

Together

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Together

by [Eye_of_the_Dragon](#)

Summary

An angry Montreal fan corners Shane at a bar after the events of the Long Game.

Protective Ilya, and mild J.J bashing cause fuck that guy

Notes

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

Chapter 1

Going to bars with Ilya was something new and exciting for Shane. Something he'd spent years wishing for, but never hoping for. To sit with his team, and feel safe and comfortable. To not have to hide the biggest part of himself, to loosen the grip on his carefully constructed mask and allow friendships.

It felt surreal, and had honestly happened faster than he had expected. Joining Ottawa after the heartbreak of Montreal, Shane had been quiet and nervous. It felt like he was a rookie in his first year all over again, waiting for the shoe to drop.

It had taken months of working together on the ice, and gentle friendship in the locker room for Shane to warm up to his new team. They never pushed but they always joked. They treated his and Ilya's relationship like any other on the team. Raunchy locker room jokes. At first it made Shane bristle, make his chest tight and his ears red. But over time, he realized this was them showing he was safe. It was their version of acceptance. It was the same way they had joked with each other for years, and now Shane and Ilya could be a part of it.

It's how they found themselves in Montreal after a game, at a local sports bar watching the highlights and getting drunk. His new team had crowded him in the locker room after the game with chants and cheers, dragging him and Ilya out, after a satisfying win - 4-1, and two of those goals had been scored by Shane personally. It was vindicating, and intoxicating to show them what they lost, when they threw away.

Most of the team was three drinks passed drunk, Bood and Barrett sitting next to them talking loudly about an impressive goal that was made.

Even Hayden and J.J had come out with them, despite being on the losing team, both were eager to spend a little time with Shane. And also, just get drunk. They had been dragged easily into a conversation with Haas at the other end of the bar.

Ilya had been nursing the same beer all night, as had Shane. Both had the same thought, the celebration they would have later would be better with a mostly clear head.

The bar was growing steadily more packed as the night went on, getting hotter as the bodies pressed tight together. Ilya had a hand placed gently on Shane's forearm as he was leaning over him to join in the conversation between Bood and Barrett, throwing out comments.

A small smile pulling at Shane's cheeks, the comfort of it all spreading a warmth through his body. At the same time, it was a little overwhelming. Spending so long in the closet, so long having to hide, he found sometimes when he got to be free, it was overwhelming.

The loud music reverberated in Shane's ears, a body bumping into him from behind, and a rushed apology. His heart was hammering a little harder. The room feeling less safe and more constricting.

Shane stood slowly to not jostle Ilya too much, catching the other man's eye as he nodded his chin towards the bathroom. Ilya quirks an eyebrow and the corner of his mouth raises just slightly. Shane snorts quietly and shakes his head, "I'll be right back. We can leave after if you're ready to go."

The smile on Ilya's face grew, his eyes darkened a little. "Go, we will leave when you come back."

Shane weaves carefully through the bodies, making his way towards the bathroom. Pleased to find it empty he quickly relieves himself and heads to the sink.

The bathroom door slams open with a force strong enough for Shane to jump back as he's washing his hands. A large man, with a rounding stomach and a balding head comes in. The most notable thing about the man is the Montreal jersey he's supporting, paired with a bitter scowl and a strong scent of alcohol.

The man's blood shot eyes lock onto Shane's lightning fast and his scowl deepens. "You're fucking Shane fucking Hollander." The man's words are slurring just slightly and he's taking a drunken step towards Shane. Shane's breath quickens a little as he looks at the gap between the man and the door, debating if he can make a quick run for it.

“We fucking lost because of you. Twice. First you throw it for your boyfriend, then you team up with him. You got a lot of fuckin nerve coming back to this city.” The man is in Shane’s face now, his breath thick and hot, a fat hand coming up to grip the collar of Shane’s shirt.

