're hurt by them being hurt.

Shane: Who gave you permission to be all wise?

Ilya: Therapy :) you should try

Ilya: But seriously. Was not a lie. Was a secret. Very different.

Ilya: Everyone has them.

Shane: Mine just happened to be that I've secretly been in love with the man I'm supposed to hate for 10 years.

Ilya: You have loved me for 10 years? ;)

Shane: You're dumb.

Shane: But yes. Probably. In some way or another.

Shane: I wish everyone could just see that and forget about it. It's no different than Drapeau telling everyone he's been engaged to a girl nobody's ever met.

Ilya: You are right, it should be no big deal. I'm sorry your team sucks. I will make sure to beat you next weekend. Humiliate them for your honor.

Shane: I would lose, too???

Ilya: Yes. Is a shame, but is for the bigger better.

Shane: Greater good?

Ilya: That, too

Ilya: Is it almost time for your practice?

Shane: Yeah. I've been hiding in the parking lot for 30 minutes.

Ilya: You could always quit and be my pretty trophy husband.

Shane: You'd love that, wouldn't you?

Ilya: Of course ;)

Ilya: Knock them dead, Captain. Don't forget who you are and what you've done for them.

Ilya: And don't forget how worth it this is...

Ilya: [1 image attachment]

Shane flushed, the visual of Ilya in grey boxers and nothing else filling his screen. With a gulp, he forced himself to calm down.

Shane: I'll tell your coach you're taking thirst traps in the locker room.

Shane: And by the way, we'd be worth it even without those ridiculous abs of yours.

Ilya: <3

Shane: I love you. I have to go.

Ilya: I love you too. Good luck.

Shane forced himself to take a few more steadying breaths before stepping out of his car. He would be okay. Things would get easier. His team just needed time. They appreciated him, and his skill on the ice would more than make up for any disappointment he'd caused.

Those were the things he told himself, over and over like a mantra, as he walked into the locker room.

He was the first one there - he was *always* the first one there, because he cared about this team, he *loved* this team, had carried it through its meteoric rise. He felt a responsibility to this team - for God's sake, he'd almost given up *Ilya* just to avoid making waves with it. Would anyone ever understand that? Would anyone take the time to realize how hard this was for Shane, too? A secret he'd been guarding for years had been splashed across every news site, every tabloid, every social media platform, and used as gossip. And his teammates were, what? Mad at *Shane*?

Maybe *Ilya* was right. Maybe it was okay if he was mad at them, too.

Shane had been on the ice for almost 45 minutes by the time the rest of the team had trickled in.

"Captain," Hayden said, smiling tentatively at his best friend.

"Pike," Shane said, smiling back. It really hadn't been Hayden's fault, everything that had happened - and god knew Shane didn't have room to push away the only friend he had left on the team. "Coach wants us to scrimmage. Everyone ready?"

They were split into two teams, Shane facing off against Latimer, who'd joined the season prior.

"So what you'll want to d—"

"I don't need someone like you to teach me how to play. I'm here for a reason," he said, sneering cruelly.

"Someone like *me*?" Shane's tone dared him to elaborate.

"Y'know -"

But the puck was dropped, and Shane slapped it in the direction of his team, winning the face-off.

"Word of advice from *someone like me*," Shane hissed. "Pay attention to the game."

And sure, Latimer looked properly admonished, but there was plenty of the game left to play.

Shane's team won - because *of course* it did, Sabourin had executed a beautiful goal in the first 3 minutes of the game, and Shane got two more with assists from Murphy. J.J. sank the final shot at the buzzer, sealing their victory, and Shane beamed. This was why he played; this was why his team would have to forgive him. He was the best, and even if they couldn't appreciate his privacy, they could appreciate his talent.

They had to - because the other option was that he'd given his fucking *soul* to a team that couldn't wait to watch him topple.

Shane was mad. No - Shane was *furious*. He replayed every moment of their game in his head, marking every chance they had to score, to *win*. All the mistakes that had been made, chances his teammates had missed out on, directives he'd barked out just to be ignored, plays that would have *won* if his team had just fucking *listened to him*.

But no, why would they do that? He'd obviously committed some sort of cardinal sin by falling in love.

