Post-Game Protocol

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Post-Game Protocol

by peiceabread

Summary

set between heated rivalry and long game, however there is no spoilers for the rest of the show.

Ilya fucks up, Shane reminds him its a game, Ilya has to go back to Boston all he wants to do is comfort his boyfriend who he hurt

Notes

First time writing for this fandom so be nice, I am a massive fan of the books however there is no ignore here (other than Shane and ilya being official) which spoils the last part of the show

database of all my fics - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1K05xfC0cJCv7ujHKqze_KhG5l0KMbPKriZjNNvM4EWI/edit?usp=sharing

The Bell Centre was deafening. Nineteen thousand people screaming for blood, specifically *his* blood, but Ilya Rozanov barely heard them. His focus was narrowed down to the strip of white ice in front of him and the blur of blue and red flying down the wing.

Shane.

Shane was fast tonight, faster than Ilya had seen him in months. He had the puck on a string, cutting inside the Raiders' defensive zone with that infuriatingly perfect edge work. It was late in the third period, tie game, 2-2.

Ilya pivoted, matching Shane's speed, closing the gap. He didn't want to hurt him—he never wanted to hurt him—but he had a job to do. He had to separate the man from the puck.

Shane dipped his shoulder, a feint to the outside, but Ilya knew that move. He didn't bite. Instead, he stepped up, angling his body to check Shane into the boards.

It should have been a clean hit. Hard, but clean.

But Shane lost an edge just as they collided. He spun awkwardly, exposing his side, and Ilya's momentum carried him through. The shaft of Ilya's stick caught Shane hard in the ribs, sandwiched between Ilya's weight and the unforgiving glass.

The sound was sickening—a sharp *thud* followed by the clatter of a stick hitting the ice.

Shane went down. And he didn't get up.

The whistle blew instantly. A roar of outrage went up from the crowd, baying for a penalty.

Ilya's heart hammered against his ribs, a frantic, terrifying rhythm. Every instinct in his body screamed at him to drop to his knees, to check if Shane was breathing, to pull him up. He saw Shane curl in on himself, clutching his side, his face contorted in pain behind the visor.

Shane. Shane, please get up.

But Ilya couldn't move. He couldn't show a flicker of the panic clawing at his throat. There were cameras everywhere. High-definition lenses zooming in on his face, looking for a smirk, a sneer, anything to feed the narrative of the villainous Russian crushing the Montreal golden boy.

So Ilya did the hardest thing he had ever done. He turned his back.

He skated toward the referee, his face a mask of bored indifference, even as his hands trembled inside his gloves. He watched the Metros' trainer run onto the ice out of the corner of his eye. He saw Shane's teammates gathering around, O'Doul shouting obscenities in Ilya's direction.

Ilya just stared at the jumbotron, watching the replay. Watching himself hurt the person he loved most in the world.

"Two minutes," the ref said. "Hooking."

Ilya didn't argue. He skated to the penalty box, sat down, and felt like he was going to throw up.

The rest of the game was a blur of aggressive forechecking and defensive paranoia. When the final horn sounded—Raiders taking it 3-2 in overtime—Ilya didn't stay for the celebration. He bumped gloves with his goalie perfunctorily and bolted for the tunnel, ignoring the jeers raining down from the stands.

Inside the visitors' locker room, the air was thick with sweat and victory, but Ilya ignored it all. He bypassed the trainer, ignored the equipment manager asking for his stick, and went straight to his stall. He fumbled his phone out of his suit jacket pocket with trembling fingers.

There was one new notification sitting on the lock screen.

Jane: *I'm fine. Just bruised ribs. X-rays clean. Don't freak out. Go do media.*

Ilya stared at the name—*Jane*. It was the nondescript pseudonym they'd picked three years ago because "Jane" sounded like a boring accountant from Ottawa, not the captain of the Montreal Metros. If anyone looked over his shoulder, they would see a boring text from a boring woman.

Ilya let out a breath he felt like he'd been holding since the second period. *Bruised ribs.* Painful, annoying, but not career-ending. Not broken.

He typed back, his thumbs flying over the screen.

Me: *Coming over. 1 hour.*

Jane: *You have a flight.*

Me: *I have an hour. Leave the door unlocked.*

He didn't wait for a reply. He tossed the phone into his bag and started stripping off his gear with frantic speed. He had a shower to take, a press scrum to survive, and a very important appointment with a boring accountant named Jane.

The silence in Shane's Montreal condo was usually something he cherished. It was clean, structured, and predictable—much like the rest of his life. But tonight, after the loss, the silence felt heavy.

Shane sat on the edge of his beige sofa, a bag of ice pressed against his side, staring blankly at the muted SportsCenter broadcast. He was mentally replaying the third period. The hit. The wind getting knocked out of him. The way Ilya had just skated away without looking back.