“Hey, man, back off.” Shane’s voice doesn’t waiver as he stands a little straighter, he knows he isn’t weak. He knows he could fight back. Despite that, his heart is hammering and his muscles tensing at the feeling of being trapped.

“No, man, fuck you.” The drunk slurs out angrily, and then before Shane can think he’s being punched square in the jaw. It’s a hard punch for a drunk man, and it’s followed by two more in quick succession while the man is holding tightly to his collar.

Shane is slumped against the wall, his eyes squinting against the pain and staring in open shock at the man. Sure he’d been punched on the rink. But he had never been in a real fight, not like this.

The man raises his fist and throws one final punch, delivering it directly to Shane’s gut realising his grip on Shane’s shirt and letting him fall forward into a hunch. “That’s for Montreal, faggot.” The drunk man spits, aiming for Shane’s face but landing it on his shoulder. And then, he’s scurrying out of the bathroom.

Shane stays hunched against the wall for a few long minutes catching his breath, using a shaky hand against the wall he slowly straightens back up. His stomach rolls and twinges in pain, and the bruise no doubt forming on his face burns hot like fire.

But both of those things felt minor compared to the swell of heat behind his eyes and in his chest. The shame and hurt in his chest that rocked him to his core.

He grabs a paper towel from the dispenser and wipes the spit from his shirt and looks at his appearance in the mirror quickly. Trying to smooth out the wrinkles of his shirt, and wiping any stray tears that had managed to escape he makes himself as presentable as he can in his condition.

Taking a deep slow breath Shane leaves the bathroom and makes his way back to where his team is sitting. His face is down, trying to shield it from any eyes that may see who he is and may want to throw punches like the drunk in the bathroom.

He's a few steps behind Ilya, a shaking hand reaching out slowly when Barrett sees his eyes widening with shock "Hollander what the fuck happened?"

Ilya's face whips around to look at him before the sentence is fully out. He stands swiftly and takes Shane's chin gently in his finger tips and tilts his face. "Who did this?" His voice is steely, and hard.

The rest of the team has gathered, they're watching intently with anger etched on all of their faces.

"It doesn't matter, let's just. Let's just go back to the hotel. Please." Shane's voice comes out smaller than he'd like it too, it's vulnerable in a way he doesn't often let himself be in public. But Shane feels like he's a minute from crying and he wants to get out of here as soon as possible, he wants to be wrapped up and feel safe in Ilya's arms.

Ilya's jaw clenches, eyes narrowing as his breath comes in sharply through his nose. "I will kill them. I will fucking kill them."

Ilya's eyes are scanning the crowd, like he might be able to tell who the offender is if he looks hard enough, but he's moved a firm hand to Shane's lower back and is slowly guiding him towards the door - his other hand pulling out his phone to shoot a text to their driver.

As they're making his way to the door, Shane sees the minute Ilya's eyes notice Hayden and J.J watching with wide eyes. Hayden looks like he wants to rush forward, but they're both being pinned still by the hard glare in Ilya's eyes.

When they're close enough Ilya's eyes shift to J.J's they're angrier than Shane had ever seen them.

“Do you see now you idiot. Do you see why he did not tell you. Look what your fans do to him.” Ilya spits out at J.J with venom in his tone. Shane knew Ilya hadn’t forgiven J.J even if Shane had. He thought J.J was as bad as the rest of the Montreal team for thinking for even a moment Shane would throw the game. He held his tongue for the most part, mostly just barbs and quips. But tonight, the anger was rolling off Ilya in waves.

J.J’s mouth opened like he was going to answer but Ilya shook his head sharply and scoffed, “You are as bad as the rest of them.” And then he is dragging Shane away, out the door towards the car.

The rest of the team follows, and Shane doesn’t get to see J.J’s reaction as he disappears in the crowd of Ottawa Centaurs players shuffling out the door.

