

Love Me Harder

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Love Me Harder

by [innerslumber](#)

Summary

Ilya Rozanov is leaving behind Russia and going to Canada. Lucky for him, he gets to stay with a new family. But once he meets Shane Hollander, sparks fly and he starts suspecting that Shane is more than what he seems.

AKA:

And They Were Alpha/Omega Roommates!

Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

Hello everyone and thank you for joining me in my hyperfixation of Heated Rivalry!

This is an alternate universe but both TV watchers and book readers should be able to understand it just fine. I do jump a bit between the two for details but nothing too complicated.

And seeing as this is an omegaverse fic, I am writing my own flavour of it. There is discrimination in this verse but the focus is more on the alpha/beta/omega aspect. I promise that the "secret relationship" tag is there for a reason.

Thank you and I hope you enjoy it!

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

Tell me something, I need to know

Then take my breath and never let it go

If you just let me invade your space

I'll take the pleasure, take it with the pain

And if in the moment I bite my lip

Baby, in the moment, you'll know this is

Something bigger than us and beyond bliss

Give me a reason to believe it

'Cause if you want to keep me

You gotta, gotta, gotta, gotta got to love me harder

And if you really need me

You gotta, gotta, gotta, gotta got to love me harder

Gotta love me harder

Ariana Grande, The Weeknd (Love Me Harder)



August 2020

Ilya stared out of the plane window as the Canadian landscape passed by in a blur.

If someone had asked him that he would be leaving behind Russia at the ripe old age of eighteen years old in such a hurried fashion, he would have scoffed at such an idea. But a lot can change in a few months, starting with the death of his father.

Ilya was torn over his feelings about it. As he stood over his father's grave, all he could remember was the neglect and the constant verbal abuse that his mother had suffered before her tragic death. The same abuse that he had endured and had to channel his grief into hockey as an escape. He thought he would feel more sad at his father's passing but all he had felt was numbness tinged with relief.

Moving to Canada hadn't been his initial plan but after his father's unexpected death, he didn't have a lot of choices. Staying in Russia would have been a bleak and terrible life. His older brother didn't give a shit about him and cared even less about his hockey aspirations. Living with his step mother was an even worse option. He had been jumping from one friend's couch to another just to keep a roof over his head for weeks.

He had begged his agent and coach for a way out and after some creative draft and trade moves, Ilya was officially moving to Ottawa.

All things considered, it was not a bad deal at all. They even set up a family that would provide a home and meals so he wouldn't have to worry about the necessities. It felt like a dream come true. A way to leave behind the wreckage of his home and start somewhere with so many more possibilities.

Ilya fiddled with his phone while an English teaching app kept droning through his earbuds. He knew his lack of language skills would be a problem, especially in a bilingual country like Canada. But for now he'd do the best he can and hopefully his hockey would spell out the rest.

He closed his eyes and took a few deep breaths to calm his nerves. Ilya double checked the scent patches on his wrists and neck to make sure they still held up even though he had put on fresh ones about an hour ago. Some alphas could get by with just the suppressants but not Ilya. He knew his scent was on the stronger side. Usually he didn't care about such details but all airlines had strict rules concerning pheromone spreading while on board and the last thing he needed was getting kicked off the flight.

Eyes still closed, Ilya forced himself to push down his anxiety deep and out of the way. There was no point in getting worked up over a closed chapter of his life. No one would miss him and he wouldn't miss them either, no matter how much that thought hurt.

“Oh my gosh, I'm so excited to meet him!” Yuna Hollander gushed as she held up the welcome sign with both hands. “Do you think we should have made a second sign? There's an awful lot of people here today.”

Shane smiled affectionately at his mother and the vibrant cardboard sign. It said “Welcome to Canada, Ilya!” in huge red letters. There was also a healthy amount of glitter and maple leaf stickers throughout the background.

“No, mom, I'm pretty sure he'll be able to see us.”

There were indeed a lot more people than usual at the airport. But Ottawa was a bustling city and it was summer break. Some heavier traveling traffic was to be expected.

“And where is your father? He said he'd only be gone to get some coffee.” Yuna looked around anxiously for her husband, David. She soon spotted him making his way to them, his hands full of caffeinated beverages.

“Sorry that took so long.” David handed a cup to his wife and she took it gratefully. “It's pandemonium out here.”

Shane didn't think it was too bad but he didn't say anything in reply. When his father offered him the second cup, he shook his head. His stomach was churning with excitement (and anxiety) and he didn't want to add a hot drink to the mess.

He honestly didn't know why he was anxious. His family had billeted many young hockey players over the years. Shane had grown up in skates since he was a toddler and the continuing revolving door of other hockey players living in his house was the norm.

But Shane knew *exactly* why he was so excited and anxious. Because this new roommate wasn't just any player. This was Ilya Rozanov. *Ilya Rozanov!*

He had been surprised as anyone else that his team had managed to acquire Rozanov. As a player considered one of the best in Russia, most thought he would finish off another year there before getting drafted to the NHL. Shane knew that this gave his team an even better chance at winning the Memorial Cup and as the newest captain, Shane felt his responsibility very keenly.

The doors to the gate opened and a steady stream of people started coming out. Yuna gave her coffee back to David so she could use both hands to hold up the welcome sign. It took about 15 minutes before a figure that Shane had only seen in pictures and videos came walking down the ramp toward the waiting area.

Rozanov was dressed head to toe in black. From the leather jacket to the barely laced army boots, he just screamed *cool*. And maybe it was the outfit but he seemed even taller in real life. Dark golden curls were tucked beneath a knitted hat and his walk was leisurely in stride. His eyes were scanning left and right along the crowd as he continued down the walkway.

Shane had to force his lungs to take the breath that he hadn't known he was holding.

“Oh my gosh, there he is!” Yuna squealed. She flapped the cardboard sign enthusiastically and called out. “Ilya! Over here!”

At the sound of his name being called, Rozanov's eyes locked into his mother's voice. That's when Shane realized that Ilya had hazel eyes, a mixture of green and gold. They looked like glittering jewels and Shane felt glued to the floor.

Making his way smoothly between the other passengers, Rozanov smiled and calmly approached. He extended his hand in greeting.

“Hello. I'm Ilya Rozanov. Nice to meet you.”

Yuna was the first to shake his hand. “Hello! My name is Yuna Hollander and this is my husband, David, and my son, Shane.” She pointed toward the respective persons in turn.

Rozanov shook David's hand and then reached toward Shane.

“Hi, uh-” Shane stuttered slightly as his hand was enveloped by Rozanov's fingers. “It's nice to meet you. You're an awesome player to watch.”

Smiling, Rozanov nodded and squeezed Shane's hand tightly before letting go. "Same to you."

His Russian accent was heavy but was still understandable. His voice was low and a bit rough but not unpleasant to the ear. Shane could feel the back of his neck heat up and had to swallow heavily.

He didn't understand why he was reacting so viscerally to Rozanov's presence. Shane's eyes darted quickly between the scent patches on the Russian man's neck and wrists. As a beta, Shane wouldn't be able to detect any pheromones anyway so he didn't understand what was going on. All he knew was that the man standing in front of him embodied every asset that an alpha could have and Shane's senses were on high alert.

"Do you have any more bags, Ilya?" Yuna pointed toward the sign that said baggage claim.

"Yes. One more."

They headed off toward the right direction while Yuna and David filled the conversation gap by assuring Rozanov that anything else he needs they can provide easily. Shane walked slightly behind everyone and reminded himself to get his act together. After all, there was a lot more of his roommate that he would need to get used to.

Ilya looked out the car window with half an interest as Mrs. Hollander diligently pointed out landmarks that he knew he'd forget. He was sitting comfortably in the backseat and the reason his attention was wandering away from buildings was just a few handspans away.

The elder Hollanders were very nice but did not particularly stand out to him. Ilya immediately noticed the lack of scent patches on both and clocked them as most likely beta. But Shane Hollander on the other hand...he was *much* more interesting.

Shane's eyes and hair were both dark with his pale skin accentuating his colours even further. Ilya's favourite feature on Shane was the smattering of freckles going across the nose and cheeks. It made him want to trace each one with his fingertips.

And even though they had been in the middle of a busy airport terminal, Ilya thought he had detected just a *hint* of something sweet when his fingers brushed Shane's bare inner wrist.

It was confusing. Ilya was known for having an exceptionally perceptive nose. His coach used to call him a bloodhound, able to smell through a game and parse through all the different emotions on display. But according to the little bit of research he had done before accepting to billet with the Hollanders, he had thought Shane was a beta. And now within the close proximity of the car interior, Ilya thought he could smell something again. It was so subtle but definitely there.

His inner thoughts came to a stop when the car parked in front of a large contemporary style home. It had three garages and a sprawling front yard that was immaculately maintained. Ilya didn't know what the Hollanders did for money but it must be paying fairly well.

Yuna gave him a tour of their spacious home and Ilya was once again reminded how lucky he was. His thoughts flashed briefly to his older brother's apartment, dingy and full of miserable people, and he thanked his lucky stars that he was great at hockey.

“Shane, why don't you show Ilya to his room?” Yuna suggested, once she had shown Ilya everything else.

“Sure, follow me.”

Ilya followed Hollander to an upstairs bedroom tucked in the corner. The room had a queen sized bed, a desk, a set of drawers and a bookcase. It was sparsely decorated which made sense because it was a guest room. Ilya set his bags down and sat on the bed and found the mattress was firm but not too hard. Just the way he liked it.

The silence that set in immediately was palpable. Ilya looked up as Hollander stood still and stared back. He looked as though he was considering multiple lines of conversation and discarding each possibility.

Ilya enjoyed doing this. He enjoyed observing and figuring out why people ticked. It served him especially well on the ice when emotions ran high and people easily made mistakes because of them. So far, Hollander had presented a fairly blank slate but Ilya had a feeling that such calm waters hid a deep pool. He leaned back on to his hands on the bed and simply raised one eyebrow at Hollander in question.

That seemed to prompt the younger man and Shane raked a hand over his hair first before speaking.

“We're going to be teammates. And I know you were the captain of your old team but I'm the captain now. So I hope we can work together without any issues.”

Ilya didn't understand everything but he got the gist of it. Hollander was already establishing dominance and it absolutely delighted Ilya. It made him like Shane even more and to not underestimate him. He was used to being the most powerful player in any team but it seemed Hollander was planning to give him a run for his money.

Oh, he was so looking forward to it.

Ilya nodded easily. “I understand. Don't worry. We win many games, yes?”

“Right.” Relief seemed to smooth out Hollander's face. “Let's play well together and get that Memorial Cup.”

“Yes. Then NHL. You number two and me number one.”

Hollander snorted in derision. “Yeah, that's not fucking happening. I'm going to be drafted first.”

A grin spread over Ilya's full lips. "We see."

The next few months passed by quickly. Shane was still finishing the last year of high school while Rozanov had enrolled in an ESL program through a local college. It didn't take long for Rozanov to acclimate to the team and his surroundings. But Shane couldn't deny the insecurities he felt. They both played center and were constantly competing against each. Trying to out do each other. It's not that Shane ever needed additional motivation. He was always the most hardworking on his team. But something inside seemed to burst with how much he wanted to prove himself to Rozanov.

It might have partially been about being a beta captain to a former alpha captain. Although alphas were rare and omegas even rarer, many team sports usually had an alpha leader. One might say it was unfairly skewed but it was usually given that an alpha had an edge over most players. Shane tried not to let that bother him and reminded himself that great beta hockey players like Scott Hunter were playing in the NHL. He knew that biology wasn't everything but sometimes sports organizations seemed to be lagging behind on modern sensibilities. It was frustrating.

As for Rozanov, he was equally adored and hated by teams and fans. The Ottawa Thunderclap fans absolutely loved their new player but he was cursed by every other CHL fans and teams. Shane knew his teammates sometimes found Rozanov to be intimidating but with each new practice and games, they melded better together. As promised, they won many games and although Ilya pushed the limits of what was allowed, Shane had a firm hold of his captaincy.

As for home life, Shane kept to his usual schedule of school, practices and exercises. To his perpetual confusion, Rozanov didn't seem to have a set routine. He attended classes (with his English improving every day) and definitely participated in all hockey activities. But his diet was irregular and he even smoked. On off nights, he was regularly out partying and would get home late or the next morning. At first, Yuna and Shane were scandalized but David reminded them that Rozanov was an adult and as long as he wasn't getting into trouble, they should respect his privacy.

Shane told himself it didn't matter. That he didn't care that sometimes the perfume of other people lingered in Rozanov's doorway. They were teammates and as long as it didn't interfere with hockey, it wasn't his business.

Then why did Shane's gut twist so hard every time he thought about it?

June 2021

“Are you sure you're both going to be okay without us?” Yuna was carefully folding another shirt into her carryon bag that was laid open on her bed. “Your Dad and I are going to be gone for two weeks. I don't want to come back to a burned down house.”

“Mom, don't be ridiculous,” Shane sighed. “It's not like we're kids anymore.”

Yuna scrutinized Shane and Ilya and scowled even harder. “That is exactly why I'm more worried. You're eighteen now, Shane. Remember, if you get caught doing anything it's no longer juvie for you!”

Ilya laughed and shook his head in disbelief. “Hollander? In jail? Impossible for a good boy.”

“Shut up, Rozanov.”

Ilya picked up the last item on Yuna's pile and carefully tucked it into her suitcase. “I promise we won't burn down the house. You go enjoy your wedding anniversary.”

David, who was also packing, came out of the bathroom with his shaving kit. He added it to the bag on the bed. “I'm really sorry we're going to miss your birthday, Ilya. But we've had this vacation planned over a year ago and rescheduling is impossible.”

“Please don't be sorry. There have been many celebrations.”

And he really wasn't kidding about that. Between Shane's eighteenth birthday in May and winning the Memorial Cup right after, there had been quite a few parties over the last few weeks. Compared to winning the cup, turning nineteen years old didn't seem that much of a big deal. Well, except Ilya could legally drink now. Not that had ever stopped him before but that was a minor detail.

However, Ilya had been trying to be a bit better about his life habits. Maybe it was Hollander's insane health regiment that was rubbing off on him but he had been smoking less. It was also partly that Ilya wanted to please his hosts. He had lost his mother at twelve years old and his father had never been loving, so getting such tacit approval and praise from Yuna and David was a bit of a rush. It also made Shane grimace in annoyance when Yuna would loudly claim that Ilya was “her favourite son”.

Ilya loved annoying Shane Hollander.

At first it was just to get a rise out of him (because Ilya was an asshole) but then it became addicting to see Hollander so flustered. His cheeks would flare up and that subtle sweet smell would come out but with a tinge of burnt sugar. The best part was that Shane himself seemed oblivious to how he affected Ilya.

Without prompting, Ilya picked up the packed suitcases and took them downstairs. He could hear the Hollanders following behind him, chatting happily, as he made his way to the parked

car. He carefully put the bags into the trunk and closed the door.

“Oh, I'm going to miss you boys!” Yuna hugged Shane and then Ilya. “Shane, please make sure Ilya has a good birthday.”

“I'm sure he's old enough to find his own fun without me.”

Ilya pressed a hand to his chest dramatically, as though mortally wounded. “What? No birthday cake baking for me?”

“Bake your own damn cake.”

David waved a hand between the young men. “Okay, that's enough from both of you. Call us if you need anything.”

Shane and Ilya stood side by side as the Hollander parents drove off to start their Mediterranean adventures. A strange silence settled over them which Ilya finally broke by turning back to the house.

“So what's the plan?” Hollander asked.

Ilya jumped over the couch and landed with a thump onto the pillows. He picked up the remote and turned on the television.

“I will be relaxing tonight to save energy for tomorrow. My birthday.” He pointed the remote at Hollander's face. “And *you're* coming with me.”

“Didn't you promise my parents not to get into trouble?”

“No, I promised to not burn the house or see you in jail. So tonight, we will Netflix and chill.”

Hollander frowned at Ilya. “Do you actually know what that means?”

Ilya smiled slowly. “Join me on this couch and find out?”

Hollander threw a cushion at Ilya and stormed off, ignoring the loud laugh coming from the living room.

Despite Shane's outwardly behaviour, he had to admit he was intrigued by Rozanov's proposal.

He had been so focused on winning the Memorial Cup that his birthday had been an afterthought. They had spent it at home with Yuna cooking his favourite Japanese dishes. No

loud parties or outdoor venues. Not that he had minded. Staying fresh for the playoffs had been more important. It had all paid off when Shane scored the winning goal and was named Playoff MVP.

But summer was finally here. No school, no practices, no games. Just a couple of weeks before the insanity of the NHL draft hitting. Would it be so bad to take up Rozanov's offer to let loose a bit?

He had a restless night thinking about it and woke up grumpy. Why was he feeling so out of sorts? He should be the happiest he had ever been. Fairly soon, he would embark on the beginning of his life's goal; to play at the highest level of hockey. But instead, his skin felt tight and a heaviness weighed down inside his chest.

A knock came through the door.

Shane groaned and buried his face into his pillow. "Ugh, what is it?"

"I made breakfast. Come eat now."

Shane groaned again but this time from feeling guilty. Today was Rozanov's birthday and he hadn't gotten anything ready for him. Even worse, now that asshole was making him breakfast. This was awful.

He finally got up, dressed, and made his way to the dining room. Ilya was already eating from his plate. Shane sat down at his seat and contemplated the perfectly made omelet and sausages.

It always surprised Shane when Rozanov showed this side to him but he knew it shouldn't. He didn't know the full story but his parents had told him Rozanov had lost both his mother and father. It made sense that the young boy had learned to fend for himself.

This was another reason sometimes Shane felt so much smaller than Rozanov, and not just in height. Ilya exuded a certain maturity that wasn't even attributed to him being older or an alpha. They were rivals but over the last year they had formed a competitive connection bound in reluctant respect. Shane couldn't deny that Rozanov just seemed...a bit mysterious and intriguing.

In comparison, Shane felt very simple. Hockey hockey hockey.

Shane mumbled a thank you and started to eat. He noticed that Rozanov had used only egg whites to make his omelet and the sausages were the turkey ones that Shane's diet favoured.

Damnit, why did this asshat have to be so observant? And strangely thoughtful?

But that was just the point. Ilya *was* thoughtful. Shane had been prepared for an obnoxious diva alpha player but he hadn't anticipated the surprising reliability. Shane had stayed as the captain of the Ottawa Thunderclap for a good reason but Rozanov had also earned his assistant captain role. Ilya noticed when the younger players were struggling. With a few

accented words, he could get the team all riled up to bring their best. It's not that Shane was a bad captain...but he definitely did feel their differences keenly at moments like this.

Sighing deeply, Shane glared at Rozanov until he noticed.

"Fine. You win. I'll come out with you."

Ilya's smile could outshine the sun. "Was my delicious breakfast that powerful?"

"More like emotional blackmail because I didn't have anything ready for your birthday." Shane flushed red in embarrassment. "But seriously, sorry about that. I should do better."

"No need. I'm a big boy." Rozanov smiled gleefully. "But I am happy you're coming out with me. We're going to celebrate!"

Shane was already regretting his decision. "What exactly are we doing then?"

"You will see."

Shane couldn't decide what was worse, the ear thumping loud music or the heat from all the sweaty dancing bodies. It was even worse knowing that he was *still* not old enough to drink, so what was the fucking point?

The point, or more accurately the man, was currently dancing in the middle of the floor.

Shane was nursing his second ginger ale of the night and he was bored out of his mind. There had been a few offers from some very attractive people to dance but Shane only knew how to be smooth on the ice so he had declined.

Rozanov on the other hand, didn't seem to have any problem being smooth on the dance floor. Wearing a see-through black tank top and ripped jeans, he was currently sandwiched between a beautiful blonde haired woman and a man even taller than Rozanov, with gorgeous dark curls cascading over his shoulder. It also seemed incorrect to call it dancing with the amount of hip thrusts and gyrations that were going on.

Shane didn't understand how any alpha or omega could withstand a situation like this. Even with suppressants, the pheromones must be flying thick because there were no rules about wearing patches in public spaces like a club. He watched a literal parade of people trying to have a chance to dance with Rozanov, to discreetly smell his wrists and neck. He had noticed that Rozanov wasn't wearing any patches tonight. It was a definite invitation.

Not that it mattered to Shane. He was a beta and all he could smell was sweat and the perfumes worn by other beta to smell good in their own right. He definitely wasn't jealous or feeling left out or-

“Hollander!”

Shane felt a sweaty body crash into him. Ilya, already slightly drunk, tried to give him a hug.

“Get off me, Rozanov! I'm not one of your boy toys.”

“Aww don't be cruel, Hollander. It's my birthday!” Rozanov leaned against the table and grinned while his neck and shoulders glistened from sweat. “Come have one dance with me. Just one. Then you are free to be Mr. Party Pooper all you want.”

“I don't know how to dance.”

“Nonsense. Everyone can dance. Come. I can teach you.”

“No, I really don't think that's a good idea.”

Rozanov stuck out his lower lip in a playful sulk. “But it's my birthday! I need your help with- What's the word,” Rozanov started snapping his fingers as though it would help magically summon the right thought. “Ah yes, *wingman*. You can be my wingman.”

Shane looked over the dance floor where many people were still staring at Rozanov like he was the most succulent meal.

“Yeah, I'm pretty sure you don't need my help.”

“Just one dance, Hollander. Or are you afraid?”

A rush of indignation went through Shane's head. Was Rozanov calling him a coward?

“I'm not scared!”

“Okay, fine,” Ilya gestured toward the dance floor. “Show me then.”

Shane took a gulp of his ginger ale and slammed it down on the table before getting up. He made his way purposely toward the throng of people and stopped when he got to a small opening of space.

He immediately regretted his bravado. Everyone seemed to be having a great time while he stood there stiffly. He wasn't even dressed that well for it, since he had only half heartedly put in an effort for his outfit.

But all of the intrusive thoughts came to a screeching halt when he felt Rozanov's hands at his waist.

“You don't have to be nervous,” Ilya crooned into Shane's ear. “Just let go.”

Shane didn't know how to let go. He had lived his whole life being disciplined. But the song was thumping a fast beat, a pair of hot hands were on his hips and Ilya Rozanov, *fucking Ilya Rozanov*, was dancing behind him.

He didn't know what made him turn around but he felt like he could stay in control better face to face. Rozanov's smile was infectious and even though Shane felt ridiculous, he had to admit the song was great and Rozanov was an amazing dancer.

“There he is!” Ilya laughed. “My Captain Oh Captain! Mr. MVP!”

Shane shoved at Rozanov's face to shut him up. “Oh my God, fuck you. I'm just doing this once, okay?”

He knew he looked stupid but he tried to match the dancers movements. Ilya on the other hand was swaying and thrusting to the music like it was just another part of him. Then he reached out and wrapped a strong arm around Shane's neck to pull him in closer.

“Not bad for an amateur.” Rozanov said, his lips curled into that familiar crooked grin.

Feeling indignant again, Shane was about to cuss him out when he suddenly got a lung full of something smokey. The scent was heavy with notes of spice and dark chocolate that made Shane's stomach take a tumble. He felt like all the blood in his head immediately drained and went straight to his crotch. He had an insane urge to grab Ilya and lick a trail up his neck to-

Shane pushed Rozanov away in a panic.

Ilya just looked surprised.

They both stood there for a moment, sticking out like sore thumbs among the moving crowd. When Shane finally managed to get his breathing under control, he looked at Rozanov and only found curiosity in his eyes.

“I gotta go,” Shane stammered. And before the other man could even reply, Shane ran out of the dance floor and the club altogether.

As Shane flagged a cab to get back to his house, he couldn't stop panicking. What the hell had happened there? It's not like he hadn't danced with other people before. And was Rozanov wearing a cologne? But they'd been living under the same roof for almost a year and Shane had never smelled anything like that before. He awkwardly adjusted his pants where he was still partially aroused.

It was fucking embarrassing. He had fucking embarrassed himself in front of the one person he never wanted to be vulnerable with.

The moment he got inside the house, Shane threw off his clothes like they were on fire and jumped into the shower. He wanted to clean all traces of the club and Rozanov off his body. After scrubbing down twice and his skin blooming pink from how hard he washed, Shane got changed and immediately hid under the covers.

