

Addicted to you

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Addicted to you

by [mareastralis](#)

Summary

“Oh god... every time... every practice and I... I thought it was just you!”

“I am very lost right now,” Ilya said, arms outstretched towards his pacing husband.

“When you kiss me, sometimes, I get this... this feeling!”

“I make you horny? We knew that,” Ilya laughed.

“No! Shut up! It’s like my entire body relaxes... because I’m finally getting what I’ve been craving, oh god I am so stupid.”

Or: Shane likes kissing his husband. Loves it even. Especially after a long day at work, hidden in a corner, lips and hands taking away all the stress he's always carrying. Until one fateful day when he understand exactly why.

Notes

I have to start by saying how overwhelmed I have been these last few days since one of my fics blew up on twitter. I still have trouble comprehending the numbers on my works/tweets right now and how that even happened but let me just say how thankful I am! Tahnk you for reading and sharing and commenting <3 I'm so happy that you guys enjoyed reading my stuff and beyond elated that some of you were touched by the way I wrote Shane in the "boring" fic because he's 100% based on me haha the fic was entirely self-indulgent! If you felt seen I love you, you're good, be a safe space for your friends and family, love will find us all eventually

Now onto a new adventure! Sponsored by oomf who dropped a fic idea in my dms and ran away, and I found it so funny that I had to try to write it. Yaz I hope this is everything you wanted even though I forgot to let Shane use Canadian swearwords and didn't manage to include them afterwards, thank you for trusting me with this <3

► Good to know before you read (tap to unroll)

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

Shane Hollander hadn't played with that many different teams in his life, but the Ottawa Centaurs were definitely his favorite. There was an ease that came with the fact that he wasn't hiding anything from his teammates for the first time in his life. He could get to know them and genuinely appreciate their company, and he thought they liked his too. Despite all of that, he was anxious like a rookie in their first playoffs. Which didn't make any sense, mostly because he was just in the locker room, getting undressed after a practice session that had gone well. The team was finding its footing, Shane was starting to click with his linemates, things were falling into place for a promising season. Still, he felt restless, anxious, and he couldn't pinpoint why.

"Everything alright Holzy?" he heard Wyatt ask, and his head whipped towards their goalie.

He hadn't even spoken that loudly, but still, most conversations had stopped around them. People were pretending to stay busy, but Shane could feel their attention on him. One person's attention in particular.

"What? Yes? Why?" He signed internally. Convincing.

"You're just... you've been bouncing your leg for like five minutes."

"Oh, sorry," Shane stopped as he realized. "It's fine. I'm fine."

It sounded hardly plausible even to his own ears, but Wyatt just gave him an awkward smile and looked away. Most of the others did too, but Shane could tell that Ilya was still watching over him. He pretended not to notice until Ilya sat down next to him to put on his shoes.

"What is it, zaychik?" he asked softly enough that only Shane heard him.

Bunny. Shane smiled at the nickname.

"Nothing. I don't know. I just need to get home I think," he gave him a forced smile. He didn't want to worry him.

"Okay, we will go then," Ilya said reassuringly.

He raised a hand towards Shane's face but dropped it at the last second. Shane tried not to wince. He had a strict no PDA policy while at work, and he knew that Ilya hated it, and he knew that he was just being insane about the whole thing, that nobody in the team cared, that all of it was allowed and even a little expected now. He just needed a little more time to get used to it all. He finished getting dressed and packing his bag while Ilya waited patiently.

"Yes, let's go."

The fresh air of the early night helped him a little as they walked out to the parking lot. Ilya brought out his usual gum, casual as ever, but Shane could still feel his worried gaze on him. They had barely made five steps towards their car before Ilya spoke again.

“You okay? Is it a panic attack?”

It was a stupid question in the sense that Ilya was better at seeing those come up than Shane himself. Maybe Ilya understood every one of Shane’s emotions better than he did. If it had been a panic attack, Ilya would have already been aware.

“No, I’m fine, just a little... I’m not sure. I don’t know why I’m like this,” he shrugged as if to try and chase the feeling away.

They had reached the car now, but Ilya kept him from opening the door with a hand on his wrist. He made Shane turn around to look at him. Shane always went easily when Ilya was directing him somewhere. He looked for something on Shane’s face, keeping a safe distance that Shane knew he despised.

