

fresh out of any good judgment

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/75633306) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/75633306>.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationships:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov , Shane Hollander & Hayden Pike , Hayden Pike/Jackie Pike
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov , Hayden Pike , Jackie Pike , Montreal Voyageurs Team Ensemble (Game Changers)
Additional Tags:	Established Relationship , POV Outsider , Friendship , Fluff , Humor , Shane is extra subby in this because it's my fic and I make the rules , I know what you're thinking: how can he be subby in an outsider pov fic , I have my ways!
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-12 Words: 5,450 Chapters: 1/1

fresh out of any good judgment

by [gurlsrool](#)

Summary

“I don’t hate him!” Hayden says, which is only true because hate doesn’t quite capture it. No, he despises Rozanov. In his defense, everyone with a pulse and without the last name Hollander does.

Or: 5 times Hayden doesn’t get Shane and Ilya’s relationship, +1 time he does.

Notes

I didn’t discover until after I started writing this that a (wonderful) fic with a similar premise exists so please go read [feel you vanish like sugar into tea. by Jooocccc](#) for more “Hayden ‘Dump Him’ Pike starts to come around” vibes!

Title comes from Bad Reviews by Sabrina Carpenter

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

1.

Hayden watches Rozanov pin Shane against the boards and tries not to wonder if this is some sort of fucked up form of foreplay.

He tries not to wonder hard. So, so hard. Harder than he's ever tried anything before. Oh God, he's thought the word hard way too many times now.

He skates up in time to hear Rozanov say, "Having fun?"

"Obviously," Shane grits out. "We're up by two."

"I was asking Pike." Rozanov's eyes shift to Hayden. "Must be very exciting for him to see good hockey up close."

"Go fuck yourself, Rozanov," Hayden snarls, and of course this is the moment the idiotic ref starts circling. He offers a warning word to both of them and Rozanov loosens his grip on Shane.

"Mmm, no. I don't think I will."

"What?" Hayden blinks. Rozanov always seems to be having his own conversation.

"Fuck myself. There is no need. Montreal is a friendly city, yes? Always a helping hand." He winks at Shane and skates off, leaving Hayden sputtering.

"He's serious," he says. "You're actually gonna fuck him after this."

"Shut up," Shane hisses, which isn't a denial at all.

"But how? What if we *lose*?"

"We won't," Shane says firmly.

"Way to jinx it."

They don't, in the end. They win with a three point lead. Really, it would have been hard not to. It's fucking Ottawa. Rozanov's few months playing with them haven't changed that fact.

Spirits are high in the locker room but Shane's busy texting, begging off an invitation to go to a bar.

"I just don't get it," Hayden says as they walk out to their cars, parked side by side. "I once beat Jackie at a six hour game of Monopoly and she made me sleep on the couch."

Shane shoves his hands in his pockets, huffs a breath. It's cold out enough that it's almost visible. "Well, this isn't that high stakes," he says finally. "It's not like it was game seven in the playoffs."

Hayden stops in his tracks. “Oh God, what if it *was*? What would you *do*? How would you even...I mean you’d...I could barely muster up a handshake the last time we got knocked out. And you’d...”

You’d kiss him. You’d tenderly trace a finger over his jaw, like I saw you do in your kitchen when you didn’t know I was watching. You’d hold him and you’d fuck him and okay, Hayden’s brain is now officially short circuiting.

Shane pats him on the shoulder. “See you tomorrow,” he says simply.

He doesn’t bother trying to explain. Hayden’s not sure it would make any difference if he did.

2.

He talked about it with Jackie for hours after he pieced it all together and Shane confirmed he was right.

She insisted that there must be more to Rozanov. That he probably has a softer side, that maybe that asshole, playboy persona is nothing more than that. A persona.

For the first time in forever, Hayden thinks that his wife is wrong.

“You are very bad at this,” Rozanov says, slamming harder on the little plastic lever. Somehow, dinner and drinks after the kids went to bed has morphed into a rousing round of Hungry Hungry Hippos.

Inexplicably (and infuriatingly), Rozanov is amazing at it.

“Shut up,” Hayden mutters weakly.

“Is there any game you are good at?” Rozanov asks, gobbling up more little white balls. Hayden’s brain briefly sputters out at the mental image of Rozanov eating balls.

“He’s great at Monopoly,” Jackie says. He tries not to think too deeply about the fact that her first instinct wasn’t to say hockey.