And if it weren't enough that they'd all basically given up on him, they were now trying to twist this around and make the loss his fault.

Shane was *furious*.

"What the fuck did you just say?" He asked, his tone deadly calm, almost numb in his disbelief.

"I said," sneered Drapeau. "It must be nice, knowing you're *winning* tonight either way. Is that why you tossed it? You get fucked better when you let him win?"

Stumbling back as if he'd been slapped by the accusation, Shane hissed, "How dare you? *How dare you?* After the things I've done for this team, the things I was willing to give up for this team - and you... you just..." Shane looked around the locker room. "You think I let them win? You think - what? That we take turns? Flip a coin and see who gets to win that night?"

He was met by a telling, deafening silence that made him sick.

"Of course not," Hayden said, standing up. "You fought just as hard tonight as the rest of us, and anyone who thinks differently is just in denial of their own shortcomings."

"Our shortcomings?!" Murphy yelled, standing, too. "The supposed best player in the league managed to trip over air *just* in time for his fuck-buddy to kick us out of the fucking playoffs!"

"It would never have come down to that if *any* of you had listened to me when I called out plays!" Shane yelled, his face growing red with frustration, embarrassment, *hurt*.

"And we were supposed to just trust that you-"

"You're supposed to *trust*," Shane interrupted. "That I'm a better player than you. That I'm a better player than 90% of this league. That I've got a C on my jersey because *I* know how to win a game. *Me*, not you. I've been seeing Ilya for *ten years* now, and not once have I thrown a game. You just can't accept that we lost because we *all* played poorly tonight." He scoffed, yanking his jersey off and throwing it into his duffel bag. "The years, the blood, the sweat, the tears I've given to this team, and this is the thanks I get?" The last of his pads came next, shoved one by one into his bag. "How dare you all?"

"Shane, they're talking like this because we just lost," J.J. tried intervening, diffusing the tension. "Don't say anything you'll regret."

Regret. What a ridiculous concept. Shane regretted every hour he'd given up with his fiancé to help this stupid fucking team win. Shane regretted ever thinking that *this* was more important than the love that he'd found. Shane regretted ever believing that these people were his family, that they would have his back. Shane was done with this team, done with these traitors who couldn't cheer for his happy ending, done with the doubt and division.

"Sure, no regrets, right?" Shane asked, his voice calm again. "Yes, I tripped, and yes, the Centaurs beat us, but they won this series long before we stepped onto the ice tonight, and they did because they *trust* their Captain. Because they trust each other. Ilya kept this secret just as I did, but his team didn't turn their backs on him. *That* is why they won. And he is not my '*fuckbuddy*,'" Shane growled, turning his glare on Murphy. "He is my fiancé, and we have played against each other for as long as we've been in love." He was quiet for a long moment, zipping his bag shut now that he was down to his compression pants and sweat-wicking shirt. "You know - my biggest fucking fear came true on a *huge* scale. The entire *planet* found out I'm gay, Ilya can never go back to his home country again, my life blew up, and **none** of you asked if I was okay. I can't believe I almost gave him up just so I would never have to face this *exact* reaction from people who yesterday I would've considered family. I can't believe what I almost let you all cost me." And then, quieter, "I can't believe how little it took for you to throw me away."

Hauling his bag over his shoulder, Shane stared around the room, one more glance at the men he'd given the best years of his career to.

"Best of luck next year without me."

It was silent as Shane walked towards the door, the words sinking in, their meaning finally making impact when the locker room erupted in protests. By then, it was too late; Shane had already let the door shut behind him and was walking the unfamiliar route to the visiting team's locker room.

Coach Wiebe opened when he knocked, a warm, sad smile on his face.

"Hollander," he said, nodding. "Didn't come to knock out my star player, did you?"

His tone was kind, teasing even, but Shane was deflated. "Hayes is safe and sound," he managed. Wiebe placed a warm hand on Shane's shoulder, squeezing it comfortingly, and it took all Shane had not to burst into tears at the unexpected kindness. Ilya had mentioned more than once how easygoing Wiebe was, but Shane had never even received such warmth from his own coach, let alone that of a rival team.

"I'll go get your boy," he promised, disappearing into the locker room.