“I can help, yes? At home. Make you relax.”

His husband was way too good to him. Shane looked around for a second. Some of their teammates were there, leaving at their own pace, but he couldn’t see any fans or press. The sun was down already, hiding them in shadows. He wanted to reassure his husband and craved his comfort. It was fine, it was allowed. He turned back towards Ilya and leaned in, Ilya instinctually meeting him halfway.

The relief he felt at the first press of his husband’s lips was like no other. Shane melted into him and surprised himself by letting his tongue drag against Ilya’s bottom lip. Ilya opened his mouth easily and soon enough Shane was licking into him, ignoring the weird taste of his nicotine gum to chase the relief his husband brought him. He felt his shoulder sag and the knot in his chest loosening.

It had been a long day. Shane had woken up early to go for a run and shower before getting to a photoshoot that had dragged on all morning. He had eaten a very diplomatic lunch with Farah, who wanted to discuss the future of his image (apparently he just *had* to capitalize on the whole not white and not straight thing, he *had* to become an icon, he had to hide how much he didn’t want any of it). He had only seen Ilya during practice and had kept his hands to himself the whole time, due to his own rules. That was it. He was head over heels about his husband and had missed him. It was a little ridiculous. They used to go months without seeing each other, but it seemed like Shane wasn’t that resilient anymore. He was an addict and Ilya his drug of choice, fine, so be it.

He detached himself from Ilya reluctantly, the world coming back into focus. “Yes,” he whispered. “You can help.”

Ilya sent him a smile, half relieved, half flirty, entirely hungry for more. Shane let him open the car door for him, he let him drive them home, he let him kiss all his worries away for a couple hours after they got there.

The routine was easily put in place after that day. Practice, games, media days, it all ended with them in the parking lot, or in the car when Shane felt particularly needy. They were, for

lack of a better term, making out like teenagers every day after work. No one had said anything yet, and Shane hoped no one would. Those five to ten minutes where he could just unwind and indulge at the end of the day, reunite with his husband and melt under his hands, kiss him until his lips felt rough and he could feel the minty taste of Ilya's gum on his tongue long after they were done, those stolen moments were everything. He could barely comprehend the instant relief he felt every time, but he was grateful for it all the same. He had started to look forward to it more and more, a mix of excitement and restlessness coursing through him while he changed after practice. It was ridiculous, because kissing was one of their hobbies at that point, but there was just something about that particular moment that Shane craved. He didn't know how he would act if he couldn't get his daily dose of post-practice Ilya.

There was something about the fact that, even if their relationship had been put on blast for the whole world to see, part of it still belonged to them only. No one would know how much Shane craved his husband's lips at the end of the day, and it was for the best, because no one would understand anyway. No one deserved to know how desperate Ilya got, how he never let go before he had Shane moaning against his mouth like he was starving for the sound. No one could understand how this simple pattern made them deeply happy and helped make everything else they had to face just a little easier.

The game was going to be rough, they all knew it. It was a make it or break it moment, and in just over an hour and a half the Ottawa Centaurs would either be on the road to the playoffs, or their season would end. Shane breathed in and out, focusing on each atom of oxygen entering his body as he walked out of the bus and into the rink. He ignored the noise coming from fans and reporters on either side of them. He didn't want to know if people believed in them or not. He wanted the wait to be over, he wanted to be on the ice, he wanted the puck to drop. Still, keeping his eyes down didn't keep him from feeling the buzz of excitement around him. And as it often happened with him, his brain made the excitement feel like fear.

He followed his team in the guest locker room, and they each found their jersey. Shane's was hung next to Ilya's, as always, a reassuring comfort in the storm. He looked up and his husband sent him a reassuring smile. He knew. Of course he did. Ilya was always looking out for him. Shane felt his heart grow three sizes while Ilya was already busing himself by unpacking his bag. It had been a long day, a team meeting and a pre-game press conference after a long night spent on the plane. Shane missed his husband, missed the feel of his hands and the warmth of his lips. He needed one of those bone melting kisses Ilya had mastered. He decided to just be brave and ask for what he wanted, for once.

"Hey," he said softly, making Ilya look up, "can I talk to you for a minute? In private?"