“We will have to play, so I can beat you at that too.”

“No,” Shane and Jackie say immediately. Hayden’s not one to back down from a challenge, but it’s probably for the best. He’s not sure he can handle a Monopoly game’s worth of Rozanov.

Shane groans, and Hayden glances over to find him frowning at his phone.

“Felix again?” Rozanov asks before Hayden has the chance to.

“Yes.”

“Who’s Felix?”

“A childhood friend of Shane’s,” Hayden supplies when it’s clear that Shane is too busy staring forlornly at his phone to answer. “He keeps hounding him for tickets to impress the chi—the woman he’s seeing.”

“I will handle this.” Rozanov snatches the phone from Shane’s hand.

“No!” Shane lunges for it but Rozanov anticipates it, rolls away from his grasp.

“Dear Felix,” Rozanov’s voice booms as he scampers to the other end of the living room. “There are no tickets for you. I am a mama’s boy and I give them all to my mother.”

“Ilya, stop,” Shane begs, because Rozanov is actually typing. Jesus, this guy’s a nightmare.

“I know what you are thinking.” Ilya jumps to his feet, still typing, holding the phone high enough that Shane can’t reach it, then lunges onto the couch for good measure. “You are the star of the team! There must be more tickets. There are. But I do not want you there because you are so boring. And that is coming from me, the king of boring.”

“Ilya.”

“No. Delete, delete. Scott Hunter is the king of boring. You are the prince of boring.”

Jackie chuckles, as if this is funny and not, like, cruel. Where does he get off calling Shane boring? Shane’s a little dry, sure, but he’s cool and interesting enough. He’s...decent at badminton. That’s not boring. Is it?

In the thirty seconds that Hayden has been musing on Shane’s personality, Shane and Rozanov have started wrestling. Like actually on the floor wrestling each other. Rozanov even gets a noogie sandwich in.

“BOYS!” Jackie cuts in with her mom voice. “Stop. We’re playing another game.”

They relent and head to the table, shoving each other on the way.

They play Scrabble, which Rozanov protests on account of it being deeply unfair. It probably is, but sue him, Hayden wants to see the guy lose for once and Jackie’s stellar at Scrabble.

Two rounds in, Rozanov plays the word ‘cumslut’ and Shane puts a hand to his mouth to cover his laughter. That’s when realization hits Hayden.

For Shane’s sake, he manages to keep it to himself, but as soon as they’re gone, he blurts it out. “He’s a child. He’s actually, literally a child and he makes Shane act like one too.”

“Maybe that’s not such a bad thing,” Jackie says, shoving Scrabble tiles back in the box. “He brings out Shane’s more playful side.”

“No, babe, it’s like...Shane’s the type of guy who takes his car to the shop as soon as the check engine light turns on. He’s so *mature*.”

Jackie frowns. “Wait, you don’t do that? You drive our kids in that car.”

“Obviously I do too,” Hayden lies. “Shane needs something on his level, don’t you think? Someone who, ya know, will do yoga and eat oatmeal with him.”

Okay, fine, maybe Shane *is* a little boring. But that’s not a bad thing! He needs someone who matches his (lack of) freak. Not this sports car driving, prank pulling...rapscallion. Hayden’s never used the word rapscallion before, but it more than suits Rozanov.

“Yeah. Maybe,” Jackie says, but she’s using that distant voice she puts on when she’s just appeasing him so he’ll shut up.

She doesn’t know Shane like he does. If she did, she’d be worried too.

3.

“Have you guys seen this?” Benny says.

The locker room is quiet. Benny’s a sweet kid, much less cocky than the typical rookie. But he’s still painfully nineteen years old.

He’s attached to his phone. At least four times a day, he asks “have you seen this?” and doesn’t seem to realize that everyone’s kind of fed up with it.

The last time he said it, he was referring to a picture of Shane’s face edited onto a goat, so no one bothers answering now.

Hayden can’t help but throw the kid a bone. “What?”

Drapeau groans. “Don’t encourage him.”

Benny deflates a little and Hayden gives him an encouraging smile. “I was just wondering if you guys have seen that post that’s blowing up on Reddit.” Hayden’s never used Reddit in his life so he stares at him blankly. “The one by the girl who slept with Ilya Rozanov.”

A loud clattering sound rings out. Hayden swivels his gaze to Shane’s direction, where he’s dropped his phone on the floor. He picks it up and doesn’t try to wipe it clean, which is deeply concerning.