Moments later, Shane was greeted by the hulking figure of his fiancé, who didn't even have time to say hello before Shane was in his arms.

"Sweetheart," Ilya cooed, stroking his hair. "Was a great game, you played hard. Your team did not."

“I’m sorry I pulled you from your celebrations.”

“Was not so much celebrating,” confessed Ilya. “Was too worried about you.”

“You should be celebrating. You could win the Cup-”

“I knew your team would be cruel, as they have been. Tell me what they said to you.”

Tugging his bottom lip between his teeth, Shane shook his head. “Later. Now’s not the time for that. You deserve to celebrate. I just wanted to see you. Congratulate you. I’ll see you at home after you’re done drinking your way through the city.”

“You know, the - what are they called? WAGs? Are joining... perhaps my HAG could join?”

Shane snorted, pulling away and pushing a hand through Ilya’s damp curls. “Maybe another night.”

“Is for the best, they might not take kindly to a Voyageur crashing the party.”

After extracting himself from his arms, Shane smiled up at him. “I’m not a Voyageur anymore,” he said, turning to leave.

“What?”

“I quit the team.”

“*WHAT?!*”

Ilya did *not* drink his way through the city. He’d followed after Shane, not wanting to be anywhere but by his side after such a long, grueling series. The comfort of Shane’s familiar mattress was long overdue when Ilya finally collapsed into it that night. Shane was shivering from the cold, but also from the exhaustion he felt after such an emotional evening. He still couldn’t quite believe all the things he’d said.

Then again, he couldn’t believe the things his former teammates had said either.

“Shane Hollander,” Ilya said, his tone nauseatingly fond. “A free agent. I never thought I’d see the day.”

“I didn’t either. I thought I was going to break a record, being on the same team for the longest time,” Shane said sadly, waving that dream goodbye. He would’ve, he’d wanted to. And maybe if Ilya’s plane hadn’t nearly crashed, he’d still be on track to do it.

Now that he knew who they really were, he couldn’t help but think of what a waste that would’ve been.

Still, he felt unmoored, not having a team, like he was out to sea without a life vest, treading unknown waters. It was *terrifying*.

It was also a huge fucking relief. Shane could start fresh somewhere. Somewhere without secrets, without skeletons in his closet. His privacy had been torn from him, the parts of himself that he hid so desperately yanked from his arms, but now anyone who signed him would know *exactly* who they were signing.

“I thought about going to Quebec, if they’d want me. Toronto would be closer, but after what they did to Troy, I don’t think they’d want me, nor do I really think I’d want *them*,” Shane rambled. “Maybe Sudbury?” Ilya was silent, looking thoughtful. “What’s on your mind? This is your life, too, and I’d never ask you to leave the Centaurs just because I couldn’t handle some... silly locker room talk.” *Maybe I shouldn’t have quit*, he thought, the self-doubt filtering back in. *Maybe they would’ve come around*.

“Was much worse than *silly locker room talk*, Shane. They hurt you. Accused you of cheating, of letting me win! As if I would need your help!” He said the last part playfully, stroking Shane’s hair before growing serious again. “They turned their back on their captain, Hollander. Is unforgivable. After all the wins you gave them, all the *years* you gave them. They do not deserve your talent.”

Ilya was right. Shane *knew* Ilya was right. It was just...

“Then what do I do? Where do I go?”

Ilya hummed. “You would look very good in black and red.”

The thought hit Shane like a punch in the gut. Black and red. *Black and red*.

It could work, couldn’t it? Maybe? No, that’s too much to ask of the hockey world, they would never accept—

Shane thought again, as he often did, about how powerful he’d felt in Crowell’s office. *You think we don’t know what we’re worth to this league?*

“You... you’d be okay with that?”

“Be okay with it?” Ilya asked, sounding incredulous. “Sweetheart, I’ve *dreamt* of it. Me and you - *unstoppable*,” he murmured against Shane’s jaw. “Imagine it, Hollander. Me, Captain, of course, you on the center, we could execute power plays like nobody’s ever seen. You would be in your hometown - they would love you, the fans.”

