

On Their Own Terms

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On Their Own Terms

by [books2beach](#)

Summary

He had been thinking about it. Coming out, sharing his relationship with Ilya with the world. It scared him to no end, especially after Crowell had so blatantly voiced his disapproval. After all, with his position in the NHL, he could make Shane's life miserable.

He was starting to wonder, though, if it was worth it for Ilya.

Or:

Two different ways Shane and Ilya get to come out on their own terms.

Notes

When I wrote this fic, I was still in the middle of reading *The Long Game*, so I made some adjustments based on what happens in canon, but I couldn't help picturing this moment- two different ways, in fact- and wanted to share.

This is my first fic writing these characters- and the first of at least a few GC fics I have in my head- so be kind please!

Chapter 1

Shane hadn't gotten to do this in so long- since the summer, really, since he and Ilya got so little time together during the hockey season- and he missed it.

Not that he missed the rivalry narrative the press had amplified between him and Ilya since their rookie season. It had been such a relief to not have to pretend to hate the man he loved anymore after the press conference where they had announced the creation of the Irina Foundation.

This, though.

He was standing across from Ilya, both of their hockey sticks on opposite sides of the puck, ready to play against him in a Stanley Cup playoff game. And not just any playoff game. The Centaurs had won three games of the series already, so if they won this game, Shane and the rest of the Montreal team would be out of the playoffs for the season.

“You ready for this?” Shane asked the love of his life, the thrill of the game, of playing against *Ilya*, making him grin.

Ilya scoffed. “We'll win. Is easy.”

“We'll see about that.” Thankful for the fact that the entire hockey world knew about at least their friendship, he suggested, “Loser takes the winner out for a drink or dessert?”

Ilya grinned wolfishly. “Oh, I know exactly what dessert I want tonight. Is easy choice.”

That little...

Before Shane could even think of the right word for his fiancée, Ilya had won the faceoff, and Shane was speeding after him, the desire to catch up to him and just *pounce* propelling him forward. Not that Ilya hadn't gotten in trouble by the refs for that kind of thing, but Shane was convinced he could make it look like a *hockey* thing, not something best left for off of the ice. The thought of doing anything like *that* on the ice...

He knew, though, that Ilya had been struggling with their separation while they were in the midst of the season, and in moments like these, he tried to make it easier for him. Constantly staying by his side, no matter what defenseman tried to get in his way, spending every second they could together once the game was over... They had promised each other no distractions during this series, but dessert and a drink were necessary, right?

None of it was enough for Ilya, though. Shane could feel it. Ilya seemed even more distant some days than he had been when they had been no more than rivals who occasionally gave in to more carnal needs, and he knew he'd been talking to a therapist, which made Shane glad. He was starting to think Ilya's change in mood this season had something to do with the fact that they had to hide, and, well... he had been thinking about it. Coming out, sharing his relationship with Ilya with the world. It scared him to no end, especially after Crowell had so blatantly voiced his disapproval. After all, with his position in the NHL, he could make Shane's life miserable.

He was starting to wonder, though, if it was worth it for Ilya. Ilya, who had moved to Shane's hometown, Shane's *country*, just so they could be closer and see each other more. Ilya, who, Shane had only recently realized had very few people who knew him even remotely as well as Shane did. Ilya deserved not just to be known for his reputation on the ice, but as the wonderful man he was in the summers with Shane at the cottage too.

And although he was terrified about what the press and the hockey world would say, he knew that their situation wasn't entirely without hope. After all, Scott Hunter had come out without anyone else in the league even remotely showing their support. If someone like Scott Hunter could do that, claim his happiness on his own terms, didn't Shane and Ilya deserve that too?

He played the game, of course, but the entire time, his brain just wasn't in it. It showed, too, their coach questioning them at the intermission at the end of the second period what was going on on the rink.

Shane said nothing, of course, but before they went back out on the ice, Hayden pulled him aside. “Okay, what's up with you and Rozanov?” he asked, his voice a whisper that seemed far louder than it should be in the empty locker room.