“Oh shit,” JJ says. “What did she say about the jackass?”

“I guess they were hooking up and her roommate walked in? And it got awkward, but Rozanov didn’t give a shit and told her to join. So they had a threesome and then as soon as they were, ya know...done, he goes ‘okay, goodbye’ and leaves.”

The room howls with laughter. Hayden can’t help stealing another glance at Shane. Okay, maybe it’s more than a glance. Maybe he stares.

He can’t help it. Shane looks ill. He’s dropped his head, but that doesn’t mask how ghostly pale he’s gotten.

Hayden searches for something, anything helpful to say and lands on a blurted, “when did this happen? The...threesome?”

Benny blinks a few times. “She said it was, like, five years ago I think? And that she wonders sometimes if it was a dream.”

“Why do you care?” JJ waggles his eyebrows. “Pissed you didn’t get an invite?”

“No. Fuck off,” Hayden sputters. It’s still so fucking weird, that they don’t know. He’s not sure they’d believe it even if Shane kissed Rozanov in front of them.

“It’s insane how much pussy he gets,” Benny says, blushing like he’s not comfortable saying the words. “I heard he has a map in his bedroom with phone numbers pinned on it. One girl for every city in North America and he hits them up whenever he plays there.”

“Just one?” Drapeau says.

“Definitely more,” Seb pipes up. “A buddy of mine played with him back in Boston. Said he would text this one chick, Jane, all the time. Would, like, spend whole flights rereading her messages. Then they’d land and he’d go fuck some other chick. Poor girl had no clue.”

A few guys let out low whistles. “That’s kind of on her,” Matty says. “I mean, what else did she expect? It’s Rozanov. That’s like playing with a wasp and throwing a bitch fit when you get stung.”

Hayden casts another worried glance to Shane, only to find his stall empty, the locker room door swinging shut. He fled so fast he practically left a trail of dust behind him.

Hayden makes some vague excuse about calling Jackie and chases after him. He finds Shane down the hall, biting the thumb nail of his right hand, tapping the pointer of his left against his phone.

“Hey,” Hayden says, because he has no clue where to start. What do you say to your friend who just heard his buddies laughing about what a slut his boyfriend is? Is there a greeting card for that? “Uh. You okay?”

There. That’s something, right?

“Hmm?” Shane says. “Yeah. Fine. I just wish I knew how much he saw.”

Hayden tries to make sense of these words and fails miserably. “What? Who?”

“Seb’s friend.”

“Seb’s...friend?”

“The one who played with Ilya.” Shane lets out an exasperated sigh when it’s clear that Hayden still isn’t getting it. He turns his head in every direction possible, almost resembling an owl, then whispers, “I’m Jane.”

“What?”

“Shane, Jane. That’s how he saved me in his phone, so...so no one would know.”

Oh. That’s fucking sad. Like Brokeback Mountain levels of sad. But then the new information registers and Hayden’s sadness makes way for pity. “I see. So you’re the one he was cheating on?”

“He wasn’t cheating on me,” Shane scoffs, like this is a ridiculous assertion, like Ilya Rozanov is the poster boy for monogamy. “We weren’t exclusive back then.”

“But you are now?”

“What? Yes, of course.”

“Okay...” Hayden says. Shane stops tapping his finger on his phone.

“You think he’s cheating on me, don’t you?” Shane shakes his head. “Who am I kidding, of course you do. You hate him.”

“I don’t hate him!” Hayden says, which is only true because hate doesn’t quite capture it. No, he *despises* Rozanov. In his defense, everyone with a pulse and without the last name Hollander does. “I just don’t get how you can handle dating someone with such a... reputation.”

“I have a reputation too,” Shane says. “It’s the nature of being a public figure.”

“Your reputation is that you’re a serious guy who plays good hockey and does yoga. Which is all true,” Hayden points out. “I just...I don’t want to see you get hurt.”

He will get hurt. There’s literally no way around that. It’s Rozanov. This is a game to him and eventually, he’ll get bored of it and move onto the next one. He just doesn’t get how someone as smart as Shane can’t see that.

“It doesn’t...Not letting myself love him is what hurt.”

Love him. God, he can see it now: Shane showing up on his doorstep, tear stained and rain soaked, because of course it’ll be raining. He’ll let him in and give him a big pint of ice cream he’ll refuse to eat and swallow down every last ‘I told you so’.