Everyone is talking loudly and angrily, they’re staying close to Ilya and Shane, and they’re standing tall like a physical barrier between them and the world. It doesn’t fully ease the anxiety that has gripped Shane’s chest, but it does loosen it just slightly.

Ilya is gentle with Shane as he helps him into the car. A couple other bodies piled in, the night was clearly over and nobody was eager to stay at the bar any longer.

Ilya slid in beside Shane, fingers laced together for the drive back.

When they’re in the lobby of the hotel the rest of the team express their sympathy and anger on behalf of Shane, saying it’s “fucked up man,” and clapping him gently on the shoulder before dispersing to their rooms.

Ilya doesn’t stop touching Shane for the entire walk to the room, the angry look on his face hasn’t softened - every time they land on Shane’s face the fire is reignited.

Shane can feel the tears getting closer with every step, his breathing getting shakier. When the hotel door finally clicks in place behind him, it tears down every wall he had built in that bathroom and the tears flow freely. A choking sob ripping it’s way up his throat, and before it has chance to finish he’s being held firmly against Ilya’s chest.

His body is shaking, every exhale a broken sob and every inhale a choked gasp. He can't catch his breath, his mind keeps circling back to the fear he felt, trapped and alone in that bathroom.

Ilya's hand is warm and strong as it strokes up and down his back, his chest is rumbling as speaks softly into Shane's hair. He might be saying words of encouragement but Shane can't hear it over his own sobs.

He had given his life for Montreal. His body. His sanity. They threw him away, and they would always blame him for this. It was overwhelming, like a fifth punch being thrown.

A whimper falls from Shane's lips and his knees give out, Ilya's strong arms holding him up for a moment before slowly lowering him to the ground.

They're sitting there for a long time while Shane sobs and Ilya murmurs softly. So long that when Ilya finally pulls back the dim light of the room feels stabbing in Shane's eyes. Ilya presses a firm hand to Shane's fluttering chest, his words soft and deliberate. "Breathe, sweetheart." He makes a big show of taking in a deep breath of his own, holding it and releasing it.

He carries on with this for several minutes, not stopping when Shane's breath breaks on a sob, or starts coming faster again. Just patient and steady.

Eventually Shane's breathing is coming in more controlled and level intervals and the tears have stopped falling at such a rapid rate.

"I have you, you are safe." Ilya whispers, moving his hand from Shane's chest to his jaw, careful not to touch any bruising, feather light.

Shane swallows down another sob and nods, he doesn't want to start crying again but he feels so vulnerable and raw.

“Come.” Ilya stands slowly and holds a hand down to Shane, who takes it slowly. Ilya’s own hand is solid in Shane’s shaking grasp.

Ilya guides Shane gently towards the bed and pushes his chest gently to get him to sit. His hands are soft and quick as he strips Shane of his clothes and maneuvers Shane’s body so he’s lying under the blankets.

“Stay.” Ilya whispers in Shane’s hair as he places a soft kiss and then moves quickly towards the hotel door, stopping to grab the ice bucket and his room key.

He’s not gone long, and before Shane can dwell on his anxiety at being alone he’s back. Taking the ice out of the bucket and twisting the plastic bag to tie it off. Ilya makes a glance to the bathroom and stops, shrugging out of his own shirt and wrapping it around the ice pack before walking over to place it gently on Shane’s face.

The first thing Shane registers isn’t the chill of the ice, but the scent of Ilya. It fills his chest with warmth, he raises his own hand to hold the ice in place as he watches Ilya get ready for bed.

The bed shifts as Ilya climbs in beside him, scooting until his body is pressed against Shane’s, he uses his hands to gently guide Shane’s head to his chest. “I am so sorry my love.” He whispers, pressing a gentle kiss into Shane’s hair.

Shane snuffles wetly and wipes his nose, he doesn’t know what to say. His heart is broken in a way he had feared but hadn’t had shoved in his face until now. He swallows thickly and holds the ice pack a little tighter, lifting his hand and holding Ilya’s tight.