Ilya simply nodded, and silently led Shane further into the room, pushing him towards the unused showers with a hand on his back. As soon as the door had closed behind them, Ilya was taking his face in his hands.

"Are you okay?" he asked, eyes roaming Shane's face.

"Yes, I just... I needed..." Shane stammered.

They had always been better at expressing themselves with their bodies anyway. Shane dropped his sentence and leaned in towards his husband. Ilya was there to catch him, and kissed back before Shane could even worry about being rejected. As usual when Ilya was trying to make him feel better with a simple kiss, Shane was unable to retain a soft moan under the sheer force of his love. And yet... something was missing. Shane brought his arms around Ilya's shoulders to bring him even closer, letting go of any restraint, lapping at his mouth. After a few seconds, Ilya broke the kiss with a grunt.

"Fuck... Shane... what..." He cut himself with a disbelieving laugh.

It must have been a good kiss, if it could render the great Ilya Rozanov speechless, and Shane wouldn't argue that it wasn't, because he felt warm all over. But something was still missing. His anxiety, his restlessness, they were still here.

"I can't let you do that again unless you want me to walk on the ice with a boner," Ilya joked.

"Sorry, sorry, I just..." Shane shook his head.

"You're okay?"

"Stressed I think."

"Mh. Is important game, but we are a great team."

"We are," Shane nodded absentmindedly.

Ilya put a hand under his chin to force him to make eye contact.

"We are. We are the best team. We will crush them, get to the playoffs, make quick work of it, and win the cup."

Shane couldn't help but smile at the certainty in his tone. "Will we now?"

"Yes. We're together. No one can stop us," Ilya concluded with a kiss on Shane's cheek. "The rest of the team is okay too I guess."

Shane laughed against him. He was right. They were great. Their team was good, and getting better every day. Shane closed his eyes, put their forehead together, and sighed. Yes. They would win. Not because Ilya had magic kisses, but because Ilya was a great captain, and his words had put Shane at ease. He couldn't wait to go out there and play with his team, with his husband, and show how great they were together.

"Thanks. I needed that," he admitted with a chaste peck against Ilya's lips.

"Anytime. I love making my players feel good," Ilya said with a grin and a pinch on Shane's ass.

"Not too good I hope," Shane laughed and pushed him away.

They walked back into the locker room with matching determined smiles.

Luckily, they were hidden away in their private bubble when things went crashing down. Well, lucky for Shane, who was able to process his emotions as dramatically as needed. Unlucky for Ilya who had to be front row at that show. It was one of those rare quiet mornings when they had nothing planned besides enjoying each other's presence. And it was exactly what they were doing, making out lazily on the couch, a TV show long forgotten in the background. Shane was melting under Ilya's hands, only able to stay seated on his husband's lap because he was being held. They were in no rush to get things anywhere, simply enjoying the time they had in ways they had been deprived of for years. Ilya finally detached his lips from Shane, sighing longingly.

"I'd kill for a cigarette right now," he whined, eyes closed, and Shane started to kiss along his jaw, hoping to ease the ache.

"You could get up, go out, have one, but maybe I can offer something else," he tried to say in a sultry voice, hiding how desperate he was for Ilya to stay exactly where he was.

"Hm, tell me," Ilya encouraged. He loved it when Shane was able to put into words exactly what he wanted to happen between them.

"I can think of other things you can use your mouth for," Shane teased, and they were close enough that he felt the rumble of Ilya's laugh against his chest.

"Your offer is for me to suck your dick?"

Shane shrugged. "You like doing it."

"Not as much as you do," Ilya smiled.

"Well... I guess we can do that too," Shane sighed like it would be a chore.

Ilya laughed and grabbed Shane's ass to bring him higher on his thighs, holding him in place while he leaned over the armrest to search through the side table drawer. He settled back and put a piece of his nicotine gum in his mouth. Shane watched him as he bit into it, a hand on his jaw to feel it's muscles work under his fingers. His husband was the most handsome man on Earth. Shane still had a hard time comprehending his luck. Ready to ignore the gum's weird taste, he leaned in to capture Ilya's lips once again.

That's when everything went wrong.

The kiss didn't taste like nicotine thinly veiled in mint.

It tasted good.

Familiar.

Bone melting.