“It’s all just talk,” Shane adds when Hayden says nothing. “I mean, he was a ladies man, but he’s...he’s different. With me, he’s different.”

Sure, Hayden wants to retort. *He calls you boring and makes fun of your interests and bullies your best friend. What an improvement!* But Shane looks so wounded, so scared, so he just nods.

“I doubt that guy on the Bears saw anything,” Hayden says. “Or he’d be spreading that around instead of the whole Jane story.”

Shane visibly exhales. Hayden can't imagine that Rozanov of all people is worth this level of constant fear, vigilance, paranoia. "Yeah. You're probably right. It's...it's fine."

"Yeah," Hayden lies. "It's all good."

4.

Hayden muscles into the hotel room and breathes in the AC like it's oxygen. Florida is a cesspool. He says as much and Shane laughs, begins correcting him that actually, it's a swamp, until they're interrupted by his phone ringing.

It's Rozanov. Hayden knows right away by the dopey smile Shane gets on his face. It's disgusting.

"Hey! We just got to the room," he answers. "Oh. Huh, I don't know, I think my mom emailed it to both of us? Hold on, I'll put you on speaker while I look."

Shane drops his phone on the bed, moving toward his bag to sift through it.

"How is Florida?" Rozanov's voice fills the room. It's jarring, hearing him make small talk. Hayden focuses on unpacking his own bag to hide the fact that he's totally listening in.

"Hmm? It's good." Shane pulls his iPad out of his backpack. "It's always hotter than I expect. It's supposed to rain tomorrow, so hopefully that cools it down, but I doubt it."

"Okay. How are you? You are miserable, yes?"

"Miserable?" Shane says, perching on the bed now and scrolling through the iPad.

"Yes. You miss me so much, you are in agony."

He has to be kidding. Who does that? Who says that? Not *I miss you*, but *you miss me*.

"I saw you five hours ago."

"So long. Too long," Rozanov says. "Don't worry, I will let you suck my dick as soon as you get home. I won't even make you beg."

Hayden drops the pair of socks he was holding and chokes on air. Shane lets out a little yelp. "*Ilya*," he hisses, "I told you you're on speaker."

"So?"

"So, Hayden is here."

"Hey Rozanov," Hayden shouts, dropping the pretense that he's not eavesdropping. He wants to see if, just this once, Rozanov will have the decency to at least pretend to be embarrassed.

"Hello Hayden. I am sorry," Rozanov says. Hayden honestly wasn't sure he knew that word. He's gracious enough not to say as much, something he regrets in a matter of ten seconds. "I

know it must be hard to hear about our sex life when yours is so boring.”

“Excuse me?”

“You only have missionary, yes? Is why you have so many kids.”

Hayden sputters incoherently in response, finally landing on a rather eloquent, “Fuck you, Rozanov.”

“Crabby, crabby. When is last time you have a blowjob? Maybe you will play better if you get your dick sucked. It clears the head.”

Shane lets out another strangled noise and fumbles for his phone, taking it off speaker and pressing it tight against his cheek. He drops his voice, speaking so low that Hayden can barely hear him.

Hayden clenches his hands, unclenches them. The nerve of this asshole. He and Jackie have a very active, interesting sex life. Like, way more active than most of the married guys on the team.

And sure, missionary is his favorite position, but so what? He likes watching Jackie’s face when she comes. It’s fucking hot.

“Sorry,” Shane says. Hayden turns to see that he’s off the phone and as red as Hayden feels. “Can we just watch TV and pretend that literally none of that happened? He’s...It’s...I’m sorry.”

Hayden resists the urge to tell Shane that it’s not normal, having to apologize for your partner this often. “Fine,” he mutters.

Shane puts the TV on, flicks through the channels, landing on the game San Francisco is playing against Vegas tonight.

Hayden tries not to think about it. Really, he does. He focuses on the game and ignores the palpable tension in the room, but something occurs to him. Something that, unlike the dumb jabs at his own sex life, he can’t bring himself to let go. “Did he say *he lets you* suck his dick?”

“Hayden.”

“He makes you beg to suck his dick. Was he joking? Please tell me he was joking,” Hayden says. Shane is intensely, incriminatingly quiet. “Oh my fucking God, Shane.”

“It’s not—he doesn’t—usually it’s the other way—” Shane says. It’s hard to believe that this is the same guy who effortlessly fields the press in two languages.