He didn't know what was happening. Sure, he had been outside of his comfort zone but Rozanov was not a random stranger. Over the last year of being roommates and teammates, they had a strong sense of rivalry tempered with camaraderie. They weren't best friends and

they definitely had different friend circles, but Shane thought he was fairly level headed when it came to Rozanov.

As the memory of Ilya's scent overtook him again, Shane didn't feel level headed at all.

He tossed and turned and tried to make himself go to sleep. He even tried putting on soothing music to help but nothing worked. Instead of getting any rest, Shane spent a miserable night watching his window slowly get brighter until morning hit.

And he couldn't help but notice that Rozanov had never made it back home.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you Kam for the hockey information. I hope my poor attempt is believable lol!

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

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

Shane felt like utter shit.

His clock was reminding him that it was already past 10 am and he should be getting out of bed. He didn't even have the excuse of being hung over since he didn't drink at the club with Rozanov. All he knew was that he hadn't slept a wink and his body felt like it had been pummeled in overtime.

Distantly, he heard the front door creak open. It seemed that Rozanov had finally made it home from wherever the hell he had gone to. Or whoever's bed he had just left.

Shane's chest clenched at the thought and he didn't want to think of it any further.

Like the coward he was being, he buried his head under the covers and hoped that Rozanov would just ignore him. Unlucky for him, he heard a knock at his door.

“Hollander? You alive?”

Shane groaned. “Go away. I think I'm getting sick.”

“Oh, is that why you ran away last night?”

“Fuck off, Rozanov.”

Shane heard the other man laugh and footsteps walking away. Then he heard the sound of the water running and assumed that Rozanov was taking a shower.

Good. He should just leave Shane alone in his misery and embarrassment.

He finally got up and went to the bathroom where he kept his various medications. He popped a cold medicine just in case he was coming down with something and went back to bed.

About an hour later, there was another soft knock.

“Hollander, I'm going to head out.”

Shane stared at his door with bleary eyes. He couldn't believe that Rozanov was leaving again after only just coming back. But that was none of his business.

“I don't care. Do what you want,” Shane said, trying to sound nonchalant but seeming more sulky.

“If you're really sick, I can stay and-”

“I told you, I don't care. I'm fine. I took some meds so I just need to sleep.”

Shane knew he was being an asshole. He knew but he couldn't help himself. The images of Rozanov dancing with others seemed to be seared into his mind and a strange petty part of himself was rearing its ugly head. Shane just wanted to sleep and forget about everything, including how amazing Rozanov had smelled.

Finally, Shane could hear footsteps walk away from his door and he could relax. He closed his eyes and let his exhaustion finally overtake him.

Shane woke up suddenly in pain.

A gasp came out of his dry throat as sharp pain ripped through his gut. His room was pitch black and everything was spinning. His clock was the only source of light and the red letters screamed out to his sensitive eyes that it was 10:47 pm. He had literally slept the whole day away.

He didn't understand what was happening. He had taken medication but it had obviously done nothing. Shane couldn't stop shaking and his clothes were soaked with sweat.

For a moment he considered calling 911 but the thought of ending up in the hospital was agonizing. He hated hospitals, not to mention how shocked his parents would be when they came back from their vacation.

Okay...maybe I can ask Rozanov for help.

Slowly, Shane managed to put both feet down on the floor and gingerly stood up. He used the wall as support as he walked out of his room and crossed the hallway to the other bedroom. He knocked on the door.

“Rozanov. Are you in there?”

Silence.

Shit.

Shane then realized the rest of the house was still dark and his roommate was probably still out. Of all the times to be home alone, this was extremely inconvenient.

Trudging slowly, Shane made it back to his room and picked up his phone from the bedside table. He scrolled through his contacts until he found “Asshole” and pressed the green call button.

Ilya was a little bit bored.

Actually he was *very* bored.

He was at a different club from the one he had been for his birthday but the scenery was similar. Loud music, alcohol flowing, sexy people trying to get other sexy people to sleep with them.

Last night had started pretty nicely. He was happy that Hollander had finally relented and came out with him. Ilya had thought he'd be more relaxed in the off-season but it seemed that wasn't the case for Shane. Still, Ilya had to admit it was probably his fault that the younger man ran away scrambling.

He hadn't meant to push it too far but Ilya usually gave into temptation. And seeing the red flush painting across Shane's cheeks had been irresistible. He had wanted to see how much more he could make that pale skin blush.

Then the smell of melted sugar had hit Ilya's nostrils and suddenly all hesitation went out the door.

He had used the pretense of whispering in Hollander's ear to get closer to his neck, chasing that elusive caramel scent. There had only been a handful of times that Ilya had caught this smell and he was almost one hundred percent that he wasn't imagining it. His brain said Shane was a beta but his instincts screamed something else.

As he had privately predicted in his mind, Hollander had only danced a moment with him before panicking and running away.

Ilya admitted that he was disappointed but he was not the type to chase anyone who was reluctant. He was more used to *being chased* and after Hollander's hasty exit, Ilya had plenty of suitors stepping up to him.

He had a pleasant enough evening with a striking redheaded beta and she had put a paper with her number in his pants pocket. He had promptly tossed it into the trash when he left her apartment in the morning. He very rarely slept with the same person twice. It was just easier that way although he did have a few exceptions. He remembered his first time with his coach's son, Sasha, and the many other times they had fumbled together. Ilya idly wondered what Sasha was up to these days...

"Hey, are you listening to me?"

Ilya turned to the woman sitting next to him. Actually, no, he wasn't listening to her but he wasn't going to say that. He put on his most charming smile and shook his head.

“Of course I was listening.”

“Okay, then,” the woman purred and caressed Ilya's bicep. “Wanna get out of here? My place isn't too far.”

He contemplated a second night out in a row and wasn't sure he wanted to. Hollander kept intruding into his mind and Ilya worried if he was doing all right.

As though manifesting his worries, his phone buzzed in his pocket. He looked at the screen and saw “Baby Face”, his private nickname for Hollander, light up in a call.

Ilya pointed to the phone and extracted himself from the disappointed woman.

“Hello?”

“...Rozanov? Where are you?”

“At a club.”

There was a weighted silence that stretched on longer than was comfortable. Finally, a whimper and moan came threading through the speakers.

“...Rozanov...could you...I need help. Please.”

Ilya's body froze in shock as he barely made out Shane's pleas over the club music. He grabbed his jacket, ignored the protesting woman, and immediately left the club. Once outside, he could finally hear the ragged breathing over the phone.

“What's wrong? What happened?”

“I don't know. But I'm in bad shape.”

“Should I call 911?”

“No, no! Just please, just please come home.”

The line went dead.

What the fuck?

Ilya hurriedly pulled up the taxi app and put in his location. It was only a 5 minute wait but it felt like an eternity. He was slightly panicking and feeling guilty that he had left Hollander home when he had said he was under the weather. But he hadn't sounded so bad...how did it come to this?

The moment the car stopped in front of the house, Ilya shoved a fistful of cash at the driver and dashed out over the front lawn. He quickly unlocked the door and opened it to-

Without warning, Ilya was slammed by a wave of pheromones so strong it nearly knocked him off his feet.

What the fuck!

Ilya started cursing in Russian and had to place a hand on the wall to steady himself. The smell of burnt sugar was intense and it singed his nose. The pheromones were screaming of distress and it took all of Ilya's will not to growl in response. His own alpha urges were cascading wildly and he bit down on his hand to *calm the fuck down*.

"Hollander!"

Running as fast as he could, Ilya leaped over the stairs and headed to Shane's door. It was already open but he didn't see anyone on the bed. Ilya dashed inside and then saw him, slumped on his bathroom floor.

"Holy shit, Hollander!" Ilya ran and kneeled by the exhausted looking man. He was covered in sweat and shivering. "What the hell are you doing here?"

"...so hot...the bed...I couldn't..."

"Okay, okay, I got it."

Ilya quickly stripped the bed of the fluffy duvet and reset the pillows in the right spot. Then, despite Hollander's protests, helped him walk and sit down on the bed.

"Stay here and don't move."

Ilya dashed out again to the kitchen to grab a Gatorade that was always in stock in the fridge. He picked the blue one because he knew that was Hollander's favourite. He made his way back quickly and offered the beverage.

"Drink this first. It should help."

Gingerly, Shane took the bottle and took a few hesitant sips. His hands were shaking so Ilya helped him drink it and not spill it everywhere. The cool beverage seemed to help a little and Ilya carefully laid him back down.

Suddenly, Shane rolled into a fetal position, gripped his stomach and moaned. "Oh my fucking God I'm dying."

"No. No one is dying. Hollander, look at me."

Shane unclenched his eyes and looked up with a tear stained face towards Ilya. "What?"

"I think you're going into heat."

Shane stared at him in utter confusion. "No, that's not possible. I'm a beta. My parents are beta. I have an alpha second cousin somewhere but my extended families are mostly betas."

"Omegas and alphas can be born from beta parents."

“But...” The massive headache ripping through Hollander's head made him wince. “I'm eighteen years old! People usually present around thirteen! It's gotta be something else!”

“Hollander, I am an alpha and I am telling you that you smell like an omega. I don't understand it but facts are facts.”

“But-”

Cursing in Russian, Ilya ripped off a scent patch on his wrist and lifted it by Hollander's face. “What do you smell?”

“I shouldn't be able to smell anything! I'm just a beta and- *Oh...*”

Shane's eyes started blinking slowly, with each second his pupils losing focus. The shivering that had gripped his sweaty body stopped and his back straightened from the previous contorted position.

Hollander took Ilya's wrist and gently laid his nose along the thin skin where the scent glands were located. His eyes fluttered close and he took a *deep* breath.

It was like the darkest chocolate mulled with spices and smoke. A campfire. Cinnamon. It was all the things that Hollander had smelled at the club that had him running away in a panic. And most importantly underneath this heady scent, the pheromones that screamed alpha.

Alpha, alpha, alpha!

Shane's eyes snapped open.

“What the *fuck* is happening to me?”

And just as he asked that question, he felt a pressure down below and soon realized his ass was becoming wet with...

Slick. It had to be slick. There was no reason it could be anything else.

Shane got off the bed, ran back into the bathroom and locked the door.

Shane was freaking out.

Fuck! This can't be happening!

The momentary relief he felt at smelling Rozanov's pheromones was already fading from the sheer tsunami of panic that was overwhelming him. None of this made sense.

Then he felt more slick trickling down his legs.

Fuck!

Ilya was freaking out.

Not that he would let anyone know.

And even though Ilya had slept with a fairly large amount of people in his nineteen years, including omegas, he had never been with any one in heat. The closest thing he could think of were the locker room talk of fellow hockey players and Ilya was willing to bet that most of it was bullshit.

“Hollander,” Ilya called out through the door. “Are you okay?”

“No! I'm obviously not okay! My ass is leaking!”

Ilya groaned and bit down on his hand again. Shane's pheromones were so strong and Ilya's head felt fuzzy. And even through the door, he could smell the incredible allure of the slick. But he could also detect the continued distress in Hollander's pheromones and it grounded him even more than biting his own hand.

Shane was his teammate. His roommate. One could maybe even say, a friend. He needed his help and Ilya wasn't going to fuck this up.

He took out his phone and started searching for information on how to help a late stage omega in heat. A medical website started listing off symptoms and how to relieve them.

“Hollander, I think I can help you. It says here that-”

Ilya heard a hysterical giggle behind the bathroom door. “Rozanov, are you fucking reading WebMD at me?”

“I'm not an expert so what do you expect me to do? Do *you* remember class from school about late presenting omegas?”

There was a very heavy silence that followed the question.

“That's what I thought,” grumbled Ilya. “Now shut up and listen. It says here that on very rare occasions, an omega will present late in life and will seem like a beta beforehand. The first

heat might be hard and last anywhere from five days-”

“Five days? How the hell am I-”

“Would you stop fucking interrupting me?”

Hollander groaned. Ilya waited a second before continuing to read from his phone.

“It says that the first day, the omega will experience fever, dizziness, abdominal pains, and the beginning of slick production. A nest made of soft materials covered in the omega's scent is best when mixed with other comforting smells, such as their mate. If no mate is available, usually an item worn or touched by a known alpha is the next best choice.”

“But I don't have a mate!”

“Lucky for you, I haven't done my laundry yet this week.”

“Fuck you, Rozanov! I don't want your damn clothes!”

Ilya ignored him and kept reading.

“The omega will peak by the second day and will be in serious discomfort. There are different ways to manage it but the easiest and most effective way is to engage in sexual intercourse. If a partner is not available, an omega could withstand a heat alone but it is advisable to seek options. Due to every individual's heat cycle severity and length, withstanding a heat without a partner could be painful and in certain cases, heavily detrimental to the omega's health.”

Ilya paused to let that information sink in. His English was much better due to his college classes but it was still not as fluent as his Russian. By the silence on the other side of the door, Hollander was also processing the new information. Ilya scrolled down and continued.

“It is very important to stay hydrated and fed. Heat consumes a lot of energy. It is best to make plans ahead of time because once the cycle reaches its peak, an omega will have difficulty making decisions that are not affected by their pheromones. If by the end of a week the symptoms do not alleviate, call a doctor.”

Ilya waited for Hollander to respond. He was contemplating breaking down the door because the silence was beginning to scare him but then with a creak, the door opened and Hollander stepped out.

To say that Shane Hollander looked the furthest from his usual self was an understatement. His hair was matted with sweat and his face was flushed bright red. His hands were wrapped tightly around himself in an effort to self-soothe. Ilya felt his chest tighten at the sorry sight of his teammate.

“There's a problem,” said Hollander. “I'm not on any omega suppressants or birth control. If I- I mean, not that I'm saying you and me but-”

“I understand.”

And Ilya did understand. If Hollander had heat sex with anyone, he was not prepared the correct way. Even if his partner used contraceptives, things could go wrong and the chance of pregnancy was too high. With the NHL draft happening soon, unexpectedly getting pregnant was the last thing that Hollander needed.

“Let's deal with what we can right now, yes?”

Shane's eyes looked haunted and scared. But he gathered himself up and firmly nodded to Ilya.

The first order of business was to get Shane set up properly. Ilya went to the hallway closet to grab multiple blankets and towels to lay on the queen sized bed. He knew that it would be messy pretty soon but the Hollanders did not have proper omega heat bedding. After all, they had never needed to up this point. This was the best he could do.

“Hollander, go take pain medicine. And did you eat anything?”

Grimacing, Shane shook his head. “No, I was asleep all day.”

“Okay, then drink the rest of that Gatorade with your medicine and I'll be right back. You should start your nest.”

Hurrying out, Ilya dashed to the kitchen and opened the fridge door. Sadly, there weren't a lot of options because neither of them had done any grocery shopping since Yuna and David had left. He opened the pantry doors and started gathering what he could to make a meal.

Shane didn't know what the hell he was doing.

He had searched “omega nest” on his phone and he saw elaborate Pinterest style galleries of...honestly, he didn't know how to feel about it. Everything from a pseudo birds nest made from pastel blankets to some kind of fairy light extravaganza, and it all made him recoil in horror. Was this the kind of shit that capitalism did to omegas in heat?

Shane put his phone down since none of the images were helpful. The website that Rozanov found had said soft fabrics would be best and he was starting to understand why. All of his senses, including touch, were on overload, and the starched t-shirt he was wearing was beginning to bother him. It didn't help that he was soaked with sweat.

Okay, let's get into something fresh first...maybe that will help.

Carefully, he peeled off his dirty clothes and found the softest shirt and shorts he could find. The slick was still trickling slowly out but he didn't have any proper heat underwear so his normal ones would have to do. He was still hot and his stomach hurt but it was better.

Then he remembered how much better he felt when he smelled Rozanov.

Technically, Ilya had already offered his clothes if the alpha pheromones would help. Shane knew this. But he still felt a rush of embarrassment at the thought of bringing his roommate's clothes into his nest.

He made his way slowly toward Rozanov's room and stepped inside. Immediately, Shane felt his body relax as the alpha pheromones that soaked through the room enveloped him like a warm cocoon. Before he could overthink it, Shane went to the laundry basket and started digging. He soon found an oversized red Ottawa Thunderclap hoodie that smelled like absolute heaven. Shane put it over his head and even though a part of him was annoyed that it was big on him, he couldn't argue with how effective it was.

Emboldened, Shane took the pillows and blanket too and went back to his room like a thief in the night. He settled his haul along with his own blanket into a makeshift fort, like the ones he used to make as a kid. Something about the lumpy walls and shapes made him dissatisfied with his amateur efforts but the mixture of his own smell and Rozanov's was intoxicating.

He crawled into his nest, wrapped a blanket around himself, and waited while his pain medication kicked in.

It didn't take much longer before Rozanov showed up holding a plate and a ginger ale. Then he immediately started laughing.

Offended, Shane scowled at the other man. "What the hell are you laughing about?"

"Did you take everything from my room?"

"I didn't take everything! Just a few items..." Shane started fiddling with the hoodie drawstring in embarrassment. "You said I could take stuff."

"Hollander, please do not misunderstand. I'm not mad. I just didn't expect to see a little babushka."

"Fuck you."

"You wish."

Shane flushed red and to his eternal mortification, he felt his stomach jump in response. He tried to change the subject.

"What's that?" He pointed to the plate.

"Tuna melt."

"Tuna...melt?"

Ilya set the food down by Shane's bedside. "Don't complain until you've tried it. I'm going to get you more Gatorade."

Now that Shane was feeling much better being nestled in his bed (and Rozanov's scent), his hunger pangs finally decided to show itself. The sandwich looked simple but it smelled amazing. He carefully picked up a half and bit through it.

Shane moaned. He literally moaned over how good it was. The mixture of salty, savory and the creamy melted cheese was so satisfying. He couldn't believe that Rozanov had made something so delicious this quickly with just a few ingredients. By the time he came back with several more bottles of Gatorade, Shane was already half done.

Rozanov arched an eyebrow in surprise. "That hungry?"

"You have no idea."

Rozanov smiled. Then he seemed to take a delicate sniff of the air. "I think you're feeling better. Is the nest helping?"

"Yes. It is. Uh, thank you for everything so far. I'm sure this isn't really a fun time for you either."

"If things were different, this could be fun. But I do see what you mean."

Shane didn't know what to say so he kept chewing on his tuna melt. He did notice Rozanov adjusting his pants discretely and a weird part of him (his omega part?) felt inner satisfaction that the gorgeous alpha in his room was not as nonchalant as he seemed.

Then ashamed, Shane quickly buried that thought. He knew this situation could have been absolutely disastrous if any other alpha with less self control was on premise. He was lucky that Ilya, despite his reckless playboy exterior, was actually incredibly reliable. Why else would Shane have trusted to call him in his hour of need?

"We should talk," said Rozanov. He pointed to the clock. "You are still on your first day so you're less..."

Grimacing, Shane wiped the grease off his fingers with some napkins. "Sex obsessed? Crazy?"

Rozanov frowned. "Don't say that. What you're feeling is natural. It's not bad. But...yes, you are more clear in mind. So we should talk about what you need tomorrow. Do you have any sex toys?"

Shane gripped the edge of the blanket and partially hid his face in horror. "Of course not!"

"Why not?" Rozanov shrugged like it was nothing. "You're an adult. You can own such things."

"But I just, I mean-" Shane spluttered. He could feel his face getting red again. "Listen, I've fooled around a bit so I'm not *totally* ignorant but I've just been really focused on hockey, okay? And you know how nosy my mom is! How could I even get away with owning any?"

"I have some. Wait right here."

Shane's jaw dropped as Rozanov left for a moment and came back with a black box. It had a numeric lock in the front and after opening, started depositing item after item onto the bed. Everything from cock rings to a teal dildo with a knotted base was now openly displayed to Shane's scandalized eyes.

“And why do you have so many sex toys?”

Ilya grinned rakishly. “Gifts from friends. Also, sometimes I like...variety. I promise that they are all very clean.”

Shane gulped, staring at the dildo. How long was that thing exactly? Eight inches? Maybe nine?

“Do you need me to show you-”

“Nope! No no. I'm good.”

“Hmm. If you say so.” Rozanov neatly put everything back into the box and closed it. “You are now medicated, fed, hydrated and nesting. Is there more we should talk about?”

Shane chewed on his lower lips. It wasn't a subject he wanted to talk about but it was necessary.

“So tomorrow when I probably...lose myself a bit, I'm going to try and get by on my own. Okay?”

Rozanov nodded.

“That being said,” Shane gulped and could barely meet Ilya's eyes. “If I need some *help with the toys*, can I come find you?”

“Of course. I'll keep you safe.”

The promise to keep him safe made Shane's inside uncoil slightly. He felt terrible that this was happening but at least he had support. Rozanov was a cocky, arrogant, and obnoxious asshole but there was no one else that Shane wanted to be near.

Shane gathered up the loosely made nest and snuggled in. “Umm, I think I'm gonna try to get some rest. You should too.”

“Good idea.”

Rozanov retreated back to his room and Shane hoped that he could get through it alone.

There was no way Ilya was getting any sleep.

By this point, the whole house was infused with Hollander's caramel sweet scent and it was driving him insane with want. He thought about going for a walk outside but it was well past midnight and he didn't want to freak out his neighbours. Also, what if Hollander needed him and he wasn't around? No, that was unacceptable. He had to endure this.

He quickly stripped off all his clothes and jumped into the shower. He could still smell a slight lingering scent of the people at the club and he didn't want that anywhere near Hollander. Ilya turned on the water as cold as he could stand, in the hopes it would calm down his erection but it was no use. His cock, now free from the restraints of his tight jeans, was at full attention and begging to be touched.

Maybe if I can just...get a little release...

Ilya wrapped a hand around the base of his cock and squeezed, trying to get himself to calm down. The cold water splashed down mercilessly on him but all he could think of was Hollander's beautiful tearstained face and his balls tightened in response.

Ilya wasn't blind. He had spent the last year admiring Hollander on and off the ice. The fact that he was literally living under the same roof as his parents had added another layer of forbidden fruit to the temptation. But as impulsive as Ilya could be, the repercussions had been steep so it had made him cautious. Putting a move on his teammate who was his roommate? When he was depending on his billet family for housing and food? It would have been too reckless. It was a bad idea. So bad.

But as Ilya frantically stroked his cock until he was painting the shower stall with his come, he couldn't remember anymore why he had hesitated.

No. No. He had to get a hold of himself. Hollander was vulnerable right now and-

Ah, but that sweet smell. The citrusy tone now mixed with the sugar that was obviously Hollander's slick. It made Ilya want to shove his face between the round globes of that perfect ass and-

Ilya immediately turned the water to a cold blast.

Fuck, this was a shitty night.

After a few minutes of ice cold water and his skin going numb from it, Ilya finally turned off the shower and stepped out. He dried himself in a perfunctory manner and threw on some sweatpants. His bed was missing all of its pillows and blanket due to Hollander's nest construction so he laid down with his arm to support his head.

And even though he felt frayed like a chewed through wire, the events of the last few hours crashed into him in exhaustion. With Hollander's sweet smell still in his nose, Ilya fell asleep.

Bang!

Ilya jolted awake at the loud noise against his door. His clock was saying 5:48 am so he had managed to get a little bit of sleep.

Another bang on his door.

“Rozanov!”

Ilya jumped out of his bed and ripped the door open. Without warning, Hollander slumped into his arms and Ilya was fully enveloped in a cloud of warm sugar spun through with lemon.

“Hollander? What's wrong?”

That was a dumb question. He knew exactly what was going on. Hollander was in full blown heat.

He pulled the younger man away a bit to get a better look. He was still wearing Ilya's hoodie but now he didn't have anything else on the bottom. He could see lines of shiny slick that were trailing down strong thighs made thick through hockey.

Hollander buried his face into Ilya's bare chest and mumbled something.

“What did you say?”

Hollander groaned and gripped Ilya even tighter.

“...I said...I can't get the angle right.”

“The angle?”

“...the dildo...”

Oh. Right. The dildo.

Shane started to lose his balance so Ilya picked him up princess style and he made his way to the nest. It was crumpled and even more awkward looking than before. He tried to lay Hollander back down on the bed but somehow he had turned into a koala and wrapped all of his limbs around Ilya. Stumbling blindly, Ilya fell onto the bed with a man only a few inches shorter than him.