The idea made Shane whimper. He’d been adored, once. And even if the last few weeks had made it seem like it’d been a lifetime ago, his jersey had been the Voyageur’s most popular piece of merch. Signs with his name on it used to fill the arenas they’d play in. Montreal had loved him, until they hadn’t. Seemingly as content to forget he existed as his team had been. But they’d loved him once.

Could Shane have that again?

“They would scream your name, and then they would scream mine, and your stall would be right next to mine. You could sit with me on the bus, on the planes, we would have our own

hotel room wherever we went...”

Shane whimpered again, though this time it had more to do with Ilya’s tantalizing fingers than the words he was saying.

Although... the picture he was painting certainly didn’t *hurt*. They could share their lives - *fully*. Live together, work together, travel together, *play together*.

“Think of the headlines they would write about us. Shane Hollander assists his husband, hockey god, Ilya Rozanov, with the game-winning goal, Ottawa advances to the Stanley Cup finals...” Ilya was kissing his shoulder then, which was criminal, really. He knew that made Shane vulnerable. “King of Hockey Shane Hollander breaks the record for career goals, assisted by his husband Ilya Rozanov. Would make history, you and me. What do you say?”

“Hmm,” Shane hummed, pretending to think about it.

“Say yes,” Ilya said, wrapping his fingers loosely around Shane’s length, the thin fabric of his sleep pants doing nothing to hide his arousal. “Make me happy, Shane Hollander. *Say yes*.”

And, like, seriously. It was morally questionable how willing Ilya was to take advantage of his fiancé in such a state, but Shane couldn’t find it in himself to put up much of a fight. It would be a dream to play alongside Ilya, to play in the town he grew up in.

He jerked his hips up, just a bit, silently begging for more of Ilya’s touch. And then, on an exhale - “*Yes*.”

Ilya rewarded him for his good behavior into the early hours of the morning.

“Good morning,” Shane said, hugging Ilya’s bicep, braced tightly against his chest.

“Mm. Morning, moya lyubov. How are you?” Ilya’s fingers toyed with Shane’s waistband until the smaller man swatted them away.

“Still sore,” Shane grumbled, as if he didn’t love the ache between his legs. As if he hadn’t begged for it the night before. “No funny business until I can walk straight.”

“You *did* tell me you wanted to limp this morning,” Ilya reminded him with a little pinch on his hip. “Was only granting your wish. Happy husband, happy life, right?”

“You’re already so well-trained,” Shane quipped back, turning around to kiss Ilya’s chest. “I don’t even need to buy the little beef jerky treats.”

“Beef jerky?”

“Yes, to train you. Y’know. Sit, stay, good boy.”

“You little-“ Ilya descended on him with fast fingers, tickling him anywhere he could reach as Shane screamed in protest, trying desperately to fight back.

Woof, woof! Anya barked from outside their door, immediately pulling Ilya's attention away and giving Shane a chance to catch his breath.

"See?" He said, lifting an eyebrow. "I trained her, too, now she protects her Papa from her mean, scary Daddy."

"Will show you mean, scary Daddy tonight if you do not watch your mouth," Ilya threatened playfully, though the words immediately shut Shane up, his cheeks flushing bright red. "Come. Is time for Anya's breakfast and walk." And then, with that lazy smirk that still made Shane's legs wobble, he said, "I'm sure no one will notice your limp."

With Anya's hands-free leash wrapped around his waist, coffee in one hand, and Shane's fingers laced through his other, Ilya was more content than he'd maybe ever felt. No matter the shit storm their careers had become, or the fury he felt towards the Montreal team on Shane's behalf, or the shock he still sometimes felt following the outing - they had this. They'd earned this. They had morning walks with their dog in a neighborhood they felt safe in, and they had a *future* that would be spent together. Forever. He had a fiancé who had bravely laced his fingers through Ilya's the moment they'd turned onto the sidewalk.

They had this. What more could he ask for?

Well, he'd asked for it last night, the words spilling out in a desperate attempt to remind Shane that he would belong somewhere. But, more than that, it had been a secret, silly dream of his for a while. Probably since one of the All-Star Games, the unparalleled *thrill* he'd gotten in finally being able to work *with* Shane. The short-lived freedom that had come from being able to put aside that fake hatred and finally collaborate with the man he loved.