“If I said that shit to Jackie, I’d be sleeping on the couch for a month. As I fucking should.”

Shane buries his face in his hands. “Can we not just...it’s different. Obviously that would be different.”

“Oh yeah? That’s what you’re going with, that this is a gay thing? We could go out tonight and find you a hundred gay guys who wouldn’t act like it’s a privilege to suck their dick. Hell, they’d act like it’s a privilege to suck *yours*. You’d be the most eligible gay bachelor in history, probably.”

“Well I’m not a bachelor,” Shane says, snippy. Hayden wants to cross the room and shake him. He gets that Shane’s options are limited. But that doesn’t mean he has to settle for Ilya Rozanov. That doesn’t mean he has to...

“Oh God,” Hayden says. “You’re a bottom, aren’t you? You bottom for *him*? And you’re not even a power bottom.”

Shane throws a pillow at him. “Where in the world did you learn that?”

“I’m very cultured,” Hayden says.

They fall silent again. Hayden grabs his phone to text Jackie ten heated paragraphs about how his best friend deserves better, and he’s greeted by a text from the devil himself.

Literally. He has Rozanov saved in his phone as The Devil Himself.

The Devil Himself: *I will give you one thousand dollars if you send me a photo of him blushing right now. I know you need the money, I make much more than you*

Hayden grabs the pillow Shane threw at him and screams into it.

He’s relieved when the next stop on their road trip allows them to have their own rooms.

At least, he is—until he quickly discovers that Shane is making full use of the solitude. And the walls are very, very thin.

Like, so thin they’d better qualify as toilet paper. Not even the good three ply stuff. He turns on the TV and blasts House Hunters to a level that he’s pretty sure might fracture an eardrum, but it’s not enough.

He can still hear that stupid, cocky Russian accent bossing Shane around.

Hayden wasn’t lying. He’s cultured. He’s seen a few episodes of Queer as Folk and he used to watch Will and Grace with his mom. He knows that gay sex is different than what he does. Obviously.

But this shit can’t be normal. Shane’s been begging Rozanov to ‘let him’ come for the span of nearly a whole House Hunters episode. Hayden’s tempted to bang on the wall and tell him to shoot his load already.

Instead, he texts Jackie: *Do you think it’s legally considered a form of torture to not let your partner come for half an hour?*

Dots appear, then disappear, then reappear, and he blinks down at his message, realizing how weird it sounds.

Asking for a friend, he adds belatedly. *The friend being Shane. I'm asking for Shane.*

The dots appear, disappear, reappear. Over the dulcet tones of a woman picking apart an open floor plan, Hayden hears a whimper.

A whimper. Shane Hollander, captain, Calder winner, Stanley Cup champion is *whimpering* at the hands of Ilya Rozanov. And the worst part is, he's not even in the fucking room with him.

Shane could just hang up and take care of business, but no. Instead, he's begging to touch his own dick.

Hayden's starting to consider the ethics of setting up a Grindr profile and catfishing with pictures of Shane, when Jackie responds: *I need you to be at least 30% less invested in your best friend's sex life. I'll settle for 15% though*

I can give you 10 max, he writes back.

Ten more seconds of dots, then another text: *I can Skype after I put the kids down. Give me two hours? I won't make you wait to come.*

Oh. *Oh*. Fuck yeah. He responds enthusiastically, gratefully, because he's not Ilya Rozanov. Because he's thankful to have a beautiful woman who will take her tits out for him on camera. He's *blessed* and he makes sure she knows it.

The show switches to a contemplative moment where they decide which house to pick, and in the relative silence, Hayden hears a familiar groaning sound. The same one he hears when Shane gets checked hard or hits the perfect yoga stretch.

Just before he shoves a pillow over his ears, he hears Shane muster up two, pathetic words: *Thank you.*

He wishes more people knew about this relationship, if only so he could stage an intervention.

5.

Hayden, like always, is groggy when he wakes up the day after a game.

So it doesn't really register as reality when he sees he has a text from Rozanov.

The Devil Himself: *I need your help*

Once he manages to process it, he bolts upright. Is Rozanov okay? No, fuck that. Is *Shane* okay?

They lost to the Centaurs at home last night, which was weird in its own right. Even weirder was the fact that Shane seemed mostly okay with it. Hayden assumed that was because he'd be spending all night begging for Rozanov's dick or whatever.

But maybe...

He types out a frantic reply: *With what?*

The answer comes in quickly.