Shane broke the kiss immediately, mind going a mile a minute.

“You okay?” Ilya asked what was probably a very horrified Shane.

His jaw had dropped. His eyes had widened. His entire body was frozen.

“Shane? What is going on?”

“Ilya! Fuck! You...” Shane scrambled to get away from Ilya, from this couch, from the impossible truth now appearing under his eyes. Ilya followed, looking entirely lost.

“What the fuck just happened?”

Shane pointed an accusatory finger at him, “You got me... addicted... to nicotine!” he said through gritted teeth.

Ilya froze. “What..?”

“Oh god... every time... every practice and I... I thought it was just you!”

“I am very lost right now,” Ilya said, arms outstretched towards his pacing husband.

“When you kiss me, sometimes, I get this... this feeling!”

“I make you horny? We knew that,” Ilya laughed.

“No! Shut up! It’s like my entire body relaxes... because I’m finally getting what I’ve been craving, oh god I am so stupid.”

“Are you saying kissing me... relaxes you? And it’s a problem?”

“No. I am saying that you eat these stupid gums every day after practice and after every game and I kiss you every time and I’m getting a fucking shot of fucking nicotine and now my body is craving it!”

They both froze at the end of that sentence. Shane could feel his heart beating inside his skull. This was the worst thing that ever happened to him, so, obviously, Ilya burst into a boisterous laugh.

“Fuck you!” was all Shane could say.

“You are addicted to me, Hollander?” Ilya asked smugly, and Shane wished they could have been on the ice so he could slam him against the boards. The penalty would be worth it too.

“Stop being an asshole for a minute.”

“Shane, this doesn’t make any sense. Not scientific at all.”

“Not scientific at all,” Shane repeated in a mocking tone. “It’s the only explanation. Oh fuck.”

He pushed his hands in his hair. Years of strict diets, years of avoiding cigarettes and drugs and alcohol, years of working out and making sure his body got everything he needed to be

the best version of itself. All those years. Ruined.

“Shane, please, calm down, is nothing,” Ilya said as he walked closer but Shane stepped out of his grasp.

“No, it’s not. I can’t be addicted to anything. I need to get sober,” he declared, serious as anything, and Ilya mouthed the word, biting his cheek not to laugh.

“You do not actually smoke, you know that?” he said, looking at Shane like he had lost his mind.

“But I’m so fucking on edge when I don’t…”

“Kiss me?” Ilya provided, too smug for it to be helpful.

“Yes!” Shane pointed at him again, way too enthusiastic. “I’ll just…”

“Don’t say anything you’ll regret,” Ilya sighed.

“…stop kissing you.”

“Something like that.” Ilya shook his head. “That’s dumb.”

“No, it’s not. It’s the only way.”

“It isn’t even a problem. I kiss you every time you need and if you need more I kiss you more,” Ilya explained, getting a little worked up because he knew that once Shane had an idea in mind, it was hard to change it.

“No, I have to get rid of this… need,” he said with a disgusted frown.

Ilya sighed. Shane had never been good at needing anything, that was for sure. “I eat the stupid gum so I can kiss you, what is the point then? I’ll just smoke.”

“The point is not dying of lung cancer at 30!”

“I don’t need to live over 30 in a world where you don’t kiss me,” Ilya declared, and Shane’s heart did flip at that, but he couldn’t let himself get sidetracked.

“I will kiss you, just not after you eat these.”

“How long after?” Ilya asked with a laugh, trying to point out the flaws in that plan.

“I don’t know, I’ll have to look it up,” Shane answered very seriously.

“You’re being crazy.”

“No. I need to take care of my body.”

“I’ll take care of your body,” Ilya said with a wag of his eyebrows, walking up to Shane to grab a handful of his ass. “Unless you want to look things up right now?” he said in a

mocking tone as he brought Shane close to drag their clothed dicks together.

“I won’t kiss you,” Shane said with the very adorable focused-horny frown he got sometimes.

Ilya made an obnoxious bubble with his gum, certain that Shane would break if he put his mind to it. “Let’s see about that.”

In the end, Shane let him do anything he wanted to him, except kiss. That game was fun for the time being, but Ilya knew he would hate it soon enough, and he hoped Shane would come to his senses before it became torture.