“This will never happen again. I will not allow it.” Ilya’s tone is firm, Shane isn’t entirely sure if he’s talking to him, or himself. But he feels the finality in the tone, and it feels like a wall around him, keeping him safe.

“I love you.” Shane whispered on a shaky exhale. He needed to say it. He loved Ilya.

“I love you.” Ilya said back fiercely and placed another kiss on the top of Shane’s head.

Chapter 2: 2

Chapter Notes

a lil pt 2 due to popular request - i dont think this pt 2 will be what people want, but it felt realistic to me

once again - high as a kite while writing this, didnt edit shit - youre all lucky i noticed the spot i had island instead of eyelid.

to all commenters - you are the lights of my life, everyone of u deserves a joint and a forehead kiss before bed - line up

Ilya didn't sleep much that night. His mind was racing and his skin felt like it was too tight for his bones. Many times he got the urge to stand up, move, run, punch something.

But every time he got that urge he would look down at sleeping Shane and his heart would thump harder in his chest and anchor him to his spot. He wouldn't leave him here. He couldn't.

By the time the sun filtered in through the hotel windows, Ilya was staring with dry eyes at the love of his life. Over the course of the night he had seen the colour of the bruise develop. It had started as bright red at the bar, then it had taken on a deep burgundy hue. This morning there is deep purple and green surrounding the edges.

Ilya raises a slow shaking hand to brush a strand of hair gently from Shane's forehead, tucking it smoothly back with the rest of the man's hair. "I love you" the words are soft, barely a whisper and rolling off his tongue with ease.

His hand stills when Shane shifts, a long sigh escaping from his lips, the moment frozen. Eventually Shane shuffles closer to Ilya, placing his head in the center of Ilya's chest. Another sigh and then, he tilts his head back - sleepy eyes meeting Ilya's own. Shane's eyebrows scrunch together as he rakes his eyes over Ilya's face, "Are you okay?"

Ilya can't help the snort that escapes him, the small bloom of humour and affection. "Am I okay? Sweetheart, are *you* okay?" Ilya's hand continues to smooth Shane's hair gently.

Ilya doesn't miss the wet sheen that covers his lover's eyes, nor does he miss the scrunch of his eyebrows and the way he looks at anything but Ilya. "I mean, I feel okay." He brings a slow hand up to trace the bruise on his face with a single finger. "Doesn't hurt too bad anymore."

Ilya can't fight the spark of rage, he knows it isn't productive right now, but seeing Shane, *his* Shane bruised and teary eyed. It was up there with Ilya's least favourite sights that would haunt him for the rest of his life.

"I want to call the police. Maybe they can go to the bar find who did this, they get charged, da?" He's trying to keep his voice even, he really is. He wants so badly to hunt whoever it was down and make sure they never try something like that again.

Shane makes a high noise in the back of his throat, it must be involuntary at first because he cuts it off after a moment and turns his face to bury it in Ilya's chest. "Can we just forget it happened? It's over, I don't want to make a big deal."

Ilya's blood goes cold. He moves his arms to wrap tightly around Shane and takes several deep breaths before he speaks. "It is a big deal Shane. Someone assaulted you. They hurt you."

Shane's arms tighten around him as he speaks, he still doesn't look up to meet Ilya's eyes. "I just, I can't Ilya. People know too much about us, I don't need anyone knowing this."

The anger burning in Ilya feels like it could consume him. The world had taken so much from him and Shane, and even now it continues to take. "This is not your fault, you did not deserve this."

Shane breathes out a quick huff on Ilya's chest before rolling away and off the bed, standing up and moving to get dressed. Ilya feels the cold air on his body like a plunge in the ocean - gripping.