Shane shook his head. “Nothing.”

Hayden huffed. “Look, I don't get what you see in him- *at all*- but clearly, Jackie and my kids do, and you know what, Shane? You're my best friend. You deserve to be happy, no matter what that looks like.”

Hayden's words rang in Shane's ears the entire rest of the game. He was happy. Wasn't he?

He couldn't keep his eyes off Ilya, though. Ilya, who deserved happiness more than anyone else Shane knew. Ilya, who, Shane suspected, was keeping their relationship a secret at this point just because Shane wanted him to.

He deserved so much more than having to hide their love in the shadows.

When the buzzer sounded, signaling the end of the game and a rare Ottawa victory, reporters swarmed around Ilya, Haas, Barrett, and Wyatt, the stars who had turned Ottawa's fate around this season. Shane was happy for them, he really was. He just wished their victory hadn't come at the cost of him losing and the team getting kicked out of the playoffs.

Instead of going back into the locker rooms and sulking with the rest of his teammates, and hyping them up for what the next season might bring as a good captain should, Shane stood at the edge of the rink, knowing he couldn't go over to interrupt the celebrations, but wanting to all the same.

“What are you going to do to celebrate?” one of the reporters asked Ilya.

Ilya's eyes couldn't help finding Shane's.

But wait.

Shane was...

He wasn't with the rest of his teammates, almost all of them in the visitor's locker rooms now, a few of their retreating backs the only trace of them.

He was *right here*, standing just behind the reporters. And even soaked in sweat as Ilya knew he was, he was stunning.

Ilya had no idea what this was, but he never wanted it to end. This was even better than that moment on the ice when he and Shane had been in the middle of a fight for the puck and Ilya had had the excuse to lie on top of Shane for two precious moments

Especially when Shane pushed past the reporters and threw his arm around his waist. "He's going to be treated to a drink. We had a bet."

"Oh?" the reporter asked. "And then, let me guess, finding someone to celebrate with for the night?"

It was then that Shane squeezed his shoulder- and suddenly, Ilya knew.

His eyes met Shane's, just to be absolutely sure. After all, once they did this, there was no going back, and Ilya didn't want to cause Shane more anxiety.

There was a nod, so slight that Ilya knew their audience wouldn't notice it, despite their proximity. No one noticed little things about Shane like Ilya did.

“There's only one person I want to celebrate with,” he declared, cupping Shane's cheek in his palm.

Then Shane was kissing him, and there was nothing in the entire world but the scent of him, the way his hand carded through Ilya's hair, the arm around his waist pulling him closer. The world dissolved until it was just the two of them, and Ilya loved nothing more.

At last they broke apart, oxygen a necessary evil, as far as Ilya was concerned, their foreheads touching.

It was only then that he noticed the crowd.

They were *cheering*. He was finally able to love Shane in the open, and the fans were calling their names and, Ilya noticed when he looked a bit closer, applauding, most of them with their phones out (to record the scene, Ilya guessed). He didn't have much of a social media presence except subtle references to them on his Instagram, of course, but he would be searching for anything from tonight he could find so he could feast his eyes on the beauty of this moment over and over again.

“Hollanov!” someone shouted. It became a chant, a mantra, this combination of their names that was so beautiful and so *right*.

Ilya smiled down at Shane. “Ready to go?” He would've added one of his silly nicknames (in Russian, of course), but he didn't want to push it. Shane had already given him everything he'd ev

er wanted tonight. How could he ask for more?

“You know I'd go anywhere with you.”

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

This starts the same, but ends differently... Enjoy!

Shane hadn't gotten to do this in so long- since the summer, really- and he missed it.

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This, though.

He was standing across from Ilya, both of their hockey sticks on opposite sides of the puck, ready to play against him in a Stanley Cup playoff game for the first time in ages. And not just any playoff game. The Voyageurs had won three games of the series already, so if they won this game, Ilya and the rest of the Ottawa team would be out of the playoffs for the season.