After that heartbreaking discovery, the perfect routine was broken. The whole world was broken, or at least it felt like it to Ilya. His beautiful but neurotic husband was making himself miserable by avoiding kissing Ilya and relieving his anxiety in one go. Ilya genuinely tried to understand it, but he couldn’t understand why Shane couldn’t just kiss him more to get rid of his nicotine need. If there even was one. Ilya still wasn’t sure about that. However, he had to admit that Shane was more on edge than usual, but maybe it was just because they were in the middle of the playoffs, and Ilya was stressed and missed the relief of cigarettes, so he ate more gum because he did want to eventually get rid of his addiction, and in turn Shane kissed him less often.

At least their games were going well. Their connection on the ice had not suffered from this whole fiasco, but it was pretty much the only thing. More often than not they were at each other’s throat, and Ilya had to juggle between his nicotine cravings and moments when he thought Shane might need to kiss him (before games, after games, mostly) and he had to abstain from his gum to let it happen. The hardest part was that he still wanted to kiss Shane all the time, and between the no PDA rule and the gum thing, life had become unbearable. And so, Ilya decided to take the matter into his own hands.

He had Shane right where he wanted him, soft and pliant, sitting on the kitchen counter with his legs open just enough that Ilya was able to stand there. His hands were dancing on his husband’s sides and thighs, sometimes coming up to pet Shane’s hair or angle his head differently. And Shane went with every silent command, shivered with every touch, moaning into Ilya’s mouth. Ilya indulged for a moment before he decided that he could put his plan in place. He detached his mouth from Shane’s, taking just a second to appreciate his blissed-out face, before he reached behind him to grab the gum he had hid for this precise moment. Shane just watched him, eyes fluttering open, looking a little lost.

“Ilya? What... what’s that?”

He sounded so wrecked that Ilya felt almost bad. “Just some gum.”

“Wha- you mean... Ilya what the fuck?” Shane yelled as he pushed him away.

Ilya crowded his personal space again almost immediately, hand creeping up Shane’s thighs to reach his crotch. “Where were we?”

“Nowhere! Get off me!” Shane complained weakly as his hips rolled instinctively against Ilya’s hands. “You’re insufferable.”

“I just want to show how unimportant this is,” Ilya said in a low voice.

“Fuck you,” Shane whined and his head fell against Ilya’s shoulder.

“I would, moy kotenok, but you don’t like it when I don’t kiss you while I do it,” Ilya answered in a falsely compassionate tone, kissing Shane’s jaw, tantalizing.

Shane rolled his hips again, the sweetest sounds falling from his mouth, and Ilya was already celebrating the win. Before he could formulate it, however, Shane had looked up and something dangerous was glistening in his eyes.

“Fuck it,” he muttered, and Ilya didn’t have time to be elated before Shane grabbed a fistful of his hair and brought him down to crash their lips together.

The kiss was so far from the softness they had shared just moments before. It was bruising, heated, almost a little mean. Ilya reveled in it. He kissed back as hard as he got, a hand still focused on distracting Shane as much as possible. There was one thing he had forgotten to consider though, which was a little ridiculous, because he really knew his husband by now.

Before he could really process it, Shane came undone under his hands, biting his lip in the process. Ilya didn’t mind the sting, because Shane looked too lost in pleasure to care, and that’s how he liked him best. It wouldn’t have taken much pressure for Ilya to follow him, but he had neglected his own dick entirely. And so, when Shane pushed him back, jumped off the counter, and started to walk out of the kitchen, Ilya was left panting and wanting, facing the consequences of his own actions.

“What are you doing?” he whined, trailing after his husband, who escaped his grasp.

“I’m going to take a shower. Alone,” he added when he saw Ilya’s eyes. “You should brush your teeth, you taste like nicotine. I hate it.” He ran up the stairs before Ilya had processed his words.

“No, no, no,” Ilya took off after Shane, but his husband was faster, and had already locked himself in the bathroom before Ilya could reach him. “You are…” he breathed out, more out of breath at Shane’s antics than because of their short race. “Unbelievable. You are a demon. I hate you,” he complained, forehead resting against the door and hand relieving some pressure on his aching dick.

“You brought this upon yourself! Go away!”

Ilya was madly in love with him. He had to find a way to make him pay.