“Hollander. You have to let go.”

Instead of letting go, Shane rolled on top of Ilya and buried his face into the crook of Ilya's neck. He mumbled something incoherent before giving a long slow lick along the scent

glands. In response, Ilya's cock pulsed back to hardness again before he could barely get two breaths in.

"Hollander, I don't know if you can understand me right now, but I can't help you like this."

"...no no...alpha...stay."

At the word "alpha", Ilya froze in place. He has had others call him alpha before to tease, flirt, and even scream out in the middle of sex. But Hollander had *never* called him out like this. He must be extremely deep into his heat if he was losing this much control.

Ilya laid a soothing hand on Hollander's back and counted backwards from ten so he could catch his breath. It wasn't helping that the other man was grinding down into his crotch with both their cocks hard and eager.

Suddenly, Hollander got up to fully straddle Ilya's thighs. He started pulling down Ilya's sweatpants and Ilya quickly gripped both of Hollander's wrists to try and stop him.

"Hollander. Hollander."

Another tug at his sweatpants.

"HOLLANDER!"

Still looking confused, Shane whipped his head up at being called loudly. He stared at Ilya like he had grown two heads. "What is it?"

Ilya gently but firmly moved Hollander's fingers away from his sweatpants and then held the panting omega's face. Hollander's pupils were slowly coming into focus.

"Remember," Ilya reminded him, "you're not prepped? We can't. That's not what you wanted."

It took a moment before Shane fully became conscious of what he was doing. A small look of horror made a shudder go through his shivering body.

"Oh my God, I'm sorry Rozanov, I'm sorry, I'm just-"

"Shh..." Ilya softly brushed back Hollander's sweaty hair off his forehead. "It's okay. You said you needed my help?"

"Umm, yeah. The uh, I was trying your toys but I couldn't, I kept dropping it." Hollander grimaced as a stab of pain went through his stomach and back. "Could you help, umm, maybe..."

"I understand. How about you come over here for a second?"

Sighing with relief, Shane put his face right back near Ilya's neck and deeply breathed in his alpha pheromones. The scent seemed to calm him down and that was exactly what Ilya had been hoping for.

Ilya peeked over Shane's shoulders and saw the teal dildo nearby. He reached over to grab it while still holding on to Hollander with his other arm. The dildo was slippery with slick. No wonder Hollander had such a hard time holding it.

“Listen to me, Hollander. I'm going to hold this in place for you but you're going to have to do the work. Do you understand?”

Hollander wrapped his arms around Ilya's shoulders and neck and shook his head. Sighing, Ilya gave Hollander's thighs a quick squeeze.

“You see these? You're a damn athlete. A fucking great one. Now use the muscles you worked so hard to make and fuck yourself.”

Then Ilya gave a resounding slap against Shane's ass.

“Ahh! What the *fuck*, Rozanov?”

“Oh, good. You're listening. Now lift yourself up.”

Whimpering from want but also frustrated as hell, Hollander wrapped his arms even tighter around Ilya and got on his knees. He gasped when the dildo was slowly stroked against his entry way, already gaping open from his previous attempts. Slowly, he sank down and impaled himself while Ilya held the dildo in place.

“Fuck...fuck, fuck!”

Ilya felt more slick pouring out and spilling over the dildo and his hand. The scent was overwhelmingly sweet and it was the best damn thing Ilya had ever smelled in his life.

His alpha instincts were all on fire, saying there was a willing omega in his arms. But he pushed it all down. It was not what Hollander wanted and he would cut off his own limbs before taking advantage of an omega in heat.

“Fuck, fuck, *fuck*-”

Hollander sunk himself over and over onto the dildo. Ilya moved it into a different angle and Hollander screamed out loud.

“There! Right there, fuck!”

Ilya felt Hollander rear back until the toy was fully encased into his ass. Hot come came spurting out and splattered all over Ilya's stomach. It was one of the hottest things Ilya had ever seen and he had slept with some incredibly beautiful people. Shane Hollander was never going to leave his memory banks.

“Are you alive?” Ilya gasped.

But there was no answer. Shane had passed out.

To not wake up the poor exhausted man, Ilya laid him carefully back down on the bed. He ducked into the bathroom to grab a warm damp towel to clean Hollander up a bit. He laid a blanket over him as well.

Once Ilya was satisfied with everything, he ran to his own bathroom to jerk off for the second time that night. He came so hard he saw stars and slightly despaired if he could last a week of this sweet torment.

Chapter End Notes

Oof. That was the first heat smut I've ever written. Hopefully you all liked it. There's more coming in the future~

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

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

Shane woke up and immediately regretted his whole existence as the memory of the last few days came crashing in like a flood.

His body felt better and he could tell that the heat was over. But it was sore. And especially tender in one particular spot. He groaned and buried his face into the pillow in embarrassment.

The morning light was gently filtering through his curtains but his room was still shrouded in dim light. It was early and Shane looked around in bewilderment.

His nest was barely there, all tossed asunder during his heat. At one point Rozanov had tried to help him rebuild it but-

The thought of Rozanov made his face heat up like a red lightbulb.

Ilya had been...tender. But firm. To the best of Shane's memory, he had kept him safe as promised. In his heat-addled state, he had kept trying to escalate things but Ilya had gently distracted him to focus on what needed to be done. Which was to get through the heat without infringing on Shane's wishes.

We didn't even kiss...

Shane touched his lips and thought about what it would be like to kiss Rozanov. It would probably be amazing.

Flushed again, Shane pushed his useless wants aside and reassessed himself. He was no longer feverish and he felt fairly good. But he was sticky with residual sweat and hungry.

First thing first, a shower.

Shane left the wreckage of his bed and carefully made his way to the shower stall. The hot water felt absolutely divine on all his sore muscles and he moaned involuntarily. He took special care to clean every crevice of his body and he started to feel like himself again.

Afterwards, wrapped in his robe, he went looking for Rozanov.

Shane first peeked into Ilya's bedroom but it was empty. It was in a better state than his own but not by much. The bedding was even missing the cover, which was attributed to Shane stripping Ilya's room for more nest materials.

He wondered if maybe Rozanov was not home as he made his way downstairs. Once his feet hit the landing, he heard a soft snore coming from the living room.

Rozanov was sleeping on the couch.

Shane had no idea why Rozanov was sleeping there before he remembered how he had raided the other man's room for his most scent concentrated belongings.

Rozanov looked...exhausted. But still so incredibly handsome. In his sleeping state, his face was relaxed and his full eyelashes brushed his cheeks. The dark golden curls were messy but somehow Rozanov still looked like a Renaissance painting come to life. A young Adonis, his limbs draped artfully against the couch cushions.

Shane couldn't help himself and stared at Ilya in admiration. Tentatively, he reached out and gently ran a finger against one chiseled cheek. There were dark smudges under Rozanov's eyes but it didn't detract from anything.

Then Shane finally noticed Ilya's neck and arms.

Everywhere from the crook of his neck to his shoulders, there were red swollen hickeys spread across. Shane knew he had been the one responsible for that. In his heated state, he had craved the scent of Ilya's alpha smell so deeply. Even now, he could smell the spicy dark chocolate emanating from Ilya's body and it took everything to not bury his face there again.

But the state of his neck was nothing compared to Rozanov's arms.

There were bite marks going up and down his forearms, some already turning purple. With horror, Shane realized he had gone through his heat without an omega neck guard and Ilya had turned to biting himself to fight against his alpha urges. Shane knew it wasn't his fault that he hadn't had all the gear needed to go through a heat safely but he still felt so much shame that Ilya had to do this to himself.

Tears started prickling his eyes as guilt slammed into him. Shane never had any compunction slamming Rozanov to the glass while they played hockey but *this injury* on Ilya tore away at him.

"Why are you crying?"

Startled, Shane looked up to see Rozanov staring at him with half open eyes. He hastily wiped the tears away and pointed at Ilya's arms and neck.

"I'm so sorry about that. I'm sorry that-"

Rozanov sat up straight on the couch and inspected his arms. He touched the scent glands on his neck with his fingers and gave Shane a nonchalant shrug.

"Is nothing. I've had worse."

"But-"

Before Hollander could say anymore, Rozanov pulled him into his arms and wrapped them around Shane's waist. Immediately, Shane returned the gesture by wrapping *his* arms around Ilya's neck and buried his face there. It felt so perfect and natural, like two puzzle pieces

fitting together. He had never realized another person could combine with him in such harmony.

And that's when the waterworks really erupted.

Shane didn't know what was happening but he felt like his whole body was convulsing with too much feelings. Fear and anxiety crashed over him, threatening to pull him under. The last few days became so much clearer in his mind, and with that thought, he felt himself wanting to reject everything.

Sobs crawled up Shane's throat and came bursting out in ugly torrents. Tears soaked Rozanov's neck and the older man gently rocked Shane like a small child. Large hands moved up and down Shane's back, trying to soothe.

"Shh, it's all right, Hollander. Just let it out."

Shane cried out. "It's not all right! All my life, I thought I was something that I wasn't! What am I supposed to do now?"

Ilya squeezed Shane harder against his chest. "You will handle it one day at a time. Like you always do."

They sat together, huddled and close, for a few more minutes before Shane slowly extracted himself from Rozanov's warmth. Sheepishly, he wiped the tears from his face and put a little distance between them.

"Sorry again," Shane said, feeling even more embarrassed.

"Not a problem. You are going through, how do you say again? A crisis?"

"An existential crisis?"

"That's the one."

Shane snorted. That was an understatement. He had thought he was a beta all his life but suddenly he woke up to be an omega. It was absolutely insane and still hard to process.

Rozanov got up from the couch and stretched out his long limbs. He was only wearing his underwear so his incredible body was mostly on display. Shane averted his eyes, or at least he tried to.

"I don't know about you," said Ilya, "but I'm starving."

Shane looked over the couch to look into the kitchen. The house was built with an open floor concept and he could clearly see the absolute disaster that was the kitchen. He had been too much into his heat to realize it but Ilya had kept him fed throughout the ordeal and the house had suffered for it.

"Uh, I should clean the kitchen. Since you did all the cooking."

Rozanov waved him away. "Don't worry. I think it would be better if you cleaned your room. Your parents are coming back in a week."

That particular reminder was like a cold water dashed over his head. The panic started rearing its ugly head back again.

"Hey hey," Ilya gently turned Shane's face towards him. "One thing at a time."

"Right. Yeah."

Shane got up to start cleaning. He knew there was going to be a lot of laundry in his future.

Ilya was tired.

Which was an understatement.

As he had suspected, helping an omega through their heat was no joke. Maybe it was harder than usual because Shane was a late presenting omega but Ilya had a feeling it wouldn't have made that much of a difference. The locker room talk of his fellow alpha teammates had been proven untrue and full of holes. But that also wasn't a surprise seeing as the average hockey players their age had the emotional maturity of a cactus.

But it hadn't been all work and no games. Ilya savoured the memory of Shane's sweet citrusy scent and his adorable whimpers. He could never have imagined such a man, who could even be called aloof at times, could become so needy in bed.

He idly wondered if there could be a repeat performance before squashing down the thought. As he had told Hollander himself, one thing at a time.

The kitchen was the immediate thing that needed his attention. Between helping Hollander through his heat and making sure they both had calories, Ilya hadn't had a good opportunity to clean as he went. The sink was overflowing and the fridge, what little grocery they had, was bare. He thought of his options and decided take-out was the best one. But then the thought of a delivery person, perhaps an alpha showing up while Shane was still feeling vulnerable, and Ilya immediately rethought his plans.

He gave another cursory look through the pantries and decided milk and cereal was the best he could do.

But first, the sink.

Shane was glad his mother had opted for the extra large washer and dryer because his deconstructed nest was...a lot.

In his heated state, he had ended up taking all of Rozanov's clothes and all of his bedding. Not to mention the extra towels and blankets. He had to admit that people (as in porn) always made omega heat sex sound so sexy but the reality of the aftermath wasn't quite as pretty.

Grimly, he had to remind himself that this was his reality now. And there was no way he would hire someone to clean up this mess so it had to be him.

After loading the first batch of clothes into the washing machine, he wandered back to the kitchen. Rozanov was filling the dishwasher but he had also placed some bowls with a carton of milk and cereal aside. He looked up when Shane entered the room and nodded his head toward the kitchen island.

“Sorry but that's all we have.”

“There's no need for you to apologize. You're the one who took care of me.”

Shane sat down on the stool by the island and poured cereal and milk into his bowl. He hadn't realized how hungry he was until he took the first bite. Pretty soon, he was finishing off a second bowl before he realized how rude he was being in not waiting for Rozanov. His mother had taught him better than this.

“Ah, sorry I started without you. I should have waited.”

Rozanov finished loading the dishwasher before making his way to the food. “You don't need to worry about it. We've been teammates and roommates for a year, yes?”

The room was still for a few moments, only filled with the sound of crunching cereal. Shane finally worked up the courage to look at Rozanov again.

“Hey, I just wanted to thank you for what you did for me. You kept your promise and I...I'm so grateful.”

Shane's face flushed red and he couldn't keep eye contact anymore. Memories of the last week came rushing back in. Ilya's soft voice encouraging him, praising him. Their bodies working in sync to work out each orgasm from Shane's feverish body, while Ilya had somehow kept his senses to keep him safe. It was a big deal to ask a partner to share a heat so Shane would not undervalue how much Rozanov had done for him.

“Of course,” Ilya said. “You needed help. It was the least I could do.”

They ate in silence again until Rozanov broke it.

“So what are you going to do now?”

That was the million dollar question. What *was* Shane going to do now? His immediate instinct was to hide it. He wasn't ashamed of being an omega but he knew very well the repercussions it would have on his hockey aspirations.

Truth be told, it had only been a few generations since omegas had been able to live as freely as they do now. Before laws were changed along with scientific breakthroughs in suppressants and birth control, society had tilted much more heavily toward alphas and betas. But these days, omegas enjoyed the freedom to live as comfortably as they always deserved.

But as with anything, there were always exceptions. Old bigotry and discrimination existed, no matter how hard modern times tugged at its roots. You could find omega athletes in many sports and careers but they tended to be more solo efforts. Any team based or highly contact sports like football and hockey still favoured alpha and beta players.

And as much as Shane hated the thought, he understood why the prejudice still existed. In a single season, an NHL team played 82 regular games. Then if you added playoffs, you could tack on anywhere from 4 to 28 more games. That was *a lot*. For an omega player to go into heat monthly, they could be missing many of those games. And for the old guard of owners, GMs, and other higher ups of the organization, an omega player missing games due to their heat was money left on the table.

Shane hated it. He knew this was why an omega player was never drafted. The few omega players that did play in the NHL had all been undrafted free agents who had gotten lucky. But not a single one of them were on the starting line. Just relegated to sitting on the bench and hoping for their time to shine.

Shane didn't want to wait. He was a great player. A really fucking great player. If he was an alpha or a beta, he'd be drafted either number one or two. He knew it in his gut. But the sudden change in his second gender now rendered all his hopes and dreams into trash.

It was all unfair. And a part of him felt ashamed that before the problem had hit him in the face, he hadn't thought too deeply about *just* how unfair it was. He had grown up and gone along with the system he was raised in. His parents certainly hadn't instilled it into him but his coaches had made their bias known. Even his own fellow teammates sometimes used being omega as a slur.

He honestly didn't know what to do. All he knew was that he was scared.

"Hollander."

Shane looked up and saw that Rozanov was staring at him, still waiting for a response.

"I...I don't know. Everything is turned upside down and...I don't think I can tell anyone about this. You know what the league is like."

"So you will lie?"

Rozanov's tone sounded disapproving and Shane was suddenly gripped with anger. What did Rozanov know? Who did he think he was to judge him? *He* wasn't the one to become an

omega overnight!

“Well, what do you expect me to do? You know I'll never get drafted if the truth comes out! All my hard work won't mean shit to those asshole owners!”

Rozanov sighed and took his empty bowl to the sink and started cleaning it. The silence between them was so heavy that it could be cut with a knife. After placing the clean dishes on the dry rack, Rozanov turned around.

“It is not my place to tell you what to do. You're an adult. But you need to think better. If you start the lie now, you will be lying forever. Is that what you want? What about your parents?”

Shane's inside shook at the thought of lying to his family. He loved his parents so much and it repelled him to think of deceiving them. But what else could he do? If his parents accidentally slipped and let out his secret, his dreams would be over before it started.

“I just...” Shane stammered. “I can't.”

Rozanov sighed again before holding up his index finger. “If you want to buy my silence, you have to do one thing.”

Shane bristled. “And what's that?”

“You need to go see your doctor.”

Feeling utterly gobsmacked, Shane stared at Rozanov. “My doctor?”

“It's one thing to hide this but your health is no joke. Besides, how will you manage your scent and heat without help?”

As much as he hated to admit it, Rozanov was right. He would need to get suppressants, scent blockers and all sorts of other things based on his new needs. Shane's head swam with the details and he felt faint again.

Shane nodded. “No, you're right. I'm an athlete. I need help to manage this.”

Rozanov picked up Shane's empty bowl and took it to the sink. “You better get on it then.”

Shane couldn't stop staring at the information board looking back at him in the waiting room.

A picture of a happy couple, one obviously very pregnant, was shown along with pink letters proclaiming “Family plans? Talk to your doctor today!”

Shane was *definitely* not going to talk about any of that, thank you very much. He had other plans.

“Shane Hollander?”

A medical assistant was calling out his name and he promptly got up to follow her. Her eyebrows rose a bit when she checked his vitals but he assured her that he was all right and that hospital settings always made him a bit nervous. She took him at his word and soon left him alone.

He was still doomscrolling on his phone when his doctor showed up.

“Hello, Shane. What a surprise. Didn't I see you just a few weeks ago for your annual check up?”

Dr. Park had been his doctor since he was a child and her soft familiar bedside manner put him slightly more at ease.

“Hi, Dr. Park. Yeah um, something came up. I...”

He didn't know how to start. He thought it would be easier because she was a doctor but it wasn't easy at all.

“Sorry, I just-” Shane paused again, his anxiety showing. “Anything I tell you is confidential, right?”

“Of course, Shane. There's laws protecting your records and rights. No one can access them without your express approval, even your parents.”

“Yeah okay, that's reassuring.”

Dr. Park waited patiently until Shane finally just spit it out.

“I had a heat.”

Her eyebrows rose in surprise. “Did I just hear you right? You had a heat?”

“Yup.”

“Oh my. That's on the rare side for your age. How are you feeling?”

“Uhh, surprisingly okay? I uh,” Shane blushed red. “I had an alpha to help me.”

“Well, I'm very glad that someone was there to help you. Late stage omega presentation is not a fun time. Could I check you over?”

Shane nodded and Dr. Park did a thorough exam. She also ordered some lab work just in case and Shane had to mentally thank Rozanov for his suggestion that he go to the doctor. Dr. Park broke things down to simple terms and assured him that he was still in top form. That

relieved him greatly. Because a part of him had been terrified that his physiology had changed irrefutably for the worse, even though he knew that was not rational.

An omega was just as capable as anyone and Shane realized he had a lot of unintended internal bias that he needed to work on. If he was having doubts, how would everyone else react if someday he wanted to come clean into the open?

Unfortunately, his own doubts strengthened his reasoning to hide his gender identity.

They discussed options and when it came to the heat suppressants, that is where Dr. Park and he hit a snag.

“Shane, I don't think it is a good idea to delay your heats.”

“But there's a way to do it, right? I researched it ahead of time.”

Dr. Park nodded but her face was not thrilled. “Yes, there are ways to delay heats. But it comes at a cost, Shane. Your body *wants* to be in heat monthly and if you drag it out, it will be much stronger and longer, just like your first heat. It can be very painful if you don't have help. Not to mention how the medication has certain side effects that could affect your fertility.”

“I don't care about any of that. I need to be able to play hockey. Please tell me what I can do.”

Dr. Park looked at Shane's determined face and sighed. She went to her computer and started typing quickly on the keyboard.

“There's a heat suppressant that can cut it down to once a year. But you have to be very diligent about taking your monthly dose. And the month you choose to have the heat, it will be hard on your body. You should take at least a week off.”

“I can do that. I don't play hockey in the summer.”

“And I highly recommend having a trusted partner.”

Shane's mind flashed briefly to Rozanov before he shook his head. “I'll work on that.”

She finished typing on her keyboard before getting up. “I'm assuming you want your doses of everything to avoid the pharmacy?”

Gratefully, Shane nodded.

She must have seen how scared he looked. Dr. Park was a much smaller woman but she came over to give Shane a surprisingly big hug.

“Don't worry, Shane. You'll get through this. I have faith in you.”

Shane felt tears prickle his eyes.

“Thank you, doctor. I'll try.”

A week later, Yuna and David Hollander returned from their vacation.

Shane knew that the house looked normal. And even if there were still traces left, his parents were betas and wouldn't be able to detect his new omega pheromones. But he was still jittery and nervous.

It must have been obvious enough that his mother had noticed and asked him about it. It also didn't help that Rozanov kept giving him side eyes whenever Shane kept insisting everything was fine.

But as promised, Rozanov kept his secret despite agreeing with Dr. Park that delaying his heat to once a year was a horrible idea. Shane was grateful and after everything they had gone through, he knew Rozanov wouldn't say anything. And lucky for them, the marks on Ilya's neck and arms had faded to faint smudges. If his parents wondered why Ilya was wearing scent patches and a longer shirt, they didn't mention anything.

But even as Shane agonized over his new omega status, he didn't have the luxury of laying still and doing nothing. His agent was messaging him all throughout the day because of the incoming draft and the same was happening to Ilya. They both knew they were some of the top prospects for the league. Either could start right away with any team and be an asset.

Before Shane could spiral any further into anxiety, they were flying out to New York to attend the draft.

“Congratulations, Shane! And welcome to the team!”

The owner of the Montreal Voyageurs briskly shook Shane's hand.

“Thank you so much, sir. It's an honour to join Montreal. I'm so excited to get started.”

Yuna and David were beaming with pride at their son. All the people who were flocking around them complimented Shane on his excellent drafting spot. Shane didn't mention that he was slightly annoyed that he had gotten number two despite being playoffs MVP and a Memorial Cup champion. The prize of being drafted number one had gone to another man.

Across the room, Shane stared at that man.

Who was of course, Ilya Rozanov.

A flash of memory of Rozanov taunting him about draft picks when he had first arrived in Canada came to mind. It was supremely frustrating but it had been an outcome Shane had secretly dreaded. There wasn't much differentiating Rozanov from his records. But one big difference was that Ilya was an alpha and to everyone else, Shane was a beta. That was always going to matter.

And it further reinforced his decision not to come out as an omega.

“Shane, honey,” said Yuna. “We're going to go see Ilya with his owners for a bit. He really shouldn't be alone on such a happy day.”

“Of course.”

Shane watched his mother and father make their way to Ilya and he saw the other man's face split into a huge grin. They hugged and Shane couldn't help but feel so lucky to have such great parents. It almost made the sting of losing out to Ilya just a little bit more bearable.

August 2021

Almost to the day, it was a year since Ilya had landed in Ottawa to stay with the Hollanders.

And now he was a member of the Boston Bears franchise, drafted at number one.

That so much could change in one year was incredible. And even though the Hollanders, especially Yuna, had given him grief over being drafted higher than Shane, he knew they were proud of him and he was glad.

He only wished his mother was still alive to see him fulfilling his dreams.

A knock came through his door.

“Rozanov? Can I come in?”

Ilya opened his door to let Hollander inside. He came in looking a bit sad, with both hands stuffed into his jeans pockets.

“Mom and Dad were wondering if you were ready to go.”

Looking around, Ilya felt a pang of hurt at the now bare room. It had only been a year but it had felt more welcoming than anything he had experienced in Russia after his mother's death.

Ilya trailed a finger along the window ledge. “I will miss this place.”

“Yeah well,” Hollander scuffed his foot against the carpet. “We’ll miss you too. And I’m sorry I can’t see you off at the airport. I didn’t think Montreal wanted a meeting so soon.”

“Even you will miss me, Hollander?”

Shane grinned. “Of course not. You’re a pain in my ass and going to be an even bigger pain in the ass in the future.”