It was a silly dream, though - Shane would never be comfortable with that much public scrutiny, the disapproval that would come along with it. It would be far too much to expect so shortly after something as traumatic as their outing.

"About-," Ilya started, the same moment Shane said, "So I was thinking-"

"Oh," they both said. And then, again in sync. "You first."

With a chuckle, Ilya shook his head. "Shane, you speak. Please."

Shane nodded, taking a sip of his coffee and squeezing Ilya's hand, as if absorbing the nerve needed to speak.

"I - what you said last night, about me being on the Centaurs. Did you mean it?"

"I did."

"And you've... thought of it before?"

"Many times."

Shane frowned at that, tugging his bottom lip between his teeth. "I feel horrible. I've never even considered that," he admitted.

"Is not horrible. You did not know your team was full of shit people."

That *was* true, and it did help Shane feel a little less horrible. Ilya always knew what to say.

"How did it go? In your... *many* thoughts?"

"Perfectly," was all Ilya said for a while - and then, "We are the best players in the league. We will play the best hockey the world has ever seen together."

"And the Centaurs would really want me?"

"You are hockey *legend*, Shane Hollander. Of course they would."

"Even with... everything?"

A smirk spread across Ilya's lips. "I think it would make them want you more. They hate Crowell. Is another win-win for all."

"I haven't *not* been Captain in years."

"I am good Captain. You will adjust." It was quiet for a while, long enough that Ilya felt the need to clarify. "I would not treat you as less than me just because you are not Captain, Shane."

"No, I know," Shane promised, squeezing Ilya's hand once more. "I'm sorry. I'm just thinking."

Humming his acknowledgment, Ilya drained the last of his cup, hooking it onto the carabiner on his waist silently. Shane stayed quiet for the rest of their walk, waiting until they walked back through their front gate to continue.

"Would we..." he started, worrying his bottom lip again. Ilya longed to reach out, to pull it from the violent grip of Shane's pretty teeth. He refrained, though just barely, as it was clear Shane was working through something serious. "Would *we* be okay?"

"Okay?"

"I mean - this whole... we've had ten years of this, of being *rivals*. Of being the best we can be against each other - and... changing that, working together, you having authority over me - what if... what if it changes everything? I'm just... I'm scared. So much has changed, so much of our plan is just *gone*, it's wrecked, and we *had* a roadmap to all of this, and now we don't, and - what if you start to resent me because I don't listen to you the way a normal player would listen to their Captain because we're *married*? What if we can't focus on the game because someone uses our relationship against us? What if - what if you lose interest in me because we aren't competitors anymore?"

It was obvious by the way Shane said the last part that it had been weighing on him. Ilya froze in their foyer, stricken by the fear in Shane's voice.

"Lose interest? In you?" Ilya made it sound as impossible as he truly felt it was, leaning in to place his hands on either side of Shane's waist, thumbs running small circles over the warm skin there. "Sweetheart, I could never. I will love you tomorrow if you decide to play for... I do not know, Boston, or Los Angeles. I will love you tomorrow if you decide to play for Ottawa. I will love you tomorrow if you decide never to play again. I will love you in 70 years, when we are both old and stuck in bed and can only hold hands. I do not need to compete with you to love you. It is the easiest thing in my life."

Tears were burning in Shane's eyes when he hid his face in Ilya's neck. "I have loved you for as long as I've known you, and they have been the best 10 years of my life, despite everything, because they've been with you. I know for me the... I mean, I *love* how competitive we are, I love that I'm only as great as I am because I've always had you to push me. But - you're right. We're so much more than just the back and forth. I love you for countless reasons, and I don't want to waste another day not totally engraining my life with yours. I'll call Farah. Have her talk to the Centaurs. I want this. I want life with you every way I can have it."

Ilya pulled him into a kiss, sweet and soft and all-encompassing.

"Ya tebya lyublyu," he whispered. "I cannot wait to marry you."

"I can't wait to play on the same team as my husband."

End Notes

how was it? was it alright? can i get you a snack? some water? i forward all kudos and comments onto my brain goblins as a treat and they really love them, so sprinkle some if you'd like, thank yooooouuuu <3

Works inspired by this one

[\[Podfic\] betrayal \(never comes from your enemies\).](#) by [bitter_zephyr](#)

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