“You ready for this?” Shane asked the love of his life, the thrill of the game, of playing against *Ilya*, making him grin.

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“We'll see about that.” Thankful for the fact that the entire hockey world knew about at least their friendship, he suggested, “Loser takes the winner out to dinner?”

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He knew, though, that Ilya had been struggling with their separation while they were in the midst of the season, and in moments like these, he tried to make it easier for him. Constantly staying by his side, no matter what defenseman tried to get in his way, spending every second they could together once the game was over...

It wasn't enough, though. Shane could feel it. Ilya seemed even more distant some days than he had been when they had been no more than rivals who occasionally gave in to more carnal needs. Shane was starting to think it had something to do with the fact that they had to hide, and, well... he had been thinking about it. Coming out, sharing his relationship with Ilya with the world. It scared him to no end, especially after Crowell had so blatantly voiced his disapproval. After all, with his position in the NHL, he could make Shane's life miserable.

He was starting to wonder, though, if it was worth it for Ilya. Ilya, who had moved to Shane's hometown, Shane's country, just so they could be closer and see each other more. Ilya, who, Shane had only recently realized, had very few people who knew him even remotely as well as Shane did. Ilya deserved not just to be known for his reputation on the ice, but as the wonderful man he was in the summers with Shane at the cottage too.

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Instead of going back into the locker rooms and sulking with the rest of his teammates, and hyping them up for what the next season might bring as a good captain should, Shane stood at the edge of the rink, knowing he couldn't go over to interrupt the celebrations, but wanting to all the same.

His gaze locked with Ilya's. His smile was so radiant, so *beautiful*, that Shane couldn't look away.

“Go get him,” someone murmured in his ear.

Shane turned to find JJ and Hayden just behind him, both of them staring at him with resignation in their eyes.

“I won't deny that this crush is messed up on so many different levels,” JJ admitted. “But you should go congratulate him. He-” He swallowed hard. “He deserves it. They played a good game.”

Shane had been thinking about doing that exact thing, crossing the ice and falling into Ilya's arms.

It seemed that Ilya had been thinking the same thing. As Shane crossed the ice, closing the distance between them, his face lit up as his head cocked to the side. *Are we really doing this?* he seemed to be asking. They had had good reasons for hiding in plain sight for years, of course, but Shane hated the thought that Ilya might think he wasn't enough when to Shane, he was everything.

Finally, Ilya was within arm's reach and he pulled him close.

“Good game, Hollander,” he murmured.

“Enjoy the next series of the playoffs,” Shane told him. “You guys deserve to win it all.”

“I feel like I already did, *moy lyuboynik*,” Ilya murmured.

In the end, it was the Russian that did it.

Shane pulled Ilya closer, way too close now for their actions to be mistaken for the friendly exchange after a match that was traditional for hockey players on opposing teams. Then, before Ilya could even draw his next breath, Shane was kissing him.

It was as if the touch of Shane's lips had transported Ilya to the stars. Every kiss from Shane was an out-of-body experience, but this one, their first one with a significant audience, was nothing short of earth-shattering.

He had thought the silence around them was the earth stopping, but it was only as their lips parted and they gasped for air that Ilya realized that the entire arena had fallen silent.

His heart in his throat, he looked up at the stands. As Shane raised his arm in victory, a mixture of polite clapping started until it was a thunderous sound punctuated by whoops and cheers, the roar of the crowd making Ilya's heart soar. He knew it! He knew that them being together wouldn't be a big deal.

He worried about Shane, though. Did he feel the same way, or did he regret the actions that couldn't be undone now?

When he glanced back at Shane, though, his face was nothing but radiant, not a single trace of remorse on his face.

Ilya laughed and kissed him again. He had the best team in the world and the man he loved- his fiance- by his side.

Nothing could be better than this.

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