That sentiment wasn’t totally false. Maybe if Ilya had been drafted to another team, it would be different. But Montreal and Boston had a 100 year rivalry that was deeply personal on both sides.

“We will be playing against each other now, yes? Should be exciting.”

“Well, I know all your moves so I’ll be sure to kick your teeth in every time.”

Ilya scoffed. “As though I don’t know *your* moves as well?”

Both men smiled at each other ferociously before breaking out into a laugh. Ilya didn’t know why but he suddenly felt...a bit shy.

Hollander stepped a little closer to speak more softly.

“And um, thank you for...everything you’ve done for me. I really am.”

Ilya knew what Hollander was referring to and he could feel his gut clench at the memory. Although neither had spoken much about it, a current of electricity would spark whenever their eyes would meet. A secret between the two and the whole world none the wiser.

“It was nothing.”

But it hadn’t been nothing. Not for Ilya and probably not for Hollander.

As the other man seemed to frown in displeasure from that response, Ilya gave in to his impulses one last time.

He reached out a hand and gently cupped Hollander’s face. Those dark eyes widened in surprise but fluttered closed when slowly, Ilya touched their lips together.

Even though they had shared a heat together, Ilya had been more of an assistant than an active lover. He had pointedly avoided kissing Hollander no matter how strong the urge was. But he was about to leave and who knew when they would have such a moment again.

When Shane moaned and opened his mouth, Ilya chased the wet warmth and slid his tongue inside. Slowly, they traded a kiss for another kiss until they were both breathless.

Stepping back, Ilya stared at the other man with a longing he hadn’t known was there all along.

But it was too late for any more words. It was time to go.

“Goodbye, Hollander. See you on the ice.”

And with that first kiss, Ilya Rozanov was no longer Shane Hollander's roommate, but his rival.

Chapter End Notes

I might have taken some of the sexy out of the heat sex but I have always been stuck on the logistics of the aftermath lol. It just screams So. Much. Cleaning. Not that it's a bad thing but you really have to think of how exhausted they must be and still have to get it done. Poor boys.

And yes, they are no longer roommates but no worries, they will see each other again!

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

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

October 2021

Ilya knew he had fucked up.

Nervously pacing his new house, Ilya knew he had let his insecurities get the better of him. And now it's been two months since he had impulsively kissed Hollander and then ghosted him after the move to Boston. Everyone thought Ilya Rozanov was such a tough, careless guy but those people really didn't know him at all.

Ironically, Ilya had not ghosted Yuna and David which...probably didn't sit too well with Shane.

And now he was about to face Hollander in their first hockey match and he didn't know what to expect. Anger? Apathy?

He still didn't fully understand why he had kissed Hollander. No, actually that was untrue. He had kissed him because even though Ilya had the willpower to resist an omega in heat, he couldn't resist that same beautiful face looking sad at their parting.

He had just wanted a taste. Just something small to remember him by. But then it had Ilya twisted up to the point he couldn't even return a fucking text. Pathetic.

He could almost hear his father's voice inside his head, taunting him. Saying he was too soft, too weak, and didn't deserve someone perfect like Shane Hollander.

Ilya had tried to make excuses to himself. That it wasn't intentional at first. The move to Boston had been a whirlwind and Ilya had been incredibly busy. He assumed the same was for Hollander. But the other man had reached out tentatively and Ilya had never answered back.

He didn't want to admit it but he had been scared. Because wanting more came with risks. Letting people in came with risks.

He hadn't blinked an eye when Hollander had asked him for help with his heat. It had been a clear transaction with set boundaries and no strings attached. There was no need or room for feelings.

But that kiss had felt different. Ilya knew it was different. He had crossed a line over just being friends and it scared him. So like a coward, he had used his busy new life as an excuse to block out Shane. He really was an asshole.

His phone alarm went off, warning him he had to make his way to the arena. With a grim set to his shoulders, Ilya picked up his bag and walked out the door.

“So *that's* your old roommate, huh?”

Hayden Pike pointed across the ice. Shane looked up from retying his skates to see Rozanov staring from the Boston team bench. Shane immediately turned his head away.

“Yup. That's him.”

“He seems like a jerk.”

Shane grimaced at Hayden, his closest friend on the Montreal Voyageurs, and nodded his head. “He is an acquired taste.”

“Well, the only flavour I want to taste is beating them. Now let's go!”

At the coach's urging, they both jumped over the boards and hit the ice.

Rozanov and his teammates did the same and for the first time in two months, Shane was face to face with Rozanov again. But this time, they were playing against each other.

Almost leisurely, Rozanov skated over to Shane and nodded his head.

“Hollander.”

“ ... ”

The other man waited for a response. Shane just stared back.

Rozanov sighed and looked away. “So is this how we'll start our first game against each other? Not talking?”

“That's pretty rich coming from you. But don't worry about it. I didn't miss you at all.”

That was a blatant lie. Shane had missed Ilya every single day. Every. Single. Fucking. Day. And each day had been consumed with questions he didn't think he'd get answers to. Like...

Why did you kiss me?

Why have you ghosted me for months?

What are we to each other?

The league certainly had their own answers for who they were. The media had been in a frenzy to talk up their games. Former teammates, drafted first and second, destined to be rivals. Every hockey oriented channel, show, and podcast ate it up as their freshest juiciest

meal. All the clickbait was analyzing their moves. From Ilya and his almost nightly partying to Shane's yoga routine. The fans couldn't get enough.

As the home town Boston crowd roared, Ilya Rozanov and Shane Hollander met each other on center ice.

They crouched low and their eyes met with competitive intensity. Whatever their own personal feelings, none of that mattered on the ice. Here, they were enemies, and only one would be standing on top.

“Don't worry, Hollander. I'll go easy on you.”

“Like hell you will.”

The puck dropped and both men clashed together. Shane won the faceoff and raced down the ice with the puck, with Rozanov hot on his heels.

And already within the first minute, Shane scored a goal against Boston.

As the fans blasted out loud jeers of discontent, Shane grinned with satisfaction at Rozanov. Maybe it was petty, but it felt so good to get the first score against his rival. This was something that could never be changed.

“How you like that huh, Rozanov? Not so cocky now are you?”

“Just you wait.”

It got even more fierce after that and before the end of the first period, Boston had tied with Montreal. Shane could feel the sweat running down his face and neck as he skated like never before.

Each time he almost had another goal, Rozanov would get in his way. He'd lost count how many times they'd crashed into the glass or each other. A referee had to already separate them twice in the second period before Boston scored another goal.

The Montreal bench was tense with barely checked aggression. They could hear the crowd boo them loudly and there was no way that Shane was going to lose.

The third period started off rough for Boston but they rallied back. As Shane neared their goalie, with almost a perfect angle to-

Rozanov crashed into Shane again and they both went tumbling to the ice.

“What the fuck, Rozanov!”

Ilya wiped the ice shavings off his gloves as he got up. “It's called hockey, Hollander.”

“No, that's playing like an asshole!”

The referee looked exasperated as he separated them again. "Hollander, Rozanov! Calm down, both of you."

Shane could barely hear the man over the piercing screeching of anger in his head. At this point, he couldn't tell anymore if the rage he felt was the hockey or Rozanov ignoring him. The same look of frustration was mirrored in Ilya's face and before anyone could stop them, they started shouting at each other.

"You're a fucking loser, Rozanov!"

"Get the fuck off my ice, you shithead!"

"Why don't you suck my dick, you fucker!"

"Why don't you ask please!"

The whole arena erupted in excitement. *This* was what they had been hoping to see. For the rivalry between Hollander and Rozanov to start off with a heated fight. Fans of both teams cheered as Ilya and Shane twisted against their own teammates who were trying to separate them.

"All right, that's enough! Off to the box with you both!"

The referees finally managed to separate them and send them to their respective penalty boxes. Shane sat down, gargled some water to get the taste of bile out of his mouth, and spit to the side.

Shane felt miserable. And he watched helplessly as the final minutes of the game counted down with both him and Rozanov missing out.

Boston won the game and Shane felt angry tears sting his eyes.

Ilya was pacing in his house. Again.

What he *should* be doing instead was celebrating with his teammates. They had won a hard game against a stubborn Montreal team and any other night, he would be part of the celebration. Even though he hadn't contributed anything at the end, his team had still won and that's what counted.

But the look of betrayal on Hollander's face at the end of the game was etched into his mind.

Of course, he's mad. I've been ignoring him. And then we screamed at each other like children.

Seeing Hollander again reminded Ilya that the other man deserved better than that. The newspapers could say all they wanted about their rivalry but only they should get to truly define their status. Although Ilya had a feeling that the game today cemented every headline that the media feasted on.

Before Ilya could change his mind, he picked up his phone and pulled up “Baby Face” to send a text.

Shane's phone buzzed.

Still sore from the game, Shane barely had the energy to lift his head off the hotel pillow. It had been a tough battle against a tough team and Shane swore he'd get back at them in the future.

Or maybe just Rozanov.

His phone buzzed again.

Finally getting up, Shane checked his screen and he had two messages from “Asshole”.

Shane did a double take. He checked his phone again and yes, he indeed had two messages from Rozanov.

Oh so now he wants to talk? Fuck that guy.

Shane tossed his phone back on the bedside table and rolled over. He was already feeling miserable from the loss and didn't need Rozanov to pile more on top.

His phone started ringing. The screen said “Asshole”.

“Argh, damnit! Shut the hell up!”

Oblivious to Shane's outburst, his phone kept ringing and ringing.

After the fourth time calling, Shane finally picked up.

“What the fuck do you want?” Shane yelled into his phone.

“What's your room number?”

Shane sat up and stared out the hotel room windows in disbelief. Was Rozanov really asking him this question? What the hell was wrong with him?

Ready to cuss him out, Shane took in a big breath. But then his own mouth betrayed him.

“1410. At the Hilton.”

“Be right there.”

The phone disconnected.

Shane stared at the screen in shock. Why had he answered him? Why hadn't he just told Rozanov to fuck off?

Was Rozanov really coming over right now?

Shane was so confused. He was also severely underdressed. He hopped off his bed to get a pair of pants and shirt. The anxiety of the wait had him walking back and forth across the small sitting area. He wished he was back in his house in Montreal that he had bought after the rookie contract. It was spacious and open so he could pace properly there.

After about 30 minutes, a knock came at the door.

Swiftly, Shane speed-walked and opened it to see Rozanov standing in the hallway. He looked just as miserable as he did.

Serves him right.

Shane ushered him inside, feeling paranoid that someone might see them. It wouldn't look good to be seen inviting his rival to his hotel room.

Rozanov was dressed stylishly in a long blue coat and black slacks. His shirt was black as well with shiny silver buttons. He looked like he hadn't changed out of his formal attire after the game. Shane hated to admit how good the other man looked, even through the exhaustion.

Crossing his arms with a look of belligerence, Shane decided to go straight to the point.

“What are you doing here?”

Rozanov looked pained and could barely meet his eyes. Somehow this angered Shane even more.

“If you think you can just waltz in here after you've ignored me for two months and then fought me, you better-”

“I'm sorry.”

Rozanov's apology was quick and it suddenly took the wind out of Shane's sails. He had been ready for a fight, maybe even Ilya's trademark cocky nonchalance. But he hadn't been prepared for immediate capitulation.

Shane felt even more confused. He didn't understand what was going on. He had thought that the year they had spent under the same roof, even sharing a heat together, meant at least that they were friends. But now he wasn't so sure.

“Rozanov, start explaining yourself.”

“Where should I start?”

“Ha! I don't know! Maybe with what you're doing here?”

Sighing, Rozanov sat on the hotel couch and raked his fingers through his curls. “I'm sorry I didn't message you back. It was...I was very busy.”

That wasn't good enough for Shane. “I was busy too but I managed to say hello just fine.”

“You're right. You did.”

Shane gestured at him, signaling that he wanted more. Ilya sighed again.

“I am not sure how to say it well in English but...I feel...I was feeling...a lot of things.”

Shane waited as he watched Ilya struggle. That's when he realized that the alpha was not wearing his scent patches. A distinct note of something sharp and acrid was mixed in with Ilya's dark chocolate pheromones. The lovely notes of smoke that had comforted Shane through his heat now smelled more like a wildfire.

That was one of the new things about being an omega that Shane was still getting used to. As a former beta, all he had smelled from other people had been their natural body odor and perfumes. But since becoming an omega, he would catch a drift of someone's pheromones passing by and...it was both exhilarating and disturbing. Being able to read someone else's feelings like watching for body language was slowly becoming second nature.

He knew that his own harsh suppressants and oral blockers kept others from discovering his true nature. But for Ilya to show up to his hotel room without any patches...it was as though the other man was trying to really convey his true feelings. And that made the cautious part of Shane soften.

“Hey, Rozanov, you don't have to explain yourself if you don't want to. I know I'm not that good at this either.”

“No no, I want to explain. I-” Ilya paused again to gather himself. “When you had your heat, you made it clear what you wanted. I crossed that line. Muddied the waters. I'm sorry.”

“Do you mean the kiss?”

“Yes.”

A sharp pang tore through Shane's chest. “Oh. I see.”

“I know I have been with many people. Sex is...” Rozanov shrugged. “It's been easy. And I don't want you to think I was treating you lightly. To me, you're a friend. So I should be more careful.”

Shane couldn't help but think this was the most intense that Rozanov had ever sounded outside of him reading off WebMd during his heat. But every word felt sincere and a small part of Shane wished that Ilya didn't regret kissing him.

“Okay, then why did you kiss me?”

A light blush came over Rozanov's cheeks. “Ah, well. You looked so sad. Like a kicked puppy. I didn't like that. Also, I knew I'd miss you.”

Shane sighed. “Actually, I lied at the game when I said I didn't miss you. I actually did. Especially your cooking.”

Rozanov grinned and the smell of wildfire started dampening. “That's because you're spoiled.”

“I'm not!”

Suddenly, Shane's phone started ringing and the screen lit up signaling “Mom”.

“Uhh...” Shane looked awkwardly between his phone and Rozanov.

“You should pick that up. I'll keep quiet.”

Shane picked up the call. “Hello? Mom?”

“Shane Yuta Hollander, what were you thinking getting into a fight with Ilya!”

Ohhh shit, the full name was being dropped.

“Mom, it's not a big deal. It's hockey.”

“You know very well that it's a big deal! There's so many kids looking up to you as a role model!”

“Hey, Rozanov yelled too!”

“But you started it. And what do I say about fighting?”

Shane rolled his eyes in exasperation. “*Don't start a fight if you're not prepared to finish it.*”

“Exactly.”

“Well, am I the only one getting this lecture? Seems pretty unfair.”

“Oh, don't you worry. Your Dad is calling Ilya right now.”

And right on cue, Rozanov's phone started ringing.

“Wait,” said Yuna. “I know that ringtone. Is Ilya there with you? Put me on video now!”

Groaning at the inevitable, Shane switched the call to video and sat beside Rozanov. When the screen showed both their faces, Yuna smiled.

“There they are, my two stupid sons. Did you have fun yelling at each other like delinquents?”

To his credit, Ilya looked extremely contrite. “Sorry. Won't do it again. Not against Hollander at least.”

“Don't you idiots know how many endorsement calls I've lined for your agents? Are you *trying* to sabotage my hard work?”

“I'm sorry, mom. We'll do better.”

“Good. And congratulations on your win Ilya. Although I'm sure Shane will pay you back.”

“And I'm looking forward to see him try.”

Yuna laughed. “Have a good night boys. Love you.”

Then she hung up.

Both men sat in silence for a few minutes to let the whirlwind that was Yuna Hollander settle into their mind.

Rozanov grinned at Shane. “Did your mom just scold us like children?”

“Ugh, yes unfortunately so.”

A huge laugh burst out of Rozanov and he looked gleefully at Shane.

“You know,” drawled Shane, “most people don't like getting scolded.”

“Ah true. But I haven't been scolded by a mother since I was twelve. I missed it.”

Shane looked at Ilya with a sad expression. The alpha rarely spoke of his family and Shane wondered how different it would have been for him if he still had his mother. Would he have chosen to billet with the Hollanders in Canada? Perhaps not. And the thought of not having that year was devastating.

Sticking his hand out to Rozanov, Shane waited expectantly. “Friends?”

Rozanov took his hand and squeezed. “Friends.”

“Okay, now get out of my room. I got an early plane to catch.”

“Okay okay.”

“Also, next time we play, I'm beating your ass.”

“In your dreams.”

“Argh, get the fuck out.”

Smiling radiantly, Rozanov took a quick peek outside the hallway before leaving. Shane leaned against the door and hoped his heart wouldn't collapse from the sudden loneliness.

June 2022

“And with that, the New York Admirals are the winners of the Stanley Cup!”

The fans on Shane's screen went absolutely insane as they cheered for the winning team. A flood of red jerseys came on the ice as their captain, Scott Hunter, lifted the cup high above his head and skated a circle around the rink.

Even though Shane wished *he* was the one holding up that cup, he was happy for Scott Hunter. As one of the few beta captains in the whole league, Shane had always secretly admired him for his incredible prowess on the ice. And now seeing Scott finally win a cup, it made the sting of Montreal losing in the first round of playoffs a little less awful.

It also helped that he had been voted as Rookie of the Year. His parents had been thrilled. Rozanov had been less thrilled but had been a great sport about it. Even though neither of their teams had made it to the final, at least Shane could hold that award to gloat over.

“You know what?” said Yuna as she started cleaning up the left over snacks from their watch party in their Ottawa house. “I'm happy for Scott Hunter. He's such a good player and this was overdue.”

David got up to help his wife and he nodded in agreement. “Couldn't have gone to a nicer guy, except Shane of course.”

“Dad, I think you're being pretty biased.”

David laughed. “I can't help that I'm proud of you! Getting Rookie of the Year is a big deal!”

As Shane got up to take his own dirty dishes to the kitchen, he felt his phone buzzing in his pocket. He checked and saw that Rozanov was calling.

“Ah, sorry I gotta take this call.”

He put his plates down, hit the green button and started walking over to his old room.

“Hello?”

“Did you watch?”

Shane rolled his eyes. "Of course I watched. I'm in Ottawa with my parents."

"Say hi to them for me."

"Can do. Are you calling for a particular reason?"

"Yes. Some of the guys on the team wanted to plan somethings but I won't go if you need me."

Shane didn't understand what Rozanov was trying to say. "Need you for what?"

"Your heat."

Flushing from head to toe, Shane was momentarily rendered speechless. Then he heard a sigh on the other side of the phone line.

"You didn't forget your own heat, did you?"

"No, of course not!"

And he hadn't. He knew that June would be when he would have his second heat and his house in Montreal had been prepped ahead of time. Everything from waterproof omega sheets to sex toys (his own now instead having to borrow from Rozanov's) were all ready to go.

"I know my last heat was umm," Shane stammered, "unexpected and a bit crazy. But I'm on all the right meds now and I got a set up. I should be okay. And I'm going to do it alone."

He could literally *feel* the judgment from Ilya's silence. He definitely took offense to that. Shane was not a kid and he knew he was much better informed now.

"Are you sure you want to do it alone?" Rozanov asked. "Aren't there...services?"

Shane could feel himself blush again. How did Rozanov even know about this stuff? But yes, services did exist to help omegas through their heat. They could even request another omega to spend it with although most opted for an alpha partner. Truth be told, what Rozanov had done for his first heat was very much like what those services provided. It was purely a business transaction with NDA forms, anonymity, and no complications.

But Shane didn't like the idea of a stranger being with him when he was in such a vulnerable state. The reason why Rozanov had been different was because he was a friend and Shane had trusted him.

"No, I'd rather do it alone," said Shane.

"That's what you said last time."

"Yes, but like I said, I'm more prepared this time."

Shane heard Rozanov sigh again. Was he that unreliable?

“Okay, I got an idea,” Rozanov said, sounding like he was losing his patience. “You should make a plan B.”

“And what do you think my plan B should be?”

“You should have someone close by. Don't you have anyone you could ask? Friends with benefits?”

Shane snorted. “Like you? I know you got *lots* of friends with benefits.”

Or at least Shane thought so. The media sure made it sound like Ilya had a very robust sex life. Not that Shane cared or anything.

Rozanov chuckled. “I do have many friends with benefits. I'm sure you could find some too, Mr. Handsome Hockey Player.”

“Yes, but I wouldn't trust them.”

The implication that the *only* person that Shane trusted with his omega secret was Ilya was not said but heavily implied. The line was silent for a bit before Rozanov coughed.

“Hollander. I'm serious. If you get in trouble, call me.”

“And how the hell are you going to help me all the way from Boston?”

“I'll think of something.”

“Fine.” Shane didn't mean to sound so surly and he moderated his tone better. “Thank you. I appreciate you thinking of me.”

“No problem.”

Shane suddenly thought of their conversation back in October and had to ask. “So... *theoretically*...if you come to help me with this heat and *theoretically* we were to kiss, are you going to freak out and ghost me again for months?”

“Do you want me to kiss you?”

Yes. Shane really did want Rozanov to kiss him again. But he played it cool and slightly understated.

“I mean, I'm down with...anything.”

There was another silence on the line before Rozanov spoke up. “Anything?”

“Well, that's what friends with benefits do right?”

“Oh,” Rozanov laughed. “Is that what we are now?”

“All this is *theoretically* if you help me with my heat. But you won't have to because I'm going to be just *fine*.” Shane put a strong emphasis on the word fine. Probably too strong to

be believed.

“Okay.”

“Okay.”

Rozanov chuckled. “Good luck, Hollander.” Then he hung up.

Shane didn't need luck. As he told himself for the hundredth time, he was going to be just fine.

Ilya was not sure if he should be horrified or impressed with the level of decadence and drinking that his teammates could accomplish during the off-season.

It had only been two weeks or so since the Stanley Cup final and he had already attended four different house parties, two weddings and politely declined three baby gender reveal parties. He knew the summer was short before practices and the pre-season hit but it was still impressive how much was getting squeezed in.

He was currently attending the third wedding in his team's busy schedule. Ilya was also actively trying to avoid dancing with the groom's divorced mother who kept eyeing him up like a piece of meat. Ilya had done some questionable things in his past but he was pretty sure his teammate wouldn't like him fucking his mom.

Marlow came by and nudged Ilya by the shoulder. “Hey Rozanov, pretty sure Hodge’s mom wants to take you for a ride.”

“No, thank you. I don't want to be stabbed with a broken hockey stick.”

Marlow laughed too loudly and Ilya rolled his eyes. Cliff Marlow was probably his closest friend on the Bears but his sense of humour was at best, questionable. It was already quite late into the reception and almost everyone was drunk. But Ilya had kept it to a moderate amount and kept checking his phone for any notifications.

“Are you waiting for a call or something?” Marlow asked. “You've been fidgeting with your phone all day.”

Ilya couldn't tell him that he was distracted because Hollander had messaged him that he felt his heat coming on. That somebody about 300 miles away, could be in trouble and not *fucking answering his texts or calls for two days.*

It was stressful and infuriating.

“I'm going to have a smoke.”

He started walking away from the giant tent that had been set up on the grass to find some privacy. Ilya didn't smoke very often anymore but he was not in a good mood. He kept reminding himself that Hollander should be fine without him but he couldn't stop worrying. After smoking two cigarettes back to back, he was turning around to return to the party when his phone vibrated in his suit pocket.

There was a single text message from "Baby Face" that said "Call me."

Ilya hit the call button immediately.

"Hollander, are you okay?"

"...I...um..." Hollander was breathing hard. "I thought I'd be okay."

Ilya's chest clenched with worry. "But you're not."

"I'm sorry, I just wanted to hear your voice. I thought...maybe it'd help."

Ilya started running to the parking lot while digging into his pants pocket for his car keys. He was having flashbacks to the first time Shane had called him in Ottawa for help. "Stay with me, Hollander. Is anyone with you?"

"No."

"I told you not to be alone."

A small choked up sound came through the phone speaker. "But I didn't want anyone here but you." The whispered words were followed along with a moan.

"What's wrong? Talk to me."

"Just...hurts. Miss you."

Ilya groaned and threw open his car door and dashed inside. He immediately opened up a tab for direct flights from Boston to Montreal and luckily found a red-eye flight that still had seats. He booked it and started driving to his house.