The Devil Himself: *I would like to get Shane flowers.*

Oh. That's...surprisingly sweet, actually.

Hayden: *And you need what? A florist recommendation?*

The Devil Himself: *No. I want to get them sent to your house.*

Hayden: *Why?*

The Devil Himself: *Shane meditates a lot after he loses. I do not want to disturb him. You can bring them over in the evening. Around 5? He should be done by then.*

Hayden: *Okay. Sure.*

It's kind. Like, unnervingly kind. It's all so thoughtful. The flowers and the foresight to not have them delivered when Shane will be meditating.

For a second, he thinks maybe Jackie was right after all. Maybe Ilya Rozanov is a secret softie.

Then the flowers come. Hayden is a nosy fucker, so he doesn't even consider not reading the note attached. *Of course* he reads the note.

Мой неудачник,

I am sorry my shitty team beat you. Not too sorry though.

Don't worry, I love you even when you are bad at hockey.

-твой победитель

He opens Google translate. The first words are 'my loser'. The second, of course, are 'your winner'.

Hayden looks back up at the flowers. They're red. Every last one of them. Centaurs red.

"Oh my fucking God," he says, loudly enough that Ruby lets out a horrified shriek. "Sorry, sorry."

He considers throwing the flowers away, but he brings them over at 5 on the dot because he's curious how the hell Shane will react.

To his surprise, Shane just snorts out a laugh and blushes as red as the flowers. "He's such a jackass," he says, and for whatever reason his voice is fond.

Hayden shoves his hands in his pockets. "You know you don't have to—"

"I do," Shane says, not bothering to let him finish his sentence. "Believe me, I wish I didn't. But I do. It's him, you know?"

Hayden doesn't know. He's beginning to think he'll never know. But he has kids waiting for him for dinner and bath time and bedtime stories, so he leaves Shane in the doorway, clutching his flowers like a lifeline.

+1.

Hayden hangs back after the game to make sure Shane's okay.

It's looking like he will be. But Shane's parents are visiting family out in Vancouver, and Hayden knows how much it sucks, the kind of check you don't immediately bounce back from. The kind that takes you out for the whole third period. No one should be alone after that.

The doctor let Hayden know that Shane's looking okay so far, no signs of concussion. But they lost to New York in the end and Hayden knows that even if all is well, Shane will be beating himself up hard enough to bruise.

He leans against the wall outside the exam room when he hears the sound of scuffling. He turns his head, almost expecting a dog or something, but no. It's Rozanov.

"Hi?" he blurts out.

"Is he okay?" Rozanov pants. He's running. He's all damp (maybe from sweat?) and wearing sweatpants and he's actually, literally running.

"Um yes?" he says. Rozanov skids to a stop. "What are you doing here?"

"He did not get back up," Rozanov says, so quietly Hayden almost doesn't catch it. "He never got back up."

His eyes are red rimmed, like he's been crying. But that makes no sense. Rozanov doesn't cry. He probably biologically can't.

"Uh."

Rozanov bolts to the door. Hayden tries to intercept, so he can make sure there are no doctors, or God forbid, teammates inside. JJ was only here a few minutes ago, and Scott Hunter was checking in on Shane before him.

Rozanov's too fast, and all Hayden can manage is to follow. Luckily, the room is empty except for Shane, sprawled out on an exam table.

"Ilya?" Shane's eyes widen like he's seen a ghost. Or maybe more accurately, an angel.

And then something weird happens. Like, final season of *Lost* levels of weird.

Rozanov steps forward, cradles Shane's cheeks in his hands, and says through a trembling breath, "sweetheart."

Hayden knows, logically, that he should leave, but he's rooted to the spot, just watching as Shane literally melts into Ilya Rozanov's hands.

Rozanov says something in Russian, and then, in English, "Are you okay?"

"Yeah. My head's pounding, but no concussion."

Inexplicably, Rozanov collapses. His knees drop to the ground. He throws his arms around Shane's neck, says, "I thought...It was like..."

"I know," Shane says, running his hands through Rozanov's damp hair. "But it's not. I've been cleared to practice tomorrow already. I'm good. I'm okay."

"I thought..." he says again, or more so heaves. "My whole world..."

"I'm okay," Shane coos.

His whole world. Hayden staggers back finally, into the hallway.

He's never paid much mind to who Rozanov actually has in his life. Nobody? His parents are both gone, he knows that much. Does he have any siblings? Hayden hasn't heard of any. He must be an only child.