“I just can’t have any more things about me Ilya. I don’t know how to explain it. I am already the “Asian” role model. I am the “gay” hockey player. I’m “weird” and “antisocial”. I just, I can’t be the guy who got his ass kicked too. Please.” Shane’s hands come up to do air quotations around words as he speaks, his voice raises in the middle before tapering at the end to nothing more than a whisper.

Ilya lets Shane’s words wash over him, he breathes deeply. His gut instinct is to argue. To point out how Shane is so much more than that, how he is everything that matters. He wants to scream that Shane shouldn’t have to minimize his pain. Instead of saying any of those words, Ilya tilts his head back and stares at the ceiling.

Several long moments pass with deep breaths filling the air. Shane has stopped moving around the room to dress himself and has stopped to sit on the corner of the bed, his head in his hand, elbows on his knees.

“You deserve justice. You deserve to feel safe.” Ilya finally says, his voice hoarse and there are tears burning in the back of his eyes. “But,” he sniffs, lifting a hand to wipe the wetness away and turning to look at Shane. “We do whatever you want, okay. I support you.”

Ilya scootches across the bed and slots his legs on either side of Shane, arms wrapping around his body and pulling lightly until Shane gives in and leans his full body back against Ilya’s chest.

They sit like that for several long minutes, Shane is the one to break the easy silence, “We have a bus to catch.”

Ilya doesn’t want to move, he doesn’t want to ever let his husband go again. Instead of saying any of that, he groans playfully and detached himself. He places a delicate kiss on Shane’s cheek and moves to dress himself.

As he’s getting dressed, he watches Shane out of the corner of his eye pack their bags. His heart swells watching the meticulous way he packs.

Ilya picks up his phone for the first time that morning, checking the time he is pleased to see they will be able to enjoy the hotel breakfast before they have to leave.

They give the hotel room one last quick sweep, ensuring all their items are collected, before wheeling their suitcases into the hall and making their way down to the hotel lobby.

Unsurprisingly, they're the last ones to arrive. Ilya spots the rest of the team crowded into the small hotel breakfast area just off the lobby as soon as the elevator doors open.

He also notices that the atmosphere is different than most mornings. It is quiet. There is not laughter and no messes or too loud voices.

Shane must notice too by the way he cocks his head to the side and studies the scene in front of them. Ilya goes to reach for Shane's hand to offer support and Shane flinches away like he'd been touched by an iron.

Ilya tried not to let it hurt, but Shane must have seen something in his eyes because he is shooting him an apologetic look and ducking his head walking a little quicker towards breakfast, away from Ilya.

Ilya's eyes prick again traitorously, between the lack of sleep and the emotional evening he felt like a strong breeze might send tears falling over the edge. He rubs his hands over his face roughly and through his hair, tugging a little at the ends before letting his hands fall to the sides - giving them a quick shake before he moves to follow Shane.

If the atmosphere was quiet before, it goes dead the minute they notice Shane and Ilya's arrival. All the guys are staring at Shane and making no move to hide it. Their faces contorted into varying degrees of anger and sympathy. Ilya clenches his jaw and prays they hold their tongues.

Zane stands up and crosses the room before anyone else can decide what they should do, he's standing in front of Shane looking like he wants to do or say something. His mouth opens and closes a few times, his eyes locked on the bruise, hands clenched at his sides. "Tell me it was just an angry fan mad we lost against Montreal and not because - " he paused, hand gesturing vaguely between Ilya and Shane.

Ilya couldn't blame the man for hoping, but he also couldn't stop the fire in his words when he responds, "how many times was Shane Hollander attacked in a bathroom prior to his coming out?"

Zane to his credit doesn't shrink down or back away, he just nods once and looks at Shane again. His eyes look wet, when Ilya looks at the rest of their teammates he sees they are sporting similar expressions. "What can we do? How do we catch that mother fucker and make him pay?"

Ilya moved forward to stand beside Shane, reaching out a slow hand to grip his arm, giving Shane ample time to move away if he needs. He is pleased when Shane doesn't flinch and lets his hand settle around his arm.