"Hollander, listen to me. If you don't want anyone else there, you need to at least drink some water and take your medicines. Do you understand?"

"...I can do that."

"And I'm coming as fast as I can. The flight is about two hours. Can you hold on for me?"

"I think I can."

"Good. Go do the things I said to do."

Ilya heard a deep sigh and a small whimper. "Yes, alpha."

The softly spoken *alpha* put Ilya in a tailspin. He broke several vehicular laws to get to his house and packed quickly. If he had a choice he would have gone straight to the airport but he didn't usually carry his passport to a fucking wedding.

Cursing himself, Ilya drove to Logan airport and counted down the minutes until he could get to Hollander. Which was hard because going through airport security and protocol was normally annoying but even worse knowing Shane needed him. He hastily slapped on the scent patches before boarding and hoped no one could smell his frustration.

Once the plane landed, Ilya rented a car and drove as fast as he could to Hollander's house. Luckily, it wasn't too far away from the airport but it was still unacceptable. It had been literally hours since they had last talked with the dawn slowly creeping in on the horizon. Too many hours wasted because Hollander had been so determined to go along with his foolhardy plan.

Fortunately, Ilya knew the codes to Hollander's front door due to their "Plan B" discussion a few weeks ago. He double checked his text messages to find the numbers and input it in.

When the door opened, Ilya was rocked by that familiar sweet scent. Mixed in were pheromones that signaled distress and sadness.

"Hollander!"

He quickly shed his shoes, jacket, and bag and ran inside the house. His nose told him where to go and he found Shane, crumpled in the middle of a bed nest. It was constructed better than the first one but it carried only one scent, Shane's.

Ilya quickly did a U-turn to go back for his bag. He had brought the fleece blanket from his bed because he'd known Shane would want his pheromones mixed into the nest.

"Hollander. Hollander, I'm here. Are you okay?"

Slowly, Shane opened his eyes and tried to get up. His limbs looked weak and Ilya had to help him sit up. Then Ilya enveloped the other man in a tight hug and covered him in the blanket.

"Ilya...you're here."

"Yes."

"You're actually here."

"Yes, I am. I'm sorry I took so long."

Arms wrapped around Ilya's neck and he felt Shane take a long deep breath from his scent glands. His naked body was covered in sweat and slightly shivering. But now that their pheromones were mingling, it seemed to help Hollander feel better.

"I can't believe you're here. Am I dreaming?"

“You're lucky that there are direct flights from Boston to Montreal.”

Hollander laughed but then grabbed his stomach in pain. He hugged Ilya tight, as though the closer the proximity, the less pain he'd feel.

“I thought,” Hollander whispered, “with all the meds I'd be better. I didn't want to bother you again.”

“I offered. I wouldn't have offered it if I didn't want to help.”

“But...what if I want more than the last time? Will you shut me out again?”

Ilya once again regretted his actions that had hurt Shane. “No, I won't do that.”

Shane ran his palms up Ilya's arms and pressed firmly along his chest. He was still panting from the pain.

“Then kiss me.”

Ilya looked into Shane's eyes to make sure and all he could see there was want. He stopped hesitating and brought their lips together.

Shane's lips were a bit swollen and he moaned deeply when Ilya's firmer lips moved confidently against his. It quickly became open mouthed, both tongues tangling with need. The combination of their scents heated up and Ilya could feel both of their cocks getting hard in response.

Shane started frantically pawing at Ilya's clothes. “Too much...take it off.”

Ilya obeyed and every single piece of clothing ended up in Shane's greedy hands. He stuffed them into his nest, each piece causing a purr of satisfaction to well up in Shane's chest. He looked like a greedy dragon, hoarding his gold.

Ilya saw the array of sex toys that Hollander had purchased and reached out to grab one. But Hollander swiftly knocked it out of his hand.

“No, no, alpha, I want you. Not that.”

“Are you sure?”

Shane's response was to push Ilya down and cover him with his whole body. Ilya sunk his fingers into Shane's hair and brought their faces close again to kiss.

They were both lost for a moment, exchanging hot breaths for more fervent kisses. Ilya had never realized just how pleasure he could find in such a simple action. Shane was devouring him and Ilya wanted to be consumed wholly.

The slick, smelling of that golden citrus scent, was leaking profusely from Shane's ass. Ilya's lap was absolutely drenched in it. Reaching behind him, Shane tried to put Ilya's hard cock inside but-

“Wait, Hollander, slow down.”

“No, alpha. Now.”

Ilya sat up and gripped Hollander's hair tighter, drawing his face slightly away.

“I need to get the condoms from my bag. Or do you have alpha ones?”

Shane growled in frustration and shook his head. “I've had my shots.”

“And so have I. But this is safer.”

Ilya flipped Shane over and pointed a finger in front of his face. “Be good.”

Shane whimpered and nodded.

Quickly and efficiently, Ilya opened his bag and grabbed the box of condoms. They were alpha sized to accommodate knots and Ilya was glad he had remembered to pack them. The thought of coming inside Hollander was intoxicating but he knew there were going to be many rounds and this would make the clean up easier.

Then Shane got on his hands and knees and presented himself and Ilya almost dropped the box.

Hollander's ass was perfect, so round and full. The thighs and calves were also thick with muscle and covered in a light dusting of hair. Ilya gulped as he watched the slick drip down and after a year of fantasizing over it, he finally caved in to his wants and buried his face in it.

Ilya had never tasted anything so delicious in his life. The slick was sweet but the cries that Shane made as Ilya's tongue licked it up was even sweeter.

Inserting one finger at a time, Ilya worked Shane open until the omega could barely support his own weight. His legs were trembling and his knees were buckling. Ilya loved the sight of it.

“Please Rozanov...please alpha...I need it.”

Hearing those pleas, Ilya rolled on a condom and coated himself in Shane's slick. He put a pillow under Shane's stomach to help support him and then slowly entered his warm gleaming hole.

Even though Ilya had stretched him to accommodate his cock, the pressure was still almost too much. He rubbed Shane's back and pressed the scent glands on his wrists everywhere that he could reach.

“Hollander...relax. It's okay.”

Shane moaned, loving the additional pheromones being rubbed all over him. It seemed to do the trick and he relaxed enough that Ilya could slowly work himself in.

But once he was in deep, Ilya himself started to lose control. Shane's omega scent was amazing and he was swimming in it. Both hands wrapped around Shane's waist and he started thrusting in earnest.

“Ohh...ohh, fuck, yes. Yes!” Shane cried out.

Hollander pushed back to meet Ilya's rhythm, each undulation hitting *exactly* where Shane wanted it. After over two days of being in heat, it didn't take long for Shane to come completely untouched. His cock shot out line by line and the pillow was covered in his shiny come.

Ilya shouted out, burying his cock so deeply that he swore he could feel Shane's belly distend. His knot started inflating and soon his thrusts became a gentle rock and forth as he pulsed inside the condom.

“Oh my fucking God....Hollander...ah fuck.”

Ilya could feel the knot locking them in together and Shane moaned in response. Fighting his urges, Ilya bit down on his arm because once again, Shane had neglected to wear a neck guard.

After the waves of pleasure calmed down, Ilya gently turned both their bodies onto their sides, spooning against each other. He knew they would be stuck together for a little while.

“Are you okay?” Ilya asked, almost out of breath.

“Mmm. So good, alpha.”

Ilya kissed Hollander's exposed shoulder and wrapped his arms around the other man. Then before he knew it, they both fell asleep.

It took an additional three days until Shane's heat was over.

By then, both men were so exhausted that Shane barely woke up in time to pick up his phone, which had probably been ringing a while.

“...hello?”

“Oh my goodness, Shane, you finally woke up.”

Shane rubbed his face, feeling like a literal husk of himself. “Yeah mom, what's up?”

“What do you mean, what's up? You haven't answered your phone in days. Are you okay? Do you need me to drive over there?”

Shane looked at the bed and Rozanov who was passed out beside him. He slowly took in his room, which looked like bedding and condom wrappers had exploded all over it and he was momentarily frozen in fear that his mother was about to knock on his door.

“No no, mom, I'm fine! I just had a little cold and the meds really made me sleepy.”

“You got sick? But it's not cold!”

“That's a myth.”

He could hear Yuna rolling her eyes through the phone. “Okay, well I just wanted to make sure you're okay.”

“I'm okay. I really am. Talk to you later.”

He hung up and looked down at Rozanov. This time, the other man was awake and staring at him.

“You're such a bad liar.”

Shane tossed his phone on to the space between them and waved a flourishing gesture. “Okay genius, you go and get creative then because I didn't know how to tell her that I went into heat and you fucked me into the mattress.”

Rozanov grinned. “That good, huh?”

“Ugh fuck off.”

“I did.”

Shane hit him over the head with a pillow. Rozanov laughed and covered his face. “Okay okay, I give in Mr. Hollander. Please don't hurt me.”

Shane was so tired but couldn't stop grinning back. He was sore from top to bottom but at the same time, felt so satisfied. And it had only come about because once again, Rozanov had come through for him.

“Hey um,” Shane said, fiddling with the fleece blanket that Rozanov had brought over.

“Thank you again. For saving me. I still can't believe you literally flew over from Boston overnight.”

“You needed me. It was the right thing to do.”

“Still...thank you.”

“If you *really* want to thank me, then you need a better plan B. So that you're not in pain.”

Shane knew that Ilya was right. He had thought that his first heat was just an anomaly and he'd be able to get through it on his own. But it seemed his doctor's warning that a delayed

heat like his would hit harder had come true. The pain had been so excruciating that after just two days, he had messaged Rozanov in his desperation.

Feeling hesitant, he wrapped the blanket around himself and took in a lungful of Ilya's alpha scent. Even with his heat gone, the smell was so comforting.

“Would it be crazy of me if I ask you to be my heat partner? It would only be once a year and...I promise not to infringe on your life other than that.”

Ilya seemed to consider his proposal carefully before speaking up. “So we will live our lives, play hockey, Montreal and Boston, but come together in summer for your heat?”

“Right. And uh, of course I realize that might get in the way of any relationships so if you don't want that, I understand.”

Rozanov shrugged. “I am not in any relationships. Or plan to. I have a few friends who has an understanding with me. That's it.”

“Oh, I see.”

Maybe Shane was still feeling sensitive after a recently finished heat but the thought of others touching Rozanov made his stomach curdle. But he couldn't think that way. This was an arrangement he was proposing, not a relationship. He couldn't afford to get his feelings hurt that Ilya would still seek out other people.

“I do have a condition if we do this,” groaned Ilya. He brought up his arms, full of bite marks. “You need to buy a neck guard or my arms won't make it.”

“Shit. I'm so sorry. I didn't think I needed one.”

“Or I could get special mouth guards. But kissing in those don't look very fun.”

Shane took Rozanov's sore arms and gently touched all of the teeth marks. He brought up Ilya's wrists to deeply scent them and lay soft trails of kisses.

“Thank you again and I'm sorry. I'll definitely get something.”

They gravitated and closed the gap until they were both in each other's arms. It felt wonderful to be held and to hold back. Shane would never be sick of wanting to live in Ilya's neck, breathing in the incredible pheromones.

But Shane was also feeling sticky and gross. Rozanov probably felt the same way so he extracted himself from the alpha. “I need a shower.”

“Good idea.”

They both got up on shaky legs and started the inevitable clean up; first themselves and the room. The omega bedding had certainly made a difference though and Shane found less laundry to do. But he felt a pang of sadness that there had been barely anything from Ilya in

his nest, which honestly had been the problem. Shane had thought he could go through his extra hard heats alone and it turned out...maybe he just really needed Rozanov after all.

Shane heard Rozanov calling from his kitchen.

“What do you want to eat?”

Feeling a bit shy, Shane reached into his well-stocked pantry and grabbed some cans.

“If you don't mind...” Shane held up the cans. “Tuna melt?”

Rozanov laughed. “Tuna melt it is.”

Shane sat down at the kitchen table and watched fondly as Ilya moved around his kitchen like he owned the place. Then he was momentarily lost in a daydream, of what his life could be like if Ilya was there all the time again. Just like back in their roommate days. Not this... pragmatic arrangement they had discussed.

But Shane knew it was just a dream and reality was harsher than that. He got up to help Ilya prep the food and told himself firmly to put aside his selfish wants.

Because at the end of the day, hockey was the most important goal and he would do what he had to do.

Chapter End Notes

Happy holidays to those who celebrate! I hope everyone are feeling well and safe!

I think it's interesting that in the show and the book, Ilya is the first to freak out and then Shane freaks out even harder after lol. Obviously in this fic, the timelines are not the same but I hope I conveyed that Ilya got with the program earlier than Shane did.

Also I wanted to give Shane a Japanese middle name and I chose Yuta. It has a lot of meanings but I MAY have stolen it from Yuta in JJK (hehehehe). Also I can see Yuna thinking it's cute that their names rhyme!

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

Just a little 2 year time skip woohoo~! I promise not to stretch it as much as the books do lol!

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

October 2024

“I still can't believe it,” said Hayden. He was sitting beside Shane and putting on his pads. The locker room was full and loud with other players but Hayden's voice carried just fine to Shane.

“Believe what?” Shane asked. He was pulling a jersey over his head, his voice muffled for a moment.

“We're both on the last season of our rookie contracts! It felt like we were baby Voyageurs just yesterday and now look at us, you're the captain and I'm the alternate captain. We're a pair of badasses!”

“We'd be even better badasses if we had a Stanley Cup.”

Hayden groaned and pulled on his own jersey. “Don't fucking remind me. I'm still pissed that fucking Rozanov got one last season.”

It didn't irk Shane as it probably should have. He was sad that his team didn't make it to the end after coming so close but he was genuinely proud of Rozanov. Not that Shane could speak publicly of him that way. After that first heated game against each other years ago, the media had been firmly on the rival enemies narrative.

Shane had thought of pushing back on it but he hesitated. Because it did serve as a good cover. Who could possibly imagine Ilya Rozanov being a heat partner for Shane Hollander? And when the few times they were spotted, Yuna and David had been there and the media would write a bullshit piece saying “Enemies lay down their animosity for Thanksgiving! Wonder how awkward that dinner talk must be!”

Yuna and David thought it was hilarious. So did Ilya. Shane didn't think it was quite as funny but his parents said to just ignore the trolls.

But he couldn't explain the complexity of his relationship with Rozanov in a crowded locker room. Couldn't explain how the last three years Ilya had been the rock that stabilized his hidden second life. How all their texts and video chat were full of inside jokes and good-

natured ribbing. Every summer since his omega presentation, Shane waited with bated breath for Ilya's touch, his scent, and the heat of his body.

He couldn't talk about how much it hurt to be so close but still so far.

None of that could be said out loud.

Shane, as usual, pushed his feelings aside about Rozanov and gave Hayden what he hoped was a normal smile.

“Well, I saw him after the Stanley Cup ceremony and I told him we're next.”

Hayden smacked Shane's back enthusiastically. “That's my boy! Throwing down the gauntlet!”

“Oh hey,” said J.J. He was the other alternate captain of the Montreal Voyageurs. “You guys talking about Rozanov?”

Shane turned around. “Yeah, a bit. What's up?”

“He was making the news on TMZ yesterday. Something about some club opening up.” J.J. pulled out his phone and scrolled to the pertinent website. “Here, take a look.”

Shane took the phone and looked at the glitzy paparazzi photos. Rozanov was dressed to the nines in a well fitting red suit but he wasn't wearing a shirt. The gap between the jacket lapels showed off his sexy body in a way that seemed more sensual because he was partially covered. The pictures seemed to progress throughout the night and at some point, Rozanov lost his jacket all together. Topless, sweat glistening, and head tossed back to the music, Ilya looked like a Greek god holding court among his worshippers.

Hoping his blockers stopped the punch of pheromones he must be admitting, Shane gave the phone back to J.J. “Whatever man. I'd be partying too if I won the cup.”

“Oh really?” asked Hayden. “Is that the *only* way we can get you to go out? I mean, I have a wife and kids so I'm boring as hell but you're single. You should go mingle!”

J.J. seemed to agree enthusiastically. He grabbed Shane by the shoulder and shook him. “That's decided then. After tonight's game, we're going out!”

Shane had to give credit to his teammates...they had at least picked a decent place to get drunk. Not that he was going to get drunk.

Half his team were interspersed throughout the bar, with music blasting just loud enough to set an energetic mood. Shane had parked himself into a booth with J.J. but his friend was

nowhere to be seen. He was contemplating maybe just going home when a beautiful woman suddenly sat across from him.

“Is this seat taken?”

“Uhh...” Shane looked at the woman in surprise and instantly recognized her. Which was easy to do because she was Rose Landry. As in the Oscar winning star of many famous movies Rose Landry.

“Nope?”

“Are you sure?”

Shane looked around and finally spotted his friends, including J.J. But they were too busy to notice what was happening at this booth. He shook his head. “It's been unoccupied for a while.”

She smiled, her teeth blinding in their perfection. “Lucky for me. I'm Rose, by the way. Nice to meet you.” She extended her hand in a greeting and Shane took it.

“Shane Hollander.”

“Oh, I know *exactly* who you are. I'm a huge fan.”

He pointed at himself in surprise. “Me? But you're a huge movie star.”

“Hey, movie stars can fangirl too! And my whole family grew up watching hockey and you're an amazing player. You should have seen me ten minutes ago when I spotted you. I was literally squealing.”

Shyly, Shane looked down where he was fiddling with his coaster. He knew he was famous but it was one thing to know it and another to feel it.

“So what are you doing in Montreal? Guessing you're filming something?”

“Yup. The sequel to my last movie. But tonight the cast and crew needed some non catered dinner so here we are.”

“Yeah, I think half my team is here too.”

Rose looked around and seemed to spot more hockey players. This seemed to excite her greatly.

“Hey so,” Rose started, looking a little sly, “you think we can talk shop for a bit? Nothing secret of course but I'd absolutely *love* to hear some hockey talk. It's all been acting, acting, acting for a month and I need a break tonight.”

“Sure, why not?”

And so Shane humored her. It turned out Rose was indeed very knowledgeable about the league and Shane always loved talking about hockey. It was different from talking to his teammates or coaches. It was also fascinating to get feedback from a third viewpoint, with Rose's comments being insightful and hilarious.

Honestly, it had been a while since Shane had so much fun. Usually his routine was fairly set and this had been a nice change of scenery. It also helped that Rose was a skilled conversationalist and he found himself smiling a lot.

They talked for hours before Rose's stomach grumbled in protest.

“Oh my God,” she exclaimed. “That's so embarrassing. Sorry, I've barely eaten all day.”

“Should we order some food then?”

“Or...”

Shane felt his foot being nudged under the table.

Rose smiled impishly. “We could order some room service in my hotel room. It's right around the corner.”

“Oh. *Oh.*”

Shane could be clueless but he wasn't totally stupid. He knew what she was getting at. It wasn't as though he hadn't indulged in a few one night stands over the years. But he generally avoided them, especially with other omegas or alphas, because he was so paranoid that they would somehow figure out that he wasn't a beta. And if his memory was correct, Rose was an alpha.

The only alpha he'd ever been with was Rozanov and he had a sudden flash of *something* in his chest. The stories and pictures he'd seen over the last years of Ilya's conquests. Him being pictured with beautiful people of all persuasions, alpha, beta, and omega.

And here was Shane, frozen because another alpha was showing interest in him.

Fuck it.

“Sure.” Shane agreed. “Sounds great.”

They both paid their tabs and left the bar. Sure enough, her hotel really was just around the corner from the bar. As they entered her room, Shane was hit with her personal alpha scent. It was green, almost bamboo like and not unpleasantly sharp.

But it's not dark chocolate, is it?

Shane mentally told himself to shut up. It didn't matter that she smelled nothing like Rozanov. He was supposed to be a beta and he had to keep acting like one.

“Hey, are you okay?” Rose asked. She wrapped her arms around his waist.

“Sorry, I'm just...it's been a while. You know, with all the games and stuff.”

“Oh I get it,” she purred. “How about we do a little relaxing off the ice then?”

She brought Shane's face down so they could kiss. Her lips were soft and gentle. Not like Rozanov's at all, where he was firm and took Shane's mouth like it belonged to him. He tried to kiss back but felt awkward, even more than his few past one night stands, which honestly had not been very successful. This encounter was starting to go down the same rabbit hole quickly.

As they started to kiss deeper, Rose moaned and started emitting more of her pheromones. It was flowery, a mixture of floral scents that Shane couldn't identify. The green scent was getting stronger too, but now it felt oppressive and too strong.

Rose dipped his head again to kiss along his jaw and he got a nose full of her pheromones and he choked. He pulled away and stepped back. It didn't feel right. It wasn't who he was supposed to be with.

She looked confused, unsure of what had just happened. Shane was absolutely mortified.

“Sorry, I'm uh,” Shane stammered. “The scent was so strong I couldn't-”

When her expression looked shocked, Shane finally realized what he was saying. To his horror, he could see the gears click into place on her face.

“Shane...are you not a beta?”

“I...I...uh...”

Shane felt the room tilt in his panic. He knew he should be breathing but his lungs weren't working. He tried to say the words to deny it but his brain couldn't catch up.

“Okay, whoa whoa, Shane. Calm down. It's okay.”

“...no, it's not okay!”

Rose led Shane to the hotel chair and sat him down. She hugged his head to her stomach and started stroking his hair. “Honey, you need to breathe. Your blockers are failing. I can smell how scared you are and I want you to know you have *nothing* to be scared of.”

He could feel tears streaming down his face as his whole body shook. “But no one is supposed to know. I can't let anyone know. If it got out...I'd probably be benched. Or worse.”

Rose kept stroking Shane's hair, her alpha scent turning down to try and comfort. “Shane...if you don't mind me asking...are you an omega?”

Wordlessly, Shane nodded.

“Oh my gosh, this must be so hard for you. I'm so sorry. But I get it.”

Shane knew that Rose got it. The last five hours they had spent talking, Rose had shown an almost encyclopedic knowledge of hockey and shared her disdain for how bigoted the league can be. She knew, even without Shane explaining, why he would want to hide being an omega.

“I’m sorry.” Shane mumbled into the fabric of Rose’s shirt.

“Shane Hollander, you have nothing to say sorry about. If I’m not your type then that’s okay!” She tipped his head up and wiped the tears from his face. “Hey, look at me.”

He tried to meet her eyes but it was difficult. She waited patiently until he could.

“There is absolutely nothing wrong with being an omega or an omega hockey player. You’re obviously incredibly talented. But I do understand why you want this kept as a secret. And I know we only met tonight but I got a *really* great feeling about you. And that this could be the start of a beautiful friendship. Could we do that? Be friends?”

Another cry choked up Shane’s throat but he nodded, feeling so relieved.

“Okay, so we’re not gonna do the horizontal tango but we can still order room service. What do you think?”

Shane laughed and nodded yes.

They ended up ordering half the menu and talking late into the night. And for the first time since Ilya had accidentally found out his secondary gender, Shane was relieved he could unburden his secret to another human being.

December 2024

“Whoa, Rozanov, take a look at your old roommate.”

Ilya was half naked and sore from the practice. He really didn’t want to humour Marlow but the mention of his “old roommate” could only be about Hollander. So he took Marlow’s phone and read the caption.

“New Couple Alert! Rose Landry bagged herself a hot hockey player, Shane Hollander!”

Ilya almost dropped Marlow’s phone.

Marlow pointed to the headline and chuckled. “Gotta give that Hollander some credit because I didn’t think he’d be the type to snag a Hollywood movie star. Damn! She’s so hot too! That lucky motherfucker.”

Ilya scrolled down and saw pictures of Shane and Rose at a bar. Then a club. Then at a coffee shop. The last photo was of her at a Montreal Voyageurs game, proudly showing off her Hollander 24 jersey.

Something uncomfortable cracked in Ilya's chest and he tried to ignore it. But he knew what this ugly feeling was. It was jealousy.

But he had absolutely no reason to feel jealous. Shane had asked him to be his annual heat partner, not his boyfriend. They were “friends with benefits” and no strings attached. He even knew that Shane had a few one night stands because he had teased Shane of being a monk and that wasn't the case.