In every profile on him, he's all hard lines and sharp angles and expensive suits and garages full of fast cars.

Hayden always figured he was showboating, but maybe there's just nothing—no one—else to show. When he leaves Shane's side and goes back to Ottawa, what waits for him there? Anything? Or just a large, empty house?

The exam room door opens and Rozanov steps through it.

He leans against the wall beside Hayden, silent. He runs a finger over that crucifix around his neck, like he got here by the grace of it alone.

"You love him," Hayden blurts out. It's an epiphany, not a question.

"Yes," Rozanov answers anyway.

A nurse walks by and they both fall silent until she enters the room.

“Okay,” Hayden says, rolling the confidence of that single syllable over in his mind. “If you break his heart, I’ll kill you.”

He expects Rozanov to laugh. But this isn’t Rozanov—this is Ilya. Wrecked and so painfully human.

“Good. If I break his heart,” Ilya says, “I will buy you the gun.”

Hayden lets out a startled laugh. “You’re in Canada now, man. It won’t be easy.”

He shrugs. “Fine. Knife then. Or poison. Put it in my vodka.”

”Yeah, okay. Sounds like a plan.” It’s one that Hayden’s now not sure he’ll ever need to implement.

He thinks back to that story Seb told, about his buddy on the Bears. How Ilya spent every flight rereading Shane’s texts.

”You don’t just love him,” he blurts out. “You’re obsessed with him.”

”Yes, well, there are worse things to be obsessed with. Like how you are obsessed with being annoying.”

It’s a terrible comeback by Ilya’s standards, and that’s not even mentioning the fact that he didn’t deny it.

He’s about to say as much when the door opens again. This time, Shane walks through it.

The relief in Ilya’s eyes is so overwhelming, Hayden almost expects him to fall to his knees again. But he doesn’t. He stays firm.

“Thanks for waiting,” Shane says to Hayden, seemingly oblivious to the look. Or maybe he’s just used to it. “My mom’s glad you were here. She’s convinced now that if she misses another one of my games, it’ll happen again.”

Hayden laughs, because yeah, that sounds like Yuna. Ilya laughs too. “She should not miss another then,” he says seriously.

“I’ll tell her you said that.” Shane rolls his eyes.

“I will take him home.” It takes Hayden a second to realize that Ilya’s addressing him. “Keep an eye on him.”

“You don’t need to keep an eye on me. I’m fine.”

“No you are not.”

“I’m not even concussed!”

“If you were fine you would have gotten back up.”

“I’m up right now.”

“Barely.” Ilya wraps an arm around Shane’s waist dramatically, as if to hold him up, and Shane laughs, shoves him away.

“You’re so ridiculous,” he says, smiling up at him. He spares a glance back to Hayden. “See you later.”

“Yeah, see you.”

Ilya mutters something and Shane keeps smiling up at him, dopey eyed. For the first time, Hayden notices that Ilya returns it tenfold.

There’s something quiet there, passing between them, that he recognizes. That constant pull he feels between his own heart and Jackie’s.

He fumbles for his phone, calls her.

“Hey. Is Shane okay?” she asks.

“Yeah, he’s good. I’ll be home soon. I—I get it now, I think,” he says. “Him and Rozanov—Ilya.”

“Good.” He can hear the smile in her voice, the fondness. “I knew you’d catch up eventually.”

”Yeah, I—hold on.”

He jogs a few feet to where Shane and Ilya are walking out to the parking lot, their hands brushing. “Shane!” he calls.

Shane turns. “Yeah?”

”Just. I’m glad you’re okay.” He pulls Shane into a hug and away from Ilya, adds in a whisper, “and I’m glad you have him.”

”Oh.” Shane’s eyes are wide when he pulls back. “Yeah. Thanks. Me too.”

He keeps on walking and Hayden watches, smiling, as Ilya Rozanov takes his best friend home.

End Notes

Like Hayden, I used Google translate for the small bit of Russian in this. Please forgive my sins if you can manage it. (Russian edited 12/16/25 thanks to a note from user Liter_Alakash. Shocking no one, Google translate did fail me lmao)

Thank you for reading my first fic in this fandom! Though not my first gay hockey romance fic. See: my decade long devotion to Jack Zimmermann, aka Troy Barrett's long lost twin

Comments are appreciated as much as Shane appreciates a crisp ginger ale :)

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!