He got his chance just a few days later. It wasn’t a plan, he didn’t even have to put anything in place, he wasn’t thinking about it. He wasn’t really thinking about anything as he walked down the stairs on a random morning, torn between the need to run back in bed for an extra

fifteen minutes and the eagerness to join the greatest loves of his life in the kitchen. He lingered in the doorframe, watching as Shane finished his smoothie and Anya begged from scraps. Poor girl didn't even know she was begging for celery. Lucky for her she spotted her other, better dad, and ran up to him. He bent down to hug her, relishing her warmth.

"Hi baby," he said in his low morning voice.

"Hi!" Shane replied, turning around to look at them. "Oh, you're talking to her," he realized and frowned, turning back to his task.

Ilya chuckled and stood back up to come up behind his husband, encircling his waist with both arms and trailing his nose against his nape. Contrary to Anya, Shane was cold. He had already been out of bed for a while, had probably gone for his usual run and shower routine. Ilya realized he would have liked to wake up next to him and bit him in revenge. Shane yelped and wiggled against him.

"What's with you this morning?"

"I missed you."

"While you were asleep?" Shane laughed.

"Da."

"Well, you should have dreamt of me then."

"I tried, you're the one who didn't show up."

Shane sighed and turned around in Ilya's arms. "I refuse to have an argument about this."

"About you standing me up in my dream? Classic Shane, avoiding issues." Ilya sighed dramatically, and Shane laughed.

"Sure, let's go with that."

He kissed Ilya's cheek and reached out beside him to grab his smoothie. It looked thick and green and smelled like gardening. He took a big gulp while Ilya scrunched his nose at the whole thing. Then, he had the audacity to lean in for a kiss. Ilya leaned back.

"What?"

That's when a little lightbulb lit up in Ilya's brain.

"Am not kissing you after you drink that."

"What? Why?"

"Gross. I'll throw up and it would ruin the morning."

Shane rolled his eyes. "You're ridiculous."

“Oh? Am I?” Ilya let go of him and crossed his arms in front of his chest. “Is it only ridiculous when I do it or are we admitting that your thing is ridiculous too?”

Shane frowned. “My smoothie is fruits and vegetables and proteins and is calculated to give me everything I need to get through practice today.”

“My cigarettes make me look hot and dangerous. What’s your point?” he shrugged, voluntarily difficult.

“Your cigarettes will kill you.”

“So will your magic potion, probably,” he said with a disdainful nod.

“Sorry I’m trying to take care of myself.”

Ilya had expected playful banter, hoped for an eye roll and kisses. But Shane seemed genuinely annoyed. It put Ilya on edge.

“How is it taking care when it makes you that mad before nine in the morning?”

“The smoothie isn’t making me mad.”

Ilya scoffed. “It’s not making you happy either. None of this thing is. Can’t you just drop it?”

“No! I’m still craving it! Every day! I almost... I almost want to leave the rink early so we can go through the whole thing and I can kiss you later on.”

This was a big admission for Shane. There was something he wanted more than hockey. Up until now the only thing on that list had been Ilya. It made sense that he was so thrown off about it. but Ilya was frustrated, and it didn’t make him want to be nice about it.

“Fine. Keep doing your thing. Why would I care? I don’t. At all. I don’t care.”

“You bring it up a lot for someone who don’t care.”

“Because I see that not kissing me makes you irritable.”

There was no playfulness in their tone anymore.

“Irritable, wow. Who taught you that one?”

“You, obviously.”

“Great, perfect,” Shane said as he grabbed the lid to his cup. “You know what? I’m almost ready, so I’ll probably head to the rink early. I don’t think you’ll care about that either?”

Ilya heard the challenge in his tone.

“No. Not at all,” he answered, and he let him go, ignoring the pit in his stomach and the sadness in Shane’s eyes.

Shane had never been a party guy, and especially when it was this type of party. The rooftop was beautiful, sure, all soft lights and a stunning view of the city. But it was crowded with people, all of them belonging to the hockey world, all of them important. Shane would have been able to deal with a room full of strangers, surrounded by his team, with his husband at his side. But here all those strangers acted like they were friends because they somewhat knew of each other, and because being seen with Shane made them look morally superior to those who didn't, and would later get accused of bigotry. Shane smiled politely, made small talk, couldn't help but wonder which of them were desperate to be seen with him exactly because they were bigots. It was all putting him on edge, and he had lost his friends in the crowd, and he didn't know where Ilya was. Simply put, he was in hell.