But those one night stands had been with betas. Shane had told him. And he was almost certain that Rose Landry was an alpha.

Ilya tossed Marlow back his phone and finished stripping his sweaty gear off. Without a word, he headed to the shower to get the game grime washed away.

What did it matter what Shane was doing with a beautiful alpha? It would be hypocritical of him to judge, seeing as he himself had a very healthy sex life that involved other omegas. It would be the absolute height of double standards and Ilya was not that stupid.

That's what he told himself as he sat in the arena parking lot and booked a direct flight to Montreal for that same night.

Shane was in the middle of reading a really good book about hockey culture in the 70s when he heard the doorbell.

He was surprised because he wasn't expecting anyone. And he was doubly surprised to open the door to find Ilya Rozanov standing at his front steps.

“Rozanov?”

“Hi.”

The Russian man didn't say another word before walking past Shane and into the house. He took off his shoes and sat down on the living room couch.

“Uh...hi?” Shane said.

“Yes, I've already said hi.”

The two men stared at each other.

“What are you doing here, Rozanov?”

“Why? Can't I come and visit my good friend, my old roommate Shane Hollander?”

“I mean, yes, of course you can visit but it's a Wednesday night. Don't you have a game in three days?”

Rozanov shrugged like it wasn't a big deal. “I can fly back again tonight. Or tomorrow.”

Shane did not know what was happening. Rozanov was still wearing his scent patches from the flight and it was hindering his ability to get a read on him. Making his way slowly toward the couch, Shane arched an eyebrow and pointed toward the patches.

With a huff, Ilya tore off the patches on his wrists and neck and the room was immediately suffused with alpha anger and frustration. It was so strong that Rozanov's oral blockers only managed to tamper down the worst of it.

Shane took a step back. “Why are you angry?”

Rozanov looked away. “I'm not angry.”

“Okay, then how come it smells like my house is on fire. Did something happen?”

Rozanov sighed and closed his eyes in frustration. Then he opened his mouth and said his words like each were being pulled out of him against his will. “When were you going to tell me you had a girlfriend?”

“A girlfriend?”

“Yes. Your famous movie star girlfriend.”

“You flew all the way from Boston to ask me if I have a girlfriend?”

“No, of course not. That's crazy.”

“But that's exactly what's happening right now.”

Rozanov went silent and the smoky campfire smell turned ashy and bitter. Shane could smell distress coming off in waves from Ilya and he didn't know what to do. But he obviously wanted to know more about Rose and that he could accommodate.

“Okay well,” Shane started. “Rose and I met at a bar here in Montreal. She's filming a movie. We uh, well-”

Shane flushed red at the memory of their failed attempt at a one night stand but Ilya mistook his blush.

“So you two fucked.”

Shane could smell the smoke turning acrid and he shook his head. “Actually um, we tried but uh, yeah it didn't happen. Her scent wasn't-”

Yours. It wasn't yours.

But Shane couldn't say that.

“Anyway, I accidentally slipped that I could smell her pheromones and she guessed that I was an omega. Then I had a nervous breakdown and we ate too much room service.”

Shane knew he was rambling but he couldn't stop.

“Then we ended up talking all night and now we're friends and we hang out. But the paparazzi won't stop taking pictures of us and keep saying we're dating because I guess that's better clickbait.”

And as the smoky smell stung his nose, Shane started to feel a bit upset that Ilya had come over to his house unannounced and demanded information from him.

“And it's honestly none of your business who I sleep with or not because I'm a grown man and we're not exclusive. I'm grateful you help me with my heat but that doesn't mean you get to be mad at me if I see someone. You get to fuck around all the time without any worries while I'm so scared to even approach a beta!”

The whole room was an ugly mix of burnt sugar and ash. Both of them were signaling so much anguish that neither could speak up. It took a few moments before Ilya slowly stood up.

“You're right,” Ilya said. “I have no business being here.”

He started to make his way toward the door when Shane grabbed him by the arm.

“Rozanov. Please. Tell me why you're really here.”

Ilya shook his head, looking sad and confused. “I don't know. Marlow showed me pictures of you and Rose and I...I just...I don't know what I'm saying.”

“...were you...jealous?”

Rozanov laughed, the sound not mirthful at all. “As you just pointed out, I have no right to be jealous. We are nothing to each other except once a year, yes? I have no hold on you.”

Ilya shook Shane's hand off and walked to the door again. “I'm sorry, Hollander. I was being crazy. Let's just forget this happened.”

“No, that's not true!”

Shane grabbed Ilya and enveloped him in a tight hug. He buried his face into Ilya's neck and could smell so much sadness coming from the other man. “Please don't say you mean nothing to me. That's just not true.”

After a momentary hesitation, Ilya also wrapped his arms around Shane's and buried his face to scent the omega. They stood there for who knows how long, Shane had lost count.

"You don't smell like another alpha," Ilya mumbled.

"Yeah, that's because *you're* the only alpha I've been with, dumbass."

Ilya squeezed Shane tighter. "Really?"

"Yes. So would you stop being so weird about it?"

Ilya pulled away slightly and sighed. "I thought I was better than this. Better than other jealous territorial alphas."

"Well, congratulations. You're just another stupid alpha. Like basically every alpha I know except Rose."

At the mention of Rose, Ilya felt a growl rumble in his throat. Shane grinned, his scent turning sweet again.

"Okay are we done now with the caveman theatrics? Is your alpha brain feeling better?"

"No, it's not."

"Okay, then what do we-"

Shane's words were stopped by Ilya kissing him firmly on the mouth. After a split second of shock, Shane returned the kiss with equal fervor. When they finally separated, both were panting and hard.

"That's uh..." Shane whispered. "I think that's the second time you've kissed me outside of my heat."

Ilya softly stroked Shane's face, admiring each freckle. "Yes."

"Are you going to run away again?"

The look that Rozanov gave Shane would have reduced the ice in the arena to water.

"No, I'm not running away. Not anymore."

He put both of his hands under Shane's ass and lifted him up. Shane yelped in surprise before his mouth was taken over again by Ilya's tongue. Slowly, Rozanov walked him over to the couch and deposited him there.

Ilya got on his knees and swiftly pulled down Shane's shorts. He grasped Shane's dick and gave it a few strokes before giving it a long lick.

"Oh my God, Roz-" Shane could barely articulate more thoughts before Ilya had his mouth back on his cock. "That, that feels amazing. Oh fuck, don't stop."

Ilya wasn't planning to stop. Shane was not in heat so he was missing that citrusy slick scent but he still smelled and tasted heavenly. Each suck and lick was met with groans of approval by Shane.

Ilya's dick was screaming to be let out but he wanted this to be all for Shane. He opened up his throat and quickly bobbed up and down the omega's sweet cock. He licked the slit, tasted the pre-come and knew that Shane was close.

“Oh fuck, I'm gonna- fuck if you keep doing that, ahhh-”

But Ilya had no plans to stop. He wanted to taste every drop of Shane. Using his hands, he gently cupped the balls and squeezed while deep throating as far as he could.

“Ilya!”

With a shout, Shane came down his throat and Ilya licked every drop. He sat back and wiped the wetness from his eyes and lips. That's when it hit him that Shane had called him *Ilya*.

It seemed to have dawned on Shane as well because he softly whispered it again.

“Ilya.”

“Shane.”

Ilya surged up from his knees to kiss Shane again. Both of their pheromones were pumping out want, need, desire, and a tinge of desperation. All of the months of separation, all of the waiting between heats to be with each other crashed over like a tsunami.

Shane and Ilya touched foreheads, breathing in each other. Somehow, Shane was already hard again and Ilya grinned at the sight.

“More?” Ilya asked.

“More,” Shane answered.

Ilya was half asleep but he could still smell the caramel sweetness of Shane Hollander.

The other man was asleep, snoring lightly against his chest. It wasn't a sight that was new but somehow without the haze of heat pheromones, every perfect detail of Shane's sleeping face was being etched into Ilya's memory.

He still couldn't believe someone so beautiful was in his arms. Ilya pushed Shane's hair aside so he could see his sleeping face even better.

After a few minutes later, Shane woke up, his brown eyes still cloudy with exhaustion. They hadn't spent much of last night sleeping so it was understandable.

“Good morning, Shane.”

An absolutely euphoric smile met his greeting.

“Good morning, Ilya.”

They both burst into giggles. They didn't know why it was such a big deal but after years of calling each other by their last names, it felt extra special to use their firsts. Ilya momentarily thought of asking to be called by a nickname but he wasn't up to explaining the complexity of the Russian naming system.

“How are you feeling?”

Shane grimaced slightly. “A little sore. It's a bit different when I'm not in heat.”

“Is my technique that bad?”

“No, it's because your dick is huge and my ass wasn't pumping slick. The lube could barely keep up. But seriously, I'm feeling good, I promise.”

“If you say so.”

“Good. I'm going to jump in the shower. You coming with me?”

“Yes, but then I have to go catch my flight back to Boston.”

“Oh. Right.” Shane buried his face into Ilya's chest. “Maybe shower can wait a moment then because I want to talk.”

“Uh oh. Sounds serious.”

Shane smacked Ilya on the shoulder. “I mean it. Yesterday was...” Shane blushed. “Yesterday was a lot. And I don't want any misunderstandings.”

Ilya pulled back and lay on his side so he could see Shane's expression better. “Okay, what do you want to talk about?”

“Well, I don't want to inflate your alpha ego anymore than it is because it's huge-”

“Like my dick.”

Shane slapped Ilya on the shoulder again. “Stop interrupting!”

“I'm sorry but that was too easy.”

Shane couldn't help but laugh because he really had walked right into that one.

“Okay, seriously. I'm trying to tell you that when Rose and I tried to uh, you know, my brain went crazy because the scent was all wrong to me. I wanted your smell and you and...it felt so fucking lonely when I realized how long I'd have to wait for you.”

Ilya looked solemn at Shane's confession. “I've...had a few omegas approach me in the last few years. We fooled around a bit and I was never satisfied. None of them were you.”

Shane looked both devastated and relieved at hearing Ilya's story. “Okay, so are we having the same issue? Do we just...really miss each other?”

“I very much do. Just seeing you in summer it's...”Ilya shook his head. “It's not enough. I like you too much. I miss you. But you said you only wanted a heat partner so I saw other people.”

“What if...I wanted us to be more than heat partners?”

“You mean like a boyfriend?”

Shane bit his lips nervously. “Is that too weird?”

“This means we will have two secrets. Are you okay with that?”

“As long as you're okay with it, then I am too.”

Ilya knew his pheromones were pumping out wildly in joy. Gently, he cupped Shane's face and gave him a kiss. “Yes, for you, I'll keep all the secrets.”

Chapter End Notes

Just to clarify, people in this omegaverse do take suppressants, oral blockers, and wear scent patches for maximum control (or in Shane's case, really hardcore suppressants and blockers because he can't be seen wearing patches). But most people don't do that in their own homes or private spaces where they are relaxing. That is why in the bar, Rose's alpha scent isn't very obvious but in her hotel room it was. Also obviously they are not failsafe because Shane's blockers broke down when he had a panic attack. Another reason why he is so paranoid about one night stands.

And oh my, do I love a jealous Ilya hahaha!

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

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

June 2025

“This is not how we get to your house.”

Shane grinned at Ilya as he drove his car down a different exit lane than the one that led to his Montreal house. “You're right. We're going to a different place.”

“Oh? Is there something wrong with it?”

Shane shrugged, trying to look nonchalant. “Nothing really wrong per se although my mom kept dropping by unannounced to see the cup when it was my turn to have it. You know, the *Stanley Cup*. That my team won.”

Ilya smacked Shane in the shoulder. “Stop rubbing it in. You're a sore winner “

“Hey, that's not fair! You rubbed it in when *you* won the cup!”

“But you're older now than I was. Have some maturity.”

“Fuck off”

Ilya wiggled his eyebrows. “That's what I plan to do here.”

Shane wanted to say something clever to cuss Ilya out but he lost his words. The sun was shining, his team were the champions, and the most gorgeous alpha in the world was in his car and about to spend a heat with him. Everything felt so good at the moment.

It would be even better if we could be open about our relationship.

Shane quickly ignored that negative thought. Yes, he was still hiding his omega status and they were hiding their relationship. But Shane was so deep in love with Ilya that even the small morsels of time they had were so precious and beautiful. Boston was still far away but they had managed to steal some time since their momentous decision to be exclusive in December. Ilya wasn't just his heat partner but his boyfriend. And there were times Shane thought he'd burst with how much he loved him, he didn't know how he kept it inside.

But Shane still held back the words. A part of him was afraid that saying it would somehow cause a monumental shift in their dynamic. The willpower he exerted to keep themselves secret might fail and he still wanted more years to play hockey. Maybe that was selfish of him but he wanted it all; a stellar career he can look back on with pride and the company of the most amazing man he knew.

“Are you going to tell me where we are going?” Ilya asked.

“Nope. It's a surprise.”

“Okay. Will I like this surprise?”

Shane laughed, still feeling light as a feather at being reunited with his boyfriend after a brutal season. “I hope so.”

They spent the next hour listening to music and chatting. They got caught up on their mutual team's latest (Boston was still sore they had lost to Montreal in the first round of the playoffs) and both of their agents were renegotiating new contracts for them. Yuna and David were a frequent topic and Ilya mentioned hoping to drop by to see them as well.

But all of this was just a distraction from the main event. Shane had already slapped Ilya's hands away multiple times from his groin, citing that if they get in an accident, it would be extremely inconvenient to say the least. Ilya would grumble, behave, then try some other antic.

After another twenty minutes of this, Shane finally initiated his plan. He pointed to the console in front of Ilya.

“I need you to open the glove compartment,” said Shane.

Ilya did as told and found something black and silky inside. He opened it up to find a blindfold.

“Okay...” Ilya gave Shane a side eyed glance. “Am I about to be murdered?”

“No, you idiot. Just put it on.”

Looking at the heavily wooded area they were driving through, Ilya shrugged and put the blindfold on. “Well, at least if you kill me, I'll be a good looking corpse.”

“Stop it! No one is getting murdered!”

Shane drove for another ten minutes before gently stopping the car. He helped Ilya out of the vehicle and held his hand as he slowly led him down a few steps. When they got to the perfect spot, Shane grinned with anticipation.

“Okay, you can see now,” Shane said, his excitement obvious in his tone.

Ilya took off the blindfold to see...a beautiful lakeside cottage.

“Wow.”

“Right?”

Shane was absolutely giddy with excitement. He had been planning this surprise for months and now it was finally the day to unveil it. And seeing the awe on Ilya's face made all the excruciating details worth it.

“You bought this? It's yours?”

“Well, yes, it's mine but I got it so we can both use it. You know, get more privacy?”

“Was the Montreal house not private enough?”

“It's private enough if we just stayed indoors but I was hoping we could do more than that.”

Ilya looked intrigued. “Oh? Like what?”

“Don't worry about it. I got a whole spreadsheet and everything planned by the hour.”

When Ilya stared at him in horror, Shane laughed. “Relax, Ilya. I'm just fucking with you. But I do have an itinerary for the whole stay.”

Ilya tackled him to the grass in response.

Shane had made plans.

He had plans to show Ilya the beautiful view from the dock. The state of the art kitchen with all the bells and whistles. The hot tub, shrouded by tall trees. Every single throw pillow which had been so thoughtfully placed.

But all the plans went to shit the moment Shane showed Ilya the bedroom. With a swift single movement, Ilya had maneuvered him on to the bed and somehow Shane's clothes had magically disappeared.

“Ahh...ahh...wait, Ilya, wait-” Shane grasped Ilya's curls with both hands and tried to tug up.

“Please don't ask me to wait.” Ilya gave a long lick along Shane's erect cock and punctuated each word between sucking the tip. “I. Want. You. Now.”

“Oh God.”

The months of separation had set a palpable sexual tension in the drive and now it was exploding out.

When Ilya came off Shane's cock with a pop, his lips were swollen red in the most obscene way possible. The grin of satisfaction was infectious.

Shane was panting, trying to catch his breath. “Gimme...just a sec...”

“Or...” Ilya opened his jeans to stroke over his underwear. “You can watch.”

Shane wasn't even in heat but his brain melted at the thought of watching Ilya masturbate. Every time they got together, whether sneaking into hotel rooms or in a heat haze in Montreal, it never felt leisurely. But they had two weeks at this cottage. No interruptions. No neighbours for miles away. It was perfect.

Another perfect note was Ilya undressing while slowly swaying to a rhythm only he could hear. He brought the edge of his shirt to his teeth, bit down, and exposed his indecently cut abs. Shane's eyes couldn't help but follow the fuzzy trail going down into the underwear.

Ilya turned around and gave a saucy wink over his shoulder while he slowly pulled off his pants and boxer briefs in one excruciatingly slow motion. Even with the plethora of sexy hockey bodies that were constantly displayed to Shane, none of it mattered or could compare to the man in front of him.

“Liking what you see?” Ilya smirked.

“You know I do.”

Ilya tossed the rest of his clothes to the side and did a little shimmy, his ample ass cheeks vibrating in motion. Shane wanted to bury his face in it.

“Be good,” Ilya wiggled his index finger when Shane started to move forward. “You lay back and watch.”

Pouting slightly, Shane sat back down on the bed and got comfortable. His eyes couldn't stop roaming up and down, admiring every muscle and moles scattered around Ilya like a constellation.

Ilya grinned and used both his hands to play with his nipples and pecs. Slowly trailing the edge of his fingertips over his stomach and waist, he grasped his thick cock in both hands and made a thrusting motion, undulating to his internal song.

Shane could feel all the saliva dry up in his mouth. He was pretty sure he was pulling out enough omega pheromones to scream *need need need* but his boyfriend was determined to torture him.

“Didn't you say,” Shane whined, “that you couldn't wait?”

“Yes, I couldn't wait to fuck you. Tour can continue after. Now spread your legs.”

Shane found himself immediately obeying despite the indignation. His dick, already having had a touch of Ilya's mouth, was so full that it almost hurt.

“Now lift your legs up. Come on, I want to see that sweet hole.”

Flushing even more in embarrassment, he used his hands to grab onto his legs to lift them up. The pose was incredibly vulnerable and Shane's heart raced with how much he loved being stared at by Ilya.

By this point, Ilya's cock was leaking generously with pre-come, every stroke making it even thicker. There was nothing more Ilya wanted than to bury himself into Shane but preparations were a must.

“Shane, where's the condom?”

“Uh, actually I was wondering...”

Shane's face was so red. He didn't know why this was such a big deal. They had even talked about it months ago, since they've been exclusive for months, tested and had their shots.

“Oh.” The realization seemed to hit Ilya like a lightning bolt. “You want me raw? You want to feel my dick coming inside you?”

Shane groaned. “Yes, that's what I want.”

“Then that's what you'll get. Lube?”

Shane pointed to the bedside drawer and Ilya reached over. A quick search produced a bottle of their favourite brand and Ilya squirted it generously onto his fingers.

Shane arched his back and screamed out as Ilya swallowed his cock again. Shane was fighting his urges to thrust up, not wanting to choke his boyfriend. Then Ilya inserted his fingers into Shane's entrance and started stroking it deeply, the tips crooked and looking for the sweet spot. Shane could barely breath between the onslaught of sensations between his dick and his hole being penetrated.

Their pheromones were mixing together into a blend that always overwhelmed Shane's senses. He couldn't imagine doing this with anyone else anymore, especially not another alpha. Ilya was it for him. All of his instincts confirmed it.

“Ilya...please fuck me.”

After one last stroke of his fingertips, Ilya got in a better position. He squirted more lube onto his hands and coated his dick. He lifted Shane's legs up to his shoulders, almost bending him in half, and slowly entered Shane.

“Ahhh...fuck...” Ilya groaned. Being inside Shane was the best feeling in the world. Even better than winning the cup. Shane was warm, sweet, and was sucking him in like a vortex. Ilya could never get enough.

“Please,” Shane begged. “Harder. Do it harder.”

To please his omega was the priority, because that's what his alpha instincts were screaming. Ilya thrust harder and deeper, causing Shane to cry out. He could be even louder here at the cottage, without worrying that anyone could overhear.

“Ilya! Ilya- I'm comin-”

That was all the warning that Shane could give him before he came so hard he almost blacked out. Ilya was not too far behind him as his knot swelled and started pumping his come into Shane's eager body.

“Oh my God...it's so hot. Ilya, ahhh...”

Shane kept groaning, riding that razor edge of pain and pleasure when the knot locked in. He could almost feel his stomach swelling with how much come was still pumping into him. It felt so warm and perfect.

Ilya, panting and overstimulated, gently put Shane's legs down to the bed. Then with the last bit of strength, he lifted Shane up and cradled him in his arms.

“I'm sorry I ruined your tour.”

“No, you're not.”

Ilya grinned. “No, I'm not.”

Shane was currently still dazed after his third orgasm, his limbs sprawled in all directions. The sun was just setting so he knew that they had literally fucked the whole day away. But what a great day it had been.

Ilya kissed the top of Shane's head then lingered at his neck where the sweet caramel scent was strongest. Maybe it was the more frequent sex in between heats but Ilya felt like he could smell it coming on better. He could tell that Shane was close, maybe a few days at most before it would hit him like a wave.

The thought of being with Shane during his heat always made Ilya feel more protective and a bit possessive. He had managed to ignore most of those urges but Rose Landry coming into Shane's life had triggered something that he wasn't always proud of. Even now, when Shane would mention her, he could feel his hackles rising a bit.

And as stupid as he felt when those negative thoughts happened, Ilya was pretty sure he knew why it was happening. He hadn't told Shane yet but the truth was, Ilya was desperate to mate him.

Ilya had even talked to his own doctor to ask if his fixation was normal or if he was just being an asshole. His doctor's conclusion was that Ilya must have found a very compatible omega. The fact that he had to fight his urge to bite, even outside of heats, was a testament to that. Normally when alphas and omegas found their potential mate, it didn't take too long before the deed was done. The pheromones and instincts were that strong. But in their case, they had been dragging their relationship for years...

There were times Ilya could barely get out of bed, with the longing he felt for Shane so strong it felt like physical pain. Was it the same for the omega? Did he chase after scents in the breeze, looking for his mate to be?

Ilya didn't know. And a part of him was too scared to ask.

So instead he threw everything of himself into Shane whenever they could meet.

Ilya tucked a wisp of hair behind Shane's ears before giving him another kiss. "I am starving. How about you?"

"Well, I *had* made plans to make burgers but..."

"But now we're going to improvise."

Shane seemed to be in deep thought for a moment, as if mentally tallying all of the cottage's supplies. "Pretty sure I got a frozen pizza. It's not fancy but it'll do."

"I'm good with that. Can you get up?"

Shane moaned and playfully punched Ilya in the arm. "I don't know, you asshole. I took your knot twice. *Twice!* And I'm not even in heat yet!"

"Mmm okay. Then I pamper you."

Ilya got up and, still naked, went to go look for the kitchen. He washed his hands first (because he knew Shane would ask) before finding the frozen pizza box. He carefully read the instructions and set the oven to preheat. When he got back to the bedroom, he found Shane slowly making his way to the bathroom.

"Ugh, I need a shower," Shane complained. "Honestly, we both do."

"The oven is heating up so that's perfect timing."

When Shane had first toured this cottage with his real-estate agent, one of the amenities he loved was the huge bathroom with the equally huge walk-in shower. It had jets coming from multiple directions and felt like heaven on sore muscles. Right now, Shane really needed that.

Both men took turns shampooing and conditioning each other's hair, with the non scented brand that Ilya liked. It was very rare for Shane to go off his suppressants and oral blockers so when he did, Ilya loved smelling the omega without other scents battling him.

Wrapped in bathrobes, they leisurely made their way to the kitchen to pop the pizza into the oven. Snuggled against each other on the large sofa, their body and minds geared down way more than they ever could before. Even in Montreal or Boston in their own private homes, there was still a chance of discovery or intrusion. But it didn't feel that way here.

Ilya stroked his fingers through Shane's damp hair. "So...does Yuna and David know about this place?"

“Yeah, they know I got a lakeside property but I haven't brought them here. I said it's for when I just wanted to get away a bit.”

“Hmm. Surprised your mom didn't pry the address from you.”