He knew why. Rationally, he knew why. But it still left a cold pit in his stomach.

The lock on the front door clicked.

Shane didn’t flinch. Only one other person had a key.

Ilya swept into the apartment like a weather system. He was wearing a ridiculous faux-fur coat that looked expensive and hideous in equal measure, carrying a grease-stained paper bag. He was still in his suit from the game, though the tie was already gone and the top button undone.

"You look like tragic widow," Ilya announced, kicking off his dress shoes and leaving them exactly where Shane would trip over them later.

"It was a regular season game, Ilya," Shane grumbled, though the tightness in his chest loosened the second Ilya came into view.

Ilya stopped in the middle of the living room. The bravado dropped instantly. He didn't make a joke about the score. He didn't tease. He just looked at the ice pack on Shane's ribs, his expression twisting into something open and pained.

"Shane," he said, the name soft and heavy in the quiet room.

"I'm fine," Shane said automatically.

"You are not fine." Ilya shed the coat, tossing it carelessly onto the armchair, and crossed the room in three long strides. He dropped to his knees in front of the sofa, ignoring the poutine bag on the table, his hands hovering over Shane’s knees. "I felt it hit. The stick. It got caught."

"It was an accident," Shane said. He reached out, his hand landing on Ilya’s shoulder, feeling the tension in the muscles there. "I lost an edge. I turned into it."

"I saw you go down. I wanted to..." Ilya trailed off, looking down at his hands. "I had to skate away. I hated it. I hated every second."

"I know," Shane whispered. "I know you did."

Ilya looked up, his eyes dark and frantic. "Let me see."

Shane sighed, peeling the ice away and lifting his shirt. A dark, ugly bruise was already blooming across his lower ribs, purple and angry against his pale skin.

Ilya hissed through his teeth. He reached out, his fingers ghosting over the skin, agonizingly gentle. "fuck. I am so sorry, Shane."

"It's just a bruise. Nothing broken. X-rays were clean."

"I will never forgive myself. I will buy you a new car. I will buy you a boat."

Shane let out a short laugh that turned into a wince. "I don't need a boat, Ilya. I live in downtown Montreal."

"Then I will buy you a better condo. This one is depressing." Ilya leaned forward, pressing a soft, lingering kiss to Shane’s hip, just below the bruise. "Does it hurt to breathe?"

"Only when you talk too much," Shane deflected, though his fingers threaded into Ilya's messy hair, holding him there.

Ilya sighed against his skin, the heat of his breath seeping through Shane’s shirt. "I brought poutine. For peace offering. And for guilt."

"You're trying to clog my arteries so you can beat me."

"Yes. It is diabolical plan." Ilya pulled back, finally sitting up on the couch next to Shane. He maneuvered himself carefully, swinging his legs up onto the coffee table but leaving enough space so he didn't jostle Shane's ribs. He pulled Shane gently into his side.

"You played well," Ilya said quietly, his hand resting carefully on Shane’s thigh.

"I missed the deflection in OT."

"Because you were hurt. Because of me."

"Because I'm getting old."

"We are all getting old, *solnyshko*." Ilya paused, then kissed the side of Shane's head. "But when you were yelling at the ref from the bench? Even in pain? Very sexy."

Shane snorted. "You have issues."

"Yes. My issue is that my boyfriend is hurt and I have to pretend I am happy we won." Ilya reached for the bag. "One fry. For the soul."

Shane took the soggy, gravy-covered fry Ilya offered. It tasted like salt and fat and forgiveness. "Fine. One fry."

They sat in silence for a while, eating the poutine. The tension of the game, the media, the hiding—it all bled away. Here, they weren't the Captain of the Metros and the Villain of the Raiders. They were just Shane and Ilya.

Shane glanced at the clock on the wall. "When is the flight?"

Ilya checked his watch, a heavy, garish thing. He sighed. "Team bus leaves the hotel for the airport in ninety minutes. I have... maybe one hour before I have to go back. I told coach I was meeting family."

"One hour," Shane repeated. It wasn't enough. It was never enough.

"It is better than zero hours," Ilya said firmly, turning to lock eyes with Shane. "I could not leave the city without checking on you. Not after that hit. I needed to see you were okay with my own eyes."

"I'm okay, Ilya. Really."

"You are bruised and grumpy." Ilya carefully wrapped his arm tighter around Shane. "So, for the next fifty-nine minutes, we do not move. I hold you. You eat grease. We ignore the world."

"That's not much of a recovery protocol," Shane murmured, though he settled deeper into Ilya's embrace.

"Is the best protocol," Ilya corrected, pressing a kiss to Shane's temple. "Just shut up and let me love you, Shane. The clock is ticking."

Shane closed his eyes, letting the weight of the loss and the pain in his ribs fade against the solid presence of the man beside him. "Okay," he whispered. "Fifty-nine minutes."

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