He adjusted the collar of his tux, which seemed to be shrinking with every second he spent there. He could hardly breathe, which didn't make sense, considering the open sky above his head. Maybe the lack of oxygen was the fault of his company. An agent fighting for his attention, a player from Los Angeles trying and failing to make jokes, and the owner of the Boston team, who was probably one of those people desperate to be seen with Shane to show how cool he was with the whole thing. He was the only one there who was looking around as much as Shane, but he probably wasn't looking for Ilya, or maybe he was scared to see him come there. Shane tried to focus back on the conversation as the Boston guy excused himself from it, probably satisfied with the number of photographers he had spotted aiming at them. Breathing became a little easier then.

"It's been such a great year for you so far," the agent told him. He felt so bad about forgetting her name that he politely smiled and nodded. "I've seen a lot of players in my time, but you're really one of a kind!" He took a sip from the now lukewarm beer he had forced himself to order and didn't want to drink. "Although I couldn't help but be surprised by how little you've appeared in the media," she said with a practiced frown.

"I feel like I've appeared plenty," he tried to joke.

"No, of course, but, if it were me, and no shade to your agent, I would have put you in every ad! You'd be the face of Calvin Klein by now!" She laughed. "Do you have something planned for June? Oh I'm sure you have!" she exclaimed with a hand on his arm for emphasis.

Well, hopefully he'd be playing the final games of his season and win the Stanley cup, but he felt like that wasn't what she had in mind. He just wanted her to take her hand away.

"Again, I know your agent is wonderful, but I'm just wondering if she has the shoulder to take on such a meaningful journey." She shook her head like the thought was just occurring to her, like she hadn't been hinting at wanting to recruit Shane and Ilya for an hour now.

"No, yeah, she's great," he stammered, correcting his position so she would have to let go of him. "The ad thing was mostly a personal choice, really. We both wanted... some peace and quiet."

“Oh, I completely understand! And you had to focus on your new team, it was a lot of changes. There’s still more time!”

Surprisingly, Shane was saved from that conversation by the LA player. “It was a lot of change for you, probably, but I guess I expected more for us,” he laughed.

Shane frowned, bracing for anything. “What do you mean?”

“Well, there was the whole revelation, stolen moment drama, and I guess we had more diversity speeches than ever, but other than that, like, if I didn’t know, I wouldn’t know, you know?”

“Uh, not really?” Shane frowned, trying to make sense of those jumbled words.

“Like...” the guy seemed to look for the right words and come short of them. “You guys don’t really look like a couple. You’re like... coworkers who we saw kiss once. Or I guess barely coworkers ‘cos like, where is he, you know?” he laughed again, swaying his arms around to point out Ilya’s absence, but Shane couldn’t find it in himself to even smile.

“Yeah, I guess we’re not... obvious.”

He hated the words as he said them. He knew Ilya would give him a hickey in the middle of the arena after every goal if Shane let him. But Shane had been putting up so many barriers. And Ilya had gone along with them, because he respected Shane’s comfort above his own wants. All the while Shane still let fear dictate his life. Fear of making people uncomfortable with their open affection, fear of not being good enough that his team would overlook his queerness, fear of somehow getting addicted to nicotine. Fuck. He was barely touching his husband these days. It was a miracle that Ilya hadn’t made him sleep on the couch already. He was the dumbest man alive and the worst husband ever.

“Which is fine!” The LA guy said with a shrug, like he was afraid of the concept of men kissing, and the agent frowned like it really wasn’t fine and Ilya and Shane should be making out on Instagram live wearing branded boxers.

But Shane didn’t care about either of them now. He wanted to kiss his husband. Craved it actually. Shane never went after what he wanted. He suffered in silence until maybe someone offered it, and then he’d usually find a reason to reject it. He was really tired of this pattern. He wanted Ilya to help him break it.

“Of course it is,” he said with a weak smile, trying to hide how annoyed he was. “If you will excuse me,” he started, and nodded as a goodbye, deciding that he didn’t care enough to finish his sentence.