“Oh believe me, she tried. Said I'd need to tell someone for emergency reasons.”

“So did you tell anyone?”

“Yeah, I let Rose know I'm going to be here.”

“Rose?” Ilya exclaimed.

“Jesus Christ, Ilya, don't burn down my house.” Shane could smell the acrid wood smoke coming from Ilya. “She knows I'm here to spend my heat with my *boyfriend* and she's extremely happy for me. So settle down.”

Ilya grumbled something Russian under his breath about *nosy interlopers* and let it go.

Luckily the oven timer went off and they were able to sate their hunger. When Shane mentioned that he wanted to set something up outside, Ilya volunteered to clean the kitchen and the bedroom. He wasn't surprised that Shane had bought the top of the line for all his appliances, which made the clean up a breeze.

Shane came inside and suggested they change clothes. The sun had fallen and there was a slight chill to the air.

When Ilya stepped outside, he saw a giant firepit with plush outdoor seating surrounding it. There was a tray filled with marshmallows, chocolate, and graham cracker squares.

“What is this?” Ilya asked.

“Ever had a s'more?”

“No. Never.”

“Well, prepare to be blown away.”

Shane showed Ilya how to skewer the marshmallows at the end of the metal poles designed for this activity. The first few tries ended up with Ilya burning his to a crisp. After that, he was much better about spinning the pole more often to get that even golden glaze.

“Okay, now we make a sandwich with the melted marshmallows, the chocolate and crackers and voilà, a s'more.”

Ilya carefully took the creation and bit into it. It was warm and sweet, with the dark chocolate that Shane had chosen to give a nice balance to it. He was surprised that such a combination of random things ended up tasting quite delicious.

Between the two men, they absolutely demolished all the supplies. They both sat there, snuggled up and staring at the warm fire.

“Thank you, Shane. For inviting me here.”

“And thank you Ilya, for coming.”

“And thank you for the food. It felt very...Canadian?”

Shane laughed. “Pretty sure they do that in America too. It's a common camping and cottage activity.”

Ilya pulled Shane closer to wrap an arm around his shoulder. “Is that why you picked it? To let me have a taste of being in Canada?”

“That too but also because...um...” Shane looked away, his freckles showing up well against the blush. “I also wanted to do it because it reminds me of us.”

“Us?”

“Yeah just...the woodsmoke, the chocolate, it reminds me of you. And you've told me I smell like melted sugar and I just love the idea of us melting and blending into each other...sorry I'm being so boring.”

Ilya took Shane's face into both of his hands, his gaze intense. It was so intense that Shane's eyes widened slightly.

“Ilya?”

“Shane.” Ilya took a breath as though gathering himself. “If you want all of me to be with you, I would.”

“And what about you, Ilya? What would you want?”

Ilya smiled ruefully. “There are so many things that I want but they always come back to you. I hate being so far away. I hate that I can't touch and smell you everyday. And I hate that our circumstances make it that way.”

Ilya brushed Shane's scent glands along his neck, causing the omega to shiver.

“More than anything,” Ilya whispered. “I wish I could show the whole world that you're mine. And that I'm yours.”

Shane sat frozen in his seat, still processing what Ilya had spoken of. He brought a hand up to cup Ilya's face.

“You...want to mate with me?”

“Yes, of course I do. I love you.”

This was monumental. A mating wasn't a small thing at all. A marriage could be broken through a divorce but a mating? That was for life. Shane grabbed Ilya and buried his face into his neck. He could feel tears come out of his eyes and soak into Ilya's skin.

"I love you too."

Ilya's arms snapped tight and they both rocked back and forth in their embrace.

"But, Ilya," Shane's voice was choking up. "You know that I can't mate just yet. Everyone will see the mark."

Ilya was feeling desperate after his own confession. "Then maybe it's time you let them know. You're the Captain of the Montreal Voyageurs! You brought home a championship! Surely they wouldn't dare?"

"It's not that simple."

Ilya's face fell and he hugged Shane tighter. His dark chocolate scent disappeared, replaced with the scent of pure sadness. Shane could feel with all his senses how disappointed Ilya was at Shane's words.

Shane panicked. He didn't want to lose Ilya or make him sad. He pulled back and held Ilya's face between his hands.

"Ilya, please listen to me. I'm not rejecting you. That's not what this is." Shane's voice took on a quiet desperation as Ilya's eyes filled with tears. "I want to mate with you so badly. I know I'm asking a lot but please wait for me? We'll figure something out. Please?"

Ilya closed his eyes and scented Shane, smelling the panic and sincerity in the other man's pheromones. "I'll wait for you," Ilya whispered. "I'll wait for you as long as you want me to."

Ilya woke up feeling odd.

The last few days had been spent in an idyllic fashion. Shane had been serious about planning their outings and exposing Ilya to all sorts of activities. From canoeing to fishing, Ilya had fun discovering each new facet of Shane's outdoor repertoire. It turns out his parents had taught their son a lot more than a love of hockey.

But as the dawn light slowly filtered in through the curtains, Ilya definitely felt off. Had he gotten sick? But he didn't feel sick.

He carefully extracted himself from Shane's sleeping form and went to the bathroom. He splashed some cold water on his face but he still felt warmer than usual. He turned on the lights and gasped at the sight he saw.

His scent glands on his neck were swollen and tender looking. He ran his tongue across his teeth and his canines were definitely protruding a bit more than usual. But the most obvious sign that something had changed was that his eyes had taken on a golden sheen.

He was going into a rut.

Fuck!

“Ilya?” Shane called out sleepily. “Where are you?”

Ilya's senses snapped around at the sound of Shane's voice. All of his senses were screaming *omega heat omega heat* as he re-entered the bedroom. He crossed the distance to the bed in a few swift steps and hugged Shane to his chest. Then he sank two fingers into Shane's hole, feeling the slick pump out in response.

Shane moaned and slumped slightly forward at the sudden penetration.

“Ilya, what's wrong?”

“I'm going into a rut.”

“What?”

In all the times they've had sex, Ilya had never gone into rut. The last and only time had been when he had presented as an alpha. But whatever the combinations of stimuli that happened, it was occurring again.

He was shocked. An alpha usually went into rut when they recognized a possible mate and responded to heat pheromones. But a surprise rut almost never occurred since alpha suppressants had been developed and utilized for almost a hundred years. The formula had been fine tuned. But when it failed, it was usually due to unusual circumstances.

Perhaps one like his and Shane...an alpha and omega exclusively sharing heats but the lack of mating...

Ilya didn't know. He was overwhelmed. All he knew was that his instincts would soon take over and he had to protect his omega.

“Shane, Shane...” Ilya gasped. “Put on the neck guard. Now.”

Scrambling, Shane got out of the bed and put on his guard. He snapped it into place and no one would be able to open it without knowing the code to the lock. As soon as Ilya heard the click, he got up and almost ran to Shane to give him a kiss.

It was messy and full of needy whimpers but neither cared. Shane's heat was on full blast now that his senses had detected his very compatible and willing alpha partner. Ilya lifted Shane up and then shoved him face down onto the bed. With a growl coming deep within his chest, Ilya entered Shane and thrust so hard that the headboard smacked into the wall.

“Ahh, alpha!”

Almost mindlessly, Ilya plunged again and again into Shane's wet warmth. The sound of the slick being slapped against their bodies was scandalously loud and Ilya bit down on Shane's shoulders, desperate to mark the omega as his.

"Mine..." Ilya licked where his teeth marks left a red imprint on Shane's beautiful skin. "My omega...mine..."

He thrust even harder into Shane, and the other man sobbed in agreement.

"Yours, yours. Please alpha. Please don't leave me."

Ilya placed a hand on Shane's back and fucked him faster and harder than he had ever done before. Shane screamed out, already coming from the onslaught on his senses.

When Shane crumpled to the bed, shivering from his orgasm, Ilya was still hard. He flipped Shane over onto his back and Shane could see the almost feral grin on Ilya's face. His eyes were glowing, adding to the wildness of his expression.

"I'm not close to being done."

Shane moaned in pleasure as Ilya pushed back inside his slick filled hole and gave him the ride of his life.

The next week was a haze for both of them. Usually when Shane was the only one in heat, Ilya could still keep his senses mostly intact. But this time, their heat and rut had aligned and it had been just a constant cycle of sex, food, sleep, and rinse and repeat.

It was Shane who woke up first on the seventh day since his heat had hit. He was sore *everywhere* but in the most delicious way possible. It had been a testament to how much self control that Ilya had exerted in all their previous heats because Ilya in rut had been... something else. His vocabulary had become absolutely filthy and all the growling and nipping... Shane shivered at the memory. He looked down at his body and saw all the telltale marks of Ilya's teeth and his inner omega preened at the sight.

"Ilya..." Shane gently shook his lover's arm. "We should get something to eat."

Ilya groaned and buried his face further into the pillow. "Do I have to?"

"Yes, you do. I think the last thing we ate was some granola bars yesterday for lunch."

"Five more minutes."

Shane laughed. He loved this adorable side of Ilya. He definitely was not a morning person. Placing a tender kiss on Ilya's back, Shane got up to take a shower first.

He stopped in his tracks by the mirror. His chest and shoulders were absolutely covered with bites and hickeys but it was his back that made him stare. Multiple handprints where Ilya had held him firm were still left. There were some around his waist and ass as well where Ilya had kept him in place as he had fucked him into the mattress over and over.

Shane grinned, and his reflection looked like a cat that had found the tastiest cream. When he took off his neck guard, all of the love bites and kisses were even more apparent compared to his still starkly unblemished neck.

After a quick bathroom break and shower, Shane was changed and ready to make breakfast. The kitchen was not in a good shape but he was able to put together a simple meal. As he set up the dining room table with the food, Ilya joined him.

“Wow, looks great,” Ilya said. He looked freshly washed just like Shane. He was wearing a Boston Bears shirt and shorts that hugged his unfairly attractive ass. He sat down at the table and nodded his thanks. “Sorry I didn’t get to help.”

“No biggie. Just some eggs, toast and bacon.”

They both dug in, feeling absolutely ravenous from the week of exertion. Between bites, Ilya kept looking up at Shane, as though trying to gauge him.

Finally, Shane sighed and put his fork down. “Is everything okay?”

“Shouldn’t I be asking *you* that? I mean...that was my first rut with you.” Ilya twirled the fork in his hand, looking uncertain. “Did I...did I do too much?”

“Oh!” Shane didn’t realize that Ilya had been nervous about that. He was such a thoughtful lover and always checking in with Shane. Yes, the rut sex had been a bit more...primal. But nothing bad. If anything, it had been really *good*.

Shane blushed. “Actually uh, I really liked it. Seeing your eyes turn gold like that...that was amazing.”

Ilya’s face relaxed a bit and his scent turned richer. Then a smile broke out that was positively a leer.

“Oh? So you liked being held down, do you?”

Shane threw a napkin at Ilya in mock indignation. “Fuck you, Rozanov.”

Ilya laughed, got up and kissed the top of Shane’s head. Then his face got serious again.

“Shane, I just want to be clear,” Ilya said, his voice somber. “I respect your wishes. I know hockey is important for you. And if you want to mate later, or not at all, I understand. I don’t want to push. Even if my stupid alpha brain is being stubborn.”

His face looking soft, Shane reached over and kissed Ilya gently on the mouth. He already knew how Ilya felt but having him say the words meant everything.

“Thank you, Ilya. I love you so much.”

Ilya smiled back and they touched their foreheads together, breathing in each other's happy scents.

“I love you too.”

Chapter End Notes

So I know every omegaverse fic is a bit different but I have always loved "the eyes turning gold when in rut" trope so I had to add that. Also had to add Ilya doing a striptease because Connor Storrie keeps releasing interviews of himself dancing. That man is going to kill me.

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

Edit: Thank you zeromegumi for your insightful question about alpha ruts in this fic! I have added to the section where Ilya is going into rut to better explain it! But basically, alphas don't go into rut unless they choose to get off their suppressants. They usually do that if they find someone they want to be mates with and they respond to the heat pheromones. They can still find mates with betas or other alphas but they just don't go into rut. But in rare cases, the suppressants can fail.

Times like this I really think I should have a beta lol.

Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

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

August 2025

Connor McKenna : Welcome back to Man in the Crease, your one-stop hockey shop. We have some big news for you tonight.

Shaun Starr : We could never have predicted this.

Connor McKenna : In a shocking move, Ilya Rozanov is not staying with the Boston Bears. Instead, he is changing teams to the Ottawa Centaurs. Shaun, can you possibly imagine how this could be a good move?

Shaun Starr : I really can't. Boston is a Stanley Cup contender this year while Ottawa is considered one of the worst teams in the league. They just recently used their second place draft pick for Luca Haas. He has potential but he's still young and needs time to develop.

Connor McKenna : Do you think this move was for that purpose, to have Rozanov serve as a mentor for Haas?

Shaun Starr : Or maybe he just wanted a chance at a Canadian citizenship? I heard those are pretty popular these days.

Connor McKenna : Well speaking of Canadians, this move by Rozanov means his rivalry with Shane Hollander continues. Seeing as both Montreal and Ottawa are in the same conference, their head to head battles are still going to be intense.

Shaun Starr : I must admit I'm impressed by the moves that the Ottawa head office is making. They've drafted well with Haas, acquired Rozanov and now rumors are surfacing there might be a trade with Toronto for Troy Barrett.

Connor McKenna : That would be a huge loss for Toronto but after the leaked tape scandal that has hit Barrett and Kent, I wouldn't be surprised if they try to offload him.

Shaun Starr : As of today, the allegations against Dallas Kent for abuse against omegas is still being investigated but if we go by what Barrett had to say, Kent might be in more trouble than we think. But it looks like if the trade rumor is true, the Toronto team is standing firm behind Kent instead of Barrett.

Connor McKenna : Either way, Ottawa could be getting a steal if this trade goes through. Rozanov and Barrett would be a great duo on the ice.

Shaun Starr : Hollander better watch out!

The Ottawa Centaurs locker room was buzzing with excitement and Ilya was eating it up.

When Ilya had told Shane he wanted to change teams to Ottawa, it had been met with a combination of shock but also happiness. Shane loved the idea of Ilya just being a drive away instead of catching anymore red eye flights but he insisted that Ilya needs to think of his career too.

Ilya appreciated it. He did. And he truly did love hockey. But at the end of the day, hockey was temporary while the feelings he felt for Shane were forever. He'd already achieved his dream of winning the cup and dedicating it to his mother. Now he wanted to chase after his innermost want, and that was a life with Shane.

The logistics still weren't perfect but it was an improvement. Ilya got a house that was about 30 minutes from the Ottawa arena. Shane's own home was about the same distance from Montreal. Between the two houses, only about an hour drive and they could be in each other's arms. It wasn't perfect but for now, it was an improvement. Another bonus was being closer to Yuna and David, who Ilya saw as an extended family.

But Ilya was also enjoying the new scene. The Boston media had eviscerated him for leaving but his teammates had been in general pretty supportive and said they'd miss him. And the new Ottawa organization and team had welcomed him with open arms.

It definitely had a different vibe from Boston. It's not that Boston was unfriendly but Ottawa definitely had a more chill mood in the air. He also didn't hear the usual insults and slurs flung around so frequently around the league. Ilya liked it.

He wasn't sure if the man dressing next to him was as happy for the change. Troy Barrett looked pale and withdrawn. His trade fallout from Toronto was unfortunate but sadly unsurprising. There were many teams willing to protect their star player, no matter how rotten, and Barrett had got caught in the middle.

Ilya nodded to Troy, trying to get his attention. When the other man turned toward him, Ilya stuck his hand out in greeting.

"Hi, I'm Ilya Rozanov. Nice to meet you."

"Uh, yeah, I know who you are." Troy replied, looking confused. "We've played against each other before."

"But we're teammates now, yes? Good to have a fresh start."

Troy still looked a bit confused but then a little smile came out. He shook Ilya's hand and grinned even wider.

"Nice to meet you, I'm Troy Barrett."

Ilya laughed. "That's the spirit. By the way, I think you are very brave for what you did, calling out Dallas Kent. I'm sorry your team didn't see it that way."

Troy's face fell but his shoulders stayed up, almost defiant in his disappointment. "You know, Dallas, he was my best friend. And whenever he'd talk crap about omegas, I just told myself I'm a beta so what the hell did I know? But when those accusations came out..." Troy shook his head, his face full of disgust. "I think I was mostly mad at myself for not speaking up before. Maybe it would have made a difference."

"You're making a difference now."

Troy nodded, looking grim. "I sure hope so."

They were interrupted by a loud yell across the room and Wyatt Hayes, the Ottawa goalie came rushing by to say hi. Troy and Hayes had played together but this was the first time that Ilya had met him off the ice.

"So, how are you boys liking Ottawa so far?" Wyatt asked, his enthusiasm bursting out. "I know this is only your first day but I know Harris has some stuff planned for both of you."

"Harris?" Troy asked.

"He's the social media manager of our team. Pretty sure he wants to interview you both for content."

Then a loud bark interrupted Wyatt. "Oh! There he is now!"

Harris was a handsome blonde man who looked like a smile was perpetually on his face. And in his arms, there was a squirming black puppy wearing an Ottawa Centaur bandana.

"Oh my God," Ilya exclaimed. He stuck out his arms. "Give him to me."

Harris grinned and deposited the adorable puppy into Ilya's arms. Ilya was pretty sure this must be heaven.

"What's his name?" Troy asked, giving the puppy a pet and receiving a possessive glare from Ilya.

"His name is Chiron. You know, like the centaur?"

Ilya cuddled Chiron close and got puppy kisses in return. "Does he have an owner? Is he treated well? Do I need to break anything if he's not treated well?"

Harris reassured him that Chiron was very well cared for and that Ilya didn't need to worry. Then the rest of the team got in the puppy petting action and practice ended up being slightly delayed.

Ilya knew that Ottawa was not going to win as many games as Boston at first. But he planned to help change that and the first day was an encouraging sight.

October 2025

“So...” Troy gave a side eyed glance to Ilya. “I thought you and Hollander were rivals.”

“Yeah,” agreed Harris. He used his fingers to signal quotations. “Heated rivals.”

“Hated rivals.”

“Hot rivals.”

Ilya glared at his friends and tried to pay attention back to the game that was unfolding. The Ottawa Centaurs had a few days off so he made plans to go see Shane play in Montreal. He made the mistake of mentioning it in the locker room and Troy and Harris immediately said they wanted to come along. He sighed and tried to ignore their curious looks.

“Yes, Hollander and I played against each other a lot but we don't hate each other. We're friends.”

More than friends, actually...

Troy's eyebrows went up in surprise. “How did that happen?”

“My first year in Canada, I stayed with Shane's family.”

Harris clapped his hands together. “Holy shit that's right! You played for the Ottawa Thunderclap! I can't believe I forgot about that!”

“So you were roommates?” Troy asked. “That must have been interesting.”

Ilya shrugged, trying not to let too much show. “The Hollanders are a nice family. I don't know why the media keeps feeding everyone that Shane and I hate each other, because we don't.”

Their conversation was interrupted by the large sound of the horn as Montreal scored a goal. Ilya grinned as he saw that it was Shane who had made the goal.

Harris gave a puzzled look to Ilya. “Then why don't you guys say anything? You could probably make a really easy post online. Do you want my help?”

“I appreciate it but it's okay. I don't really care what the media says.”

Troy scoffed and went back to watching the game. “I wish I was more like you in that.”

The Montreal Voyageurs were playing an intense game against the New York Admirals. Scott Hunter, who Ilya secretly thought was an awesome player, was giving absolute hell to the

Montreal defense. The Admirals were winning and everyone in the arena could feel how tense the atmosphere was.

Suddenly, the puck was missed in a pass and Shane took advantage of this mistake. He barreled down the ice, passing the puck back and forth with his teammates, and as he was about to score-

The whole arena gasped as an Admiral player crashed into Hollander and he was splayed out onto the ice.

Hollander wasn't moving. Not even a twitch.

Ilya jumped up from his seat, panic coursing through his body like poison. He could barely hear Troy and Harris' voice, his peripheral vision blurring from his adrenaline. He had to get to Shane. He didn't know how but he knew he had to.

Sprinting over the seats, Ilya ran down the stairs and got to the rink side. He almost tried jumping over the boards and into the players' box but security stopped him. He could only watch helplessly as the emergency crew went on the ice with the board to get Shane out of there.

Thinking fast, Ilya turned around and started sprinting out of the arena. He knew that most likely an ambulance would be arriving to take Shane away. When he hit the exit to the parking lot, he could already hear the distant wailing of the sirens.

He was not as familiar with the arena but he had been in enough hockey rinks to get a feel for where the ambulance would go. And as suspected, there was a back exit where the emergency crew was already meeting the EMTs.

Ilya ran toward them but was stopped by the crew.

"Please!" He pleaded. "Tell me how he is doing? Is he okay?"

"Hey, back off!" The security pushed Ilya back. "We don't need any nosey reporters!"

But some of the crew seemed to recognize him and was confused by his presence there. But they were more sympathetic in the sight of Ilya's distress.

"He's being taken to Providence Hospital. His family has been contacted. I'm sorry but that's all we can say."

Then they loaded Shane up and the ambulance peeled off with the sirens on full blast.

Ilya stood there for a second before he started running again to his car. Troy and Harris had arrived together so he knew they wouldn't be stranded. He felt bad about leaving his friends behind but he just couldn't wait any longer.

As soon as he got in his car and found the hospital on his GPS, Ilya drove like a bat out of hell.

Everything was fuzzy for Shane.

He knew he was hurt, that was for sure but the details weren't clear. One moment he had been ready to score and then the next...next was...

The pain.

His whole torso ached and he felt disoriented. When he finally opened his eyes, the glare of the hospital lights was too much and he had to close them again. He thought he could hear Ilya's voice from somewhere far away but that didn't make any sense.

But he said he'd come see the game.

Oh right. Ilya had mentioned that. But Shane could barely register much else.

“Shane, Shane. Can you hear me?”

Shane opened his eyes again and there was Ilya, standing next to him. He looked like he was near tears.

“I'm so sorry I couldn't get in here sooner. The hospital wouldn't let me until Yuna called ahead and gave permission. Your parents are on their way.”

“How long have I been out?”

“Almost two hours.”

Shane moaned. He looked down and saw that there was an IV attached to his wrist and bandages around his torso. He felt sore, like his ribs had taken a battering. His head felt wobbly as well and for some strange reason, he was feeling really hot.

“Can you tell me what happened?”

“You got hit pretty bad. I think you were so focused on scoring that you didn't see him coming. Then after you fell, you stopped moving. The ambulance people told me you would be here and so I came.”

Ilya looked pale and shook up. Shane weakly reached for his hand and Ilya put his trembling one into Shane's.

“I'm sorry you had to see that.”

“I was scared. I'm still scared. Your doctors won't say anything but they keep running tests on you.”

“Tests?”

The door to the hospital room opened and Yuna and David came barreling in.

“Oh! My baby!” Yuna ran to gently hug Shane while David went to hug Ilya. They were both also shaken up.

“We're so sorry it took so long to get here,” said David. “The traffic was bad because there was an accident and I thought I'd lose my mind just sitting on the highway.”

Yuna took her turn hugging Ilya too. “Ilya, thank goodness you were at the arena. Thank you so much for being here while we were coming over.”

Ilya nodded, looking relieved that the rest of the family was here. “Of course. I couldn't leave him alone.”

Yuna looked at all the beeping machines and tubes running into Shane's body. “Do we know what's going on? Where are the doctors?”

Ilya got up from his chair and offered it to Yuna. “Let me go see if I can find a nurse to ask.”

He exited the room to find someone who could help. Ilya went to the nursing station and found several people sitting by their computer monitors.

“Uh, hello? The family of Shane Hollander is here? They were wondering what was going on?”

“Oh yes, I'll let the doctor know his parents have arrived. It should just be a moment.”

“Thank you.”

Ilya went back to the room, wondering what was all the mystery about. When he went back into the room, Shane had his eyes closed and seemed to be in more pain.

“What did they say?” Yuna asked.

Ilya shook his head. “They didn't tell me anything. Just that the doctor was on their way.”

“This is worrisome. Shouldn't we be getting quicker results than this?”

A knock interrupted their questions and a tall redheaded doctor entered the room.