"We're not doing anything. We're gonna eat breakfast, then we're going to catch the bus." Shane's voice probably doesn't sound as definitive as he wants it to, and he won't meet anyone's eyes.

The uproar is almost instantaneous and unsurprising. People cursing the man out, saying that isn't fair. He can't get away with that. Ilya had even heard Troy mutter something about just going back to the bar himself and kicking the man's ass.

Ilya watches as Shane's shoulders climb closer to his ears with every passing comment and outburst, the team means well. Just as Ilya had this morning. "Enough. This is not up for debate. When you all get punched in the face, you can decide how to handle it. And if you do not shut up soon, you will make that decision today." His tone dips into teasing at the end to try and lighten the mood.

It doesn't work the way Ilya wants it to, but everyone stops talking and turns towards their breakfast. The air is tense and Ilya can feel the anger rippling through the air, and it's coming from more than just him.

Zane swallows thickly once, twice before nodding. "If there's anything we can do, let us know." He turns and sits down.

The rest of the breakfast passes in tense silence, Shane mostly pushing his food around his plate and picking at the odd fruits. Ilya spends more time watching Shane than eating.

He watches as Shane checks his phone, sees the missed calls from Hayden and J.J. and he watches as Shane ignores them and locks his phone, slipping it back in his pocket.

Nobody says anything when they leave the hotel and load the bus, and nobody teases light heartedly when Shane leans his head on Ilya's shoulder, whole body slumping into him.

Ilya's arm wraps around Shane's shoulder on impulse, bending at the elbow so he can weave his fingers through Shane's hair. Rubbing softly at his husband's scalp.

It doesn't take long for Ilya to sleep, he fights as hard as he can, wanting to stay awake for Shane, but his heavy eyelids fight harder.

—

Zane watches from three seats back as Shane settles against Ilya, watches his captain softly and gently petting his husband's head. He watches Ilya lose his fight against sleep, head drooping down on top of Shane's head.

He can't see Shane from his angle, but Shane doesn't move much at all, and eventually seems to slump even further suggesting his own fall into slumber.

He looks over to Wyatt who is sharing his seat, and by the looks of it, also watching Shane and Ilya closely. To his left Troy and Harris are sharing a seat, their heads are tucked close together and their speaking in low tones that Zane can't pick up.

A low level of anger running through his veins every time his thoughts drift to the night before.

“This can’t happen again.” He’s startled out of his thoughts by Wyatt speaking, he’s nodding before the words are fully out.

“No, of course not.”

“You can’t stop it.” Troy is butting in now, leaning across the aisle and inserting himself in their conversation.

“What do you mean we can’t stop it? We have to!” Wyatt’s face is red with rage as he leans across Zane’s lap.

“What are you going to do? Follow him everywhere he goes and beat up anyone who says mean things? Are you gonna follow Ilya, me and Harris too?” Troy scoffs a little and scuffs his boot on the ground, kicking the bar under the seat ahead of him. “I get what you guys are saying, but you can’t change the world.”

Wyatt seemed to deflate a little, slumping back into the seat a little. “So what, we just do nothing?”

Troy shakes his head. “No, we do exactly what we are doing. We continue to be a safe inclusive team, and we continue to not stand for that kind of bullshit. We can’t stop it every time, but maybe sometimes things can be better.” Troy’s cheeks flush a little and he shrugs.

“That fucking sucks.” Zane huffs angrily. “It doesn’t feel good enough.”

“Look, I’m not saying shit doesn’t suck. But this team has already made a world of difference for me, and I am sure Ilya and Shane would say the same thing. That counts for something.”

End Notes

I posted this without the last two paragraphs at first LMAO whoops

Also - first fic in this fandom, so if the characterization is off bare with me, i am working on it,

always happy to receive helpful feedback :) <3

(all fics are posted unedited, and written while high on marijuana sooo , mistakes are my own)

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