He walked away from them, dropping his beer onto the first table he saw. He was on a mission now. Scanning the place, he zeroed in on all the familiar faces, all the people Ilya could have been talking to, and especially the other Ottawa players, but his husband was nowhere to be seen. He made his way through the crowd, making sure to always look far enough ahead that he wouldn’t cross anyone’s eye. At least he was very good at that.

Finally finding Ilya felt like a breath of fresh air. He was on the edge of the terrace, looking over the guardrail he was leaning on. Only half of his face was visible, but the cigarette hanging between his fingers was unmistakable. This felt like the universe was sending Shane a big ‘fuck you’ sign, but he realized that he didn’t care about the universe any more than anyone else at this party. He wanted Ilya, now, and allowing the thought to bloom in his head had made the want so much more palpable. He was almost shaking with it. He did see the nicotine, the risk, the exposure, but this time he also saw the warm light shining on his husband’s face, his relaxed but closed off posture, the messy curls falling on his forehead and how his tux made him look sharp and powerful.

He saw the love of his life, and he couldn’t help but rush towards him.

Ilya didn’t see him until Shane was right next to him, leaning on the railing too. Ilya brought the cigarette to his mouth once before moving his hand as far away from Shane as possible, turning his head to exhale, and Shane loved him even more for that.

“Enjoying the view?” he asked as casually as possible, keeping his hands on the metallic bar in front of him to keep himself from pawing at his husband just yet.

“I just wanted people to leave me alone for a minute,” Ilya sighed. “People ask me too many stupid things here.”

“Hence the cigarette?”

“Usually works with you,” Ilya sent him a little smile that Shane could tell was tinged with real frustration.

“Usually, yeah.”

He leaned in and kissed Ilya’s cheekbone. Ilya stood straighter.

“Is okay, I’m fine,” Ilya shrugged him off like Shane was doing this for him, and not entirely because he wanted to.

“Good to know,” Shane answered, getting back into his personal space.

Ilya put out his cigarette and looked around. It broke Shane’s heart a little. He had some groveling to do.

“Do you want us to leave?” his husband asked.

“No, we can’t, there’s still a bunch of speeches we have to get through.” He put a hand on Ilya’s forearm and gently brought it back up to his bicep, then to his shoulder, following it with his eyes before planting them in Ilya’s.

“You can’t look at me like that and expect me to care about boring speech.” He seemed genuinely conflicted.

Shane’s hand came up to his cheek. Ilya jerked back slightly.

“I just smoked, there’s people, we can’t,” Ilya said softly.

“I’m sorry.”

“What? Why?” Ilya frowned.

“For making you feel like this. Like you can’t touch me. I shouldn’t have... it’s all stupid.”

“Shouldn’t have what?”

“Gave us all those rules. I don’t want to hide behind them anymore.”

“Okay. What do you want?” Ilya asked, immediately picking up on Shane’s mood.

“Just... I think we should just have one rule,” he started, and felt Ilya’s hand slip from his waist, so he came up close enough for their breath to mingle before he added: “Kiss me whenever, wherever, and however you want.”

Shane only saw Ilya’s surprised expression for a second before he went in for a kiss. Ilya didn’t need to be told twice, hands coming back to hold Shane and lips chasing after his. He let the world melt away as he held on to his husband for dear life, kissing him within an inch of his life. He had missed it. The feeling of Ilya right against him, the warmth of his hands on the small of his back, the softness of his tongue in his mouth. The thrill. The taste of the cigarette reminded Shane of some of their earlier encounters. The fear, the urgency, the desperation, the secrecy... Now he was just relieved. Relieved that this part of their life was behind them. Relieved that Ilya was still kissing him like he needed it more than oxygen. Relieved that they had made it so far. And maybe some part of that relief was the nicotine, but he really didn’t fucking care anymore. He was addicted.

End Notes

Twice now I've made Shane leave a conversation at a party to go kiss Ilya, let's all pretend that it's a trope and not just a lack of imagination

As usual feel free to drop by my [twitter](#), even in my dms, I'll probably follow back if you interact like twice because I want more friendsss!

Sending you all love and kisses

(edit: thank you for the response to this fic, I'll answer every comment whenever I finally have time but I do read them and they make me cry often <3)

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