“Hello, my name is Dr. Miller. I'm sorry for the delay but Mr. Hollander was showing some strange symptoms that we wanted to look into.”

Yuna looked alarmed. “What strange symptoms?”

Dr. Miller looked at Shane to get confirmation and Shane nodded. But the doctor still looked unsure.

“Maybe it might be best if we discussed this in private?”

Shane looked puzzled. He didn't understand why it was a big deal to talk about his results in front of his family. Most likely it was something broken, a usual injury from hockey.

“Doctor, I don't mind if we discuss this with the people in the room.”

Dr. Miller looked at everyone and then shrugged, as though he felt he had tried his best.

“Well, luckily your gear did its job and kept you protected for the most part. Nothing broken but you do have some bruised ribs. It's probably going to hurt for a few weeks. Now, it's standard to run some scans with an injury like yours and we found something unexpected. So we ran some blood work and uh...”

Everyone in the room held their breath as Dr. Miller shuffled some of the papers in his hands before finding a particular one. He handed it to Shane.

“Mr. Hollander, you're pregnant. And you're already in the second term.”

The silence was so heavy that it could be cut with a knife.

The first one to snap out of it was Yuna. She shook her head in denial. “But that's impossible. Shane is a beta.”

She turned to look at Shane and noticed the pale faced panic that had frozen his features. Then she noticed how still Ilya looked, staring down at the paper.

David looked at both men, feeling unmoored. “Is there...something we should know?”

Dr. Miller nodded to Shane and quietly exited the room. The door shut behind him and everyone looked at the paper that had been handed to Shane.

It was an ultrasound image of a baby inside a womb.

“Shane?” Yuna's voice was uncertain and sounded a little scared. “What's going on honey? You know you can tell us anything.”

That's when Shane covered his face and started to cry. Not wracking sobs but tears spilling out nonstop as the reality finally hit him. His secret was out. There was no going back from this.

Ilya's nose flared as Shane's oral blockers failed in the face of such distress. He immediately wrapped his arms around Shane and in response, the other man buried his face into Ilya's scent glands to seek comfort.

They all stood there in silence to give Shane a chance to gather himself. After a few moments where he cried into Ilya's embrace, he finally extracted himself and turned toward his parents.

“Mom, Dad...this isn't the way I thought I'd tell you. I'm so sorry. I'd wanted to tell you eventually...I just...”

"It's all right, son," David said, extending his hand to grasp Shane's. "No matter what, we love you. We're here for you."

Shane wiped away his tears and held onto his father's hand tighter. "Do you remember when you guys went on that Mediterranean cruise?"

"Well, yes. That was four years ago," Yuna replied.

"While you were gone, I got my first heat. My doctor explained to me that sometimes omegas can present late although it's rare and...that's what happened to me."

"But, don't omegas usually get their heat once a month?"

"Yes, but I'm on a special suppressant and blockers that allows me to go into heat just once a year. And the blockers work really well. It's only failed me once and...well I guess right now?" Shane looked to Ilya for confirmation and the alpha nodded. "Usually I can keep my emotions in check pretty well so that doesn't happen."

"But why Shane?" His father asked. "Why go this far? That doesn't sound healthy at all!"

"Was it because of hockey?" Yuna asked.

Shane nodded, looking miserable. "You know what would have happened, Mom. You know I'd never have been drafted. Everything I had worked for would have been trashed. I just couldn't let that happen."

"But you still could have told us."

"Your father is right," Yuna insisted. "We could have helped you."

"How? By asking you to lie for me? It was bad enough I had to ask Dr. Park and Ilya to keep it confidential for all these years. I hated deceiving you but asking you to lie for me too? No, I couldn't do that."

Both Yuna and David needed a moment to process that. They still looked upset but they were starting to understand why their son had to go on such extreme lengths. Hockey had been the center of Shane's life since he was a child, an obsession that both parents had encouraged and supported. They were the last people who could judge him unfairly for the drastic actions he had taken.

"Okay, well how is Ilya involved in all this?" David asked, before getting nudged in the elbow by Yuna. "What? I'm just curious!"

Shane blushed and looked at Ilya. He had a telltale blush as well, although he always insisted that Russians don't do that.

"That first heat, I panicked and didn't know what to do. But Ilya helped me and made sure I was okay. He's actually been helping me this whole time."

"With the...heat?" Yuna asked delicately.

Both young men nodded. They could barely look her in the eye.

“So then,” Yuna continued, “you've been dating since this whole time?”

“Oh no, no, no...no.” They both weakly disagreed.

“Ilya has been my heat partner. Since the first heat. So he'd fly in for a week in the summer.”

“But now for a while, Shane and I have been exclusive and we tried to see each other as much as possible because...”

Ilya looked at Shane and Shane smiled back. Then they both turned to Yuna and David.

“We love each other.”

The parents seemed to need another moment to absorb that. They seemed to like what they were seeing and hearing because although Shane looked like he could have a panic attack at any moment, he was also smiling up to Ilya.

Yuna slapped her hand together, as though having an epiphany. “This explains why you'd just disappear off the face of the earth for a week every summer since then! And oh my God, your cottage! Don't tell me that-” She saw the look of absolute mortification on Shane and Ilya's faces and stopped herself. “Got it. Love nest. No wonder you wouldn't give me the address.”

“Mom...”Shane whined.

David waved his hands, not wanting to hear anymore about love nests. “I think we should let Dr. Miller finish explaining your situation, shall we?”

He left the room to find the doctor. Yuna turned back to Shane and stroked the hair off his sweaty brow. “Oh my sweet son. I'm so sorry you were feeling like it was a rock and a hard place. And I'm sorry that you couldn't confide in us. Because we would have taken the secret to the grave if you wanted to...although I get the feeling that's not what you want?”

Ilya spoke up. “We do...want to come out. But the league is so tilted against omegas and...”

They knew. They all knew. But now Shane couldn't hide it anymore like before. Shane put his face in his hands again, starting to spiral and it alarmed his family.

“Maybe we should wait until Dr. Miller comes back?” Ilya suggested.

They all agreed and Dr. Miller returned with David. He saw the look on everyone's faces and made a sympathetic gesture.

“Well, it seems like this was not the news that was expected.”

Shane gave a weak groan. “No. And I still don't understand. Ilya and I both have all our meds, including shots for birth control. How did this happen?”

“Unfortunately nothing is perfect. Especially between an alpha and omega partner that are truly compatible. By any chance have you had any combined heat and rut sessions?”

Ilya and Shane looked at each other, and then nodded at the doctor.

“Well, there you have it. Sometimes those can break through. And I'm sorry to say this but Shane, you have some choices to make, because I can't clear you to play hockey until you decide if you're carrying this baby to term.”

It was a fairly serious and at times scary conversation. But a necessary one.

Shane had already been pregnant this long without any prenatal care and also injured. To make things worse, he was entering a premature heat because his body knew it was lacking something and was signaling distress. The one good news was that the baby seemed to be doing all right, despite the circumstances.

First thing first, Shane was moved to a special room for omegas entering heat so he could be safer. Yuna and David left, knowing that Ilya and Shane needed privacy with their decisions. They said their goodbyes reluctantly but also that the two didn't need to worry about their teams. Shane knew that Yuna was more than capable of contacting both Montreal and Ottawa to get a short term leave for Shane and Ilya.

The room they were moved to smelled of antiseptic and nothing. Shane hated it. He missed his nest, he missed his home, and more importantly, he missed his own scent mingling with Ilya.

Ilya did what he could. He took off his scent patches and rubbed his pheromones along the pillows and bedding. He scented Shane heavily, especially on his face and neck. That seemed to help him calm down and Ilya sat in Shane's bed to continue their conversation.

“Shane, if...if you don't want this baby, you know that I will respect it.”

“I know, Ilya. I know. And thank you for always giving me the freedom of my choice. I love you so much.”

“I love you too.”

Shane was quiet, his face looking blank but Ilya knew a thousand thoughts were flying behind that passive face.

“I...” Shane started and stopped. He rubbed his still flat looking stomach. “It doesn't feel real.”

“The doctor said omega men don't show much until the third trimester.”

“But how could I have missed the other signs? I was tired and hungry but I just...well, aren't us hockey players usually tired and hungry after practice and games?”

“I feel that way too.” Ilya hugged Shane and scented him again. “You can't blame yourself for this. You missed the signs because you didn't think there was any to see. It's not your fault.”

“And it's not your fault either. You know that right?”

Ilya looked pained. Shane gripped Ilya's chin and tilted it towards him.

“Ilya, this is not either of our faults. We took precautions and it *still* happened. You heard the doctor. We're just *really* compatible.”

“It's because you love my sexy body.”

“Fuck you.”

“I did. A lot.”

Shane grinned a little hysterically at that, the preheat starting to get to him. It didn't feel like any other heat he'd had before. He still wanted Ilya's presence and his scent but his mind felt more lucid. It was as though his body wanted the extra stimuli but not necessarily the mindless sex.

Shane turned to Ilya, making sure their eyes were meeting.

“I've spent most of my life thinking that hockey was my ultimate goal. And that I wouldn't let anything get in the way of that. But the truth is...when I think about what I want until the day I die, it's to be with you.” Shane gently touched his stomach, as though trying to convey all of his feelings through his flesh.

“And even though we didn't plan for this baby, when I think about having a little one that we made together...it makes me so happy. Even more than hockey ever could.”

Shane took both of Ilya's hands and gently kissed them.

“Ilya Rozanov, would you like to be my mate?”

Tears were welling in Ilya's eyes, his pheromones wildly joyous. He laughed and kissed Shane. “You know, I think we've done all this in the wrong order.”

“Who cares? As long as we're together and happy, that's all that matters.”

Ilya looked around the hospital room, this one a little cozier than the first one but still a hospital room. “I'm sorry we're bonding here and not at our cottage. I had...plans for us someday but...”

“Shhh,” Shane shook his head. “Don't worry about that. It's perfect wherever you are.”

They hugged again and settled down for the moment. According to Dr. Miller, this prenatal heat would be much shorter and would be peaking soon. It was Shane's body starved for a proper mate and the baby needing its parent to be settled. They had already spoken of their intentions to join at the cottage but Ilya was glad they were able to have an additional confirmation from Shane.

When Shane finally peaked, it was already very late and the hospital wing was quiet with sleep. Ilya had always thought a mating heat would be frantic and coarse but this was not it. Maybe it was different for other people in other circumstances but for Ilya, all his instincts were saying was to *protect*.

Shane was sweating lightly and panting but all he wanted was a tight embrace. His slick was barely coming out but enough for Ilya to slip a few fingers in to pleasure him. Shane gasped, arching his neck and baring it for Ilya to admire.

Ilya was wrapped around Shane's back and licked all over Shane's swollen glands. The sweet smell coming off Shane was intoxicating and Ilya couldn't get enough.

"Ilya...please...bite me. Make me yours."

"You've always been mine."

Shane smiled back. "But now the whole world will know."

Ilya's heart wanted to burst open with happiness. Shane wanted everyone to know they were in love. And Ilya couldn't be happier to oblige.

He gave a few more strong licks to Shane's neck. And after finding the perfect spot with his nose, Ilya bit down hard.

Shane gasped, not with pain but surprise. A sudden rush of endorphins hit his system and he thought he would faint with how good it felt. All of his senses were singing and it was saying *Ilya, Ilya, Ilya*.

"Oh...oh...Ilya..."

Moaning and losing consciousness quickly, the last thing Shane felt was Ilya's strong arms wrapping protectively into his embrace.

The phone wouldn't stop ringing.

Shane didn't know what was up or down. All he knew was that he had spent the last few days in a mating bond heat so deep and satisfying, he never wanted to leave Ilya's side.

But the phone still wouldn't stop ringing.

Shane looked beside him and saw Ilya asleep. His phone was by the bedside table and he reached for it, his ribs protesting now that the heat and pain meds had faded.

“Hello?”

“Oh my God, you're alive,” said Hayden, his voice full of so much relief. “You haven't picked up your phone in days! And none of the team people had any news for us! Are you ok?”

Shane rubbed the back of his neck and felt the ridges of the mating scar from Ilya's bite. He was still sore but...he felt pretty good, all things considered.

“Yeah, yeah I'm okay. Some bruised ribs but nothing broken. I'm sorry but I've been kind of out of it.”

“Well of course you'd be. But I still had to call you because...”

Shane didn't like the uncertainty that was painting Hayden's tone.

“What's going on?”

“Well it's just...” Hayden hesitated. “There's a rumor going around that Ilya Rozanov was seen at our game and then at your hospital. And that you're both in the omega section. People are talking a bunch because you've both missed games this week. Is everything okay, Shane?”

Shane almost dropped the phone from the shock. He thought that the medical confidentiality built into the system would at least protect his privacy until Ilya and he could come out with a statement of their own. But it seemed they weren't going to be so lucky.

He shook Ilya awake and the other man got up groggily. He pointed to the phone and put it on speaker phone so that Ilya could hear too.

“Are you okay, Shane? Do you need my help?”

Shane smiled, feeling so fortunate to have such a great best friend. But he had lied to this best friend and it was time to correct his mistakes.

“Hayden, are you alone right now?”

“Yeah, I'm in my bedroom. Buddy, you're scaring me. What's going on?”

“Sorry it's just...it's a lot. Umm...are you sure you don't want to do this in person?”

“Just lay it on me.”

Shane took a big breath and exhaled out.

“I'm an omega. And I've been hiding it since even before the draft because I knew my hockey career would go nowhere.”

There was a heavy silence on the other line. Then Hayden's confused voice came through the speaker.

“An omega? But...I've never smelled anything from you. And you've never taken heat leave.”

“I know. I'm on some different meds to help regulate that. It's a long story. But um, yeah, I'm in the hospital because uh...it turns out I'm pregnant.”

“WHAT?”

Shane could just imagine Hayden's face. His jaw must be on the floor by now.

“Wait wait wait a minute,” Hayden sputtered. “Does this have anything to do with that bastard Rozanov?”

“My parents were married when I was born,” Ilya said out loud, looking smug.

“Rozanov!” Hayden yelled. “Did you knock up my best friend? Did you, you fucking asshole? Because if you did, I'm going to fucking-”

“Oh please. You're just jealous.”

“Jealous? What the fuck does that mean? You no good-”

“Okay, that's enough.” Shane put the phone on mute. Meanwhile they could still hear Hayden cursing Ilya to hell. “You behave or I'm going to name this child after Hayden.”

Ilya faux gasped. “You wouldn't. Hayden is a stupid name.”

“Watch me.” Shane turned off the mute. “And Hayden, you don't have to be angry on my behalf. The pregnancy was unexpected but not unwanted. We just thought it would be a lot later. You get me?”

“So are you telling me you two are an item?”

“That's exactly what I'm saying.”

“But you're hated rivals, aren't you?”

Shane and Ilya both shook their heads, still surprised how many ate that narrative up.

“No,” replied Ilya. “We do not hate each other. It's opposite.”

Hayden was silent again. It seemed he needed a moment to process it. Finally he spoke up again.

“Well, there's obviously a lot going on. And I must admit I feel a bit hurt I was left out but I understand what a big deal this is. So as soon as you get out of there, you both owe me a long explanation. Got it?”

Shane breathed a sigh of relief that he hadn't lost his best friend. It meant so much that Hayden was already being accepting, despite the initial reaction.

“Oh and I better be the godfather of that baby! Rozanov probably doesn't even know how to set up a carseat!”

Ilya yelled into the phone, feeling offended. “That's what YouTube is for!”

“Ugh, I still can't believe Shane has such bad taste in men.”

“Fuck you, Pike. At least I'm not named after a fish.”

“All right, boys,” sighed Shane. “That's enough. You're giving me a headache.”

Both Ilya and Hayden started apologizing profusely until Shane had to stop that too. After a few more minutes of chatter, Hayden hung up.

Shane looked at Ilya, relief radiating out of his pores. He had been so scared to come out but he had now to his parents and best friend. It could have gone so much worse but it hadn't.

After he put the phone away, Shane settled back into Ilya's arms. It was still fairly early in the morning and he thought a nice little snooze would be delightful.

Unfortunately it was interrupted by a fierce knocking and a distressed voice outside their door.

“You can't go in there! That's a private room-”

The door slammed open and two men walked past a harried looking nurse. Ilya immediately got up, his hackles rising as the men approached his mate.

“Hello Mr. Hollander. Mr. Rozanov. We have some important business that needs to be attended to.

The men who had rudely interrupted their rest was Roger Cromwell, the NHL commissioner, and the owner of the Montreal Voyageurs.

Chapter End Notes

Omg this chapter was a rollercoaster! And thank you so much to all the readers and their patience!

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

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

The hospital room was a powder keg about to blow.

There was a newly mated alpha and omega, who was carrying a pup, and two hostile men intruding into their space. It couldn't end well.

But before Ilya could tear a hole into Roger Cromwell's throat, Mr. Lewis, the owner of the Montreal Voyageurs intervened.

“Shane, please,” Mr. Lewis pleaded. “I know this is a bad time but we need some answers and we could not wait any longer.”

It was strange seeing Mr. Lewis looking so grim. In the years as a Montreal Voyageur, Shane had only seen him in a jovial mood. With his white beard and pear shaped silhouette, he usually reminded Shane of Santa Claus. But standing beside the commissioner, Mr. Lewis didn't look quite as friendly as before, despite his calm words.

“You have to realize that rumors are going wild already,” Mr. Lewis pleaded. “You're the face of the Voyageurs and having their captain mysteriously disappear is alarming to everyone in the organization and the fans. So please, what exactly is going on?”

Shane looked at Ilya, who nodded at him, and then the worried looking nurse. “Ma'am, it's all right.” Shane reassured the nurse. “We'll talk to them.”

She glared at both of the intruding men. “Well, if they cause any trouble, just hit the button and I'll call the security.”

Ilya smiled at her in thanks. “We appreciate it.”

She left the room and the tension rose up again. Ilya very casually sat on the bed, putting his body between Shane and the others. Shane knew that Mr. Lewis was a beta but Roger Cromwell was well known for his demeanor that gave alphas a bad name. He was arrogant, stubborn, and rarely took advice from others. And as Shane stared at Cromwell's nose flaring at the scents in the room, the only word that could describe the commissioner's expression was *disgust*.

With neither Shane and Ilya wearing scent patches and their recent heat bonding that had occurred, it was obvious to the commissioner what was going on.

But Shane wasn't going to back down. Not anymore. As much as it pained him that his career might be ruined, he had gained something even more precious. And he was going to protect it with all his might.

"I'm sorry for the confusion, Mr. Lewis. I've had a bit of a surprising week myself. Luckily nothing is broken but the doctor said I do have some bruised ribs."

Relief seemed to flood the owner's face at the news. "Oh I'm so sorry to hear that you're hurt. Of course, you are. We all saw you go down. But when can the doctor clear you to come back?"

"He's not coming back," Cromwell growled.

"What?" Mr. Lewis looked alarmed. "It's still early in the season. Surely some rest and Shane should be all right."

Cromwell grimaced, once again looking disgusted. "But it's not just the ribs, is it Hollander? Don't try to lie. I can smell the heat fading from you."

Mr. Lewis looked shocked at the news. "Excuse me? Did I hear that right?"

Cromwell stepped closer to the bed and Ilya immediately sprang up, teeth bared.

"Don't think of taking another step," Ilya threatened. Shane could smell the acrid wood smoke of Ilya's pheromones pumping out to Cromwell's presence. Shane couldn't smell the commissioner, due to the scent patches visible on his neck and wrists. But Shane didn't need to smell Cromwell to know the other man was angry.

Shane placed a calming hand on Ilya's waist and pulled him closer back to the bed. His alpha seemed to register that Shane needed the proximity and took a step back.

"Yes, Mr. Lewis. I recently had a heat because I'm an omega. I'm sorry I wasn't honest about my second gender. I was afraid that I'd never be given a proper chance to play hockey if it was known."

"And you-," Cromwell pointed to Ilya, "you knew about this and helped Hollander cover it up?"

Ilya shrugged as though it wasn't a big deal. "It was not my information to share. Besides, Shane is one of the best, if not *the best* player in the league. Who cares if he's an omega?"

Cromwell's face turned red in frustration and rage. "Of course I care! The whole league cares! This is an absolute disaster." He turned to Shane again, his mouth twisted in mockery. "Do you realize what you have done? You've signed a contract under false pretenses! Lied for years about yourself! The PR is going to be an absolute nightmare from your foolishness!"

Mr. Lewis grabbed on to Cromwell's arm and started tugging him back, nervously looking at Ilya's furious demeanor. "Now, Roger, let's not get too hasty. I know omegas are rare in the NHL but we do have a few. And maybe we can make an exception for someone so talented as Shane. When can the doctor clear you?"

Shane knew his face was stoic but he doubted it could fool anyone. He grasped Ilya's hand tighter, to ground himself.

“I'm sorry, Mr. Lewis but...I don't think the doctor will clear me for a while. I'm pregnant.”

“Ha!” Cromwell threw his hands into the air along with his ugly laugh. “This just gets better and better! First you're a lying scum omega and now you couldn't even keep your legs closed!”

Ilya roared and grabbed Cromwell by the throat. He slammed the commissioner to the wall with his canines baring. “Don't you *ever* speak to my mate in such a way! Who the fuck do you think you are?”

“Ilya! Please!” Shane cried out.

Slowly, Ilya let go of Cromwell and stepped back. Panting and out of breath, Cromwell pointed to both Shane and Ilya.

“You're done. You're both done. I won't accept you tarnishing the league and what it stands for. You're both liars. And for all I know, cheaters too. How do we know either of you have played honestly?”

Looking alarmed, Mr. Lewis stared at Shane. “Is that true? Did you ever let Rozanov win against us? For your mate?”

Shane was flabbergasted. Out of everything that was going wrong, this was the last thing he expected to be accused of. “Of course not! Ilya and I always played competitively! We'd never do something like that!”

Mr. Lewis closed his eyes and wiped the sweat that was glistening on his cheeks. He seemed to think for a moment before coming to a decision.

“I'm so sorry Shane but I agree with the commissioner. We can't have you playing while pregnant. What if you got hurt and lost the baby? Our team and the league would be blamed if something happened. So for now until we come to a different decision, you're benched.”

Shane had a feeling this would be the final outcome but it was still devastating. He held back the tears and nodded.

“I understand, sir.”

Cromwell growled again at both of them. “And after I'm done, neither of you will have a career again. And you-” He pointed at Ilya. “You'll be hearing from my lawyer for laying your hands on me.”

Ilya scoffed and gave him the middle finger. “Oh go right ahead. I bet a judge will *love* hearing how you illegally barged into a heat room and threatened my pregnant mate.”

Cromwell seemed to lose a little bit of air at that rebuttal but he still adjusted his suit tie with a jerky movement of his hand. He opened the door and walked out, followed closely by Mr. Lewis.

The moment the door closed, Ilya whipped around and took Shane's into a tight hug. Shane could do nothing but reciprocate back, his heart so broken. He knew being found out would hurt. He knew the inevitable rejection would hurt. But he hadn't guessed just how much it would.

As the tears finally spilled out, Ilya tenderly kissed them away. Then he kissed Shane so softly that it made his heart ache even more.

"I love you," said Ilya. "No matter what happens or what anyone says, I'm on your side."

"I know. I know." Shane whispered, kissing back. "I love you so much. And even if my career is done now, I don't regret anything. Especially not the times we've had."

"And more. We'll have forever together."

Ilya crawled back into bed and held Shane as he cried out the rest of his despair.

The next week was a whirlwind. And as much as Shane always wanted Ilya by his side, there were still realities to contend with. That had included calling their agents and preparing statements to the public. The reaction had been mostly shock mixed with support and detractors. Shane tried not to let it get to him when certain media pundits said he had put the Montreal Voyageurs playoff chances in jeopardy. But despite the backlash, Shane and Ilya found a certain relief that they no longer had to hide their relationship.

Everything had been an adjustment but their family and closest friends had been so incredibly supportive. Especially when the news had hit the airwaves that Shane Hollander was a pregnant omega and Ilya Rozanov was the father.

Roger Cromwell had kept his word that he'd try to bench Ilya as well. The only obstacle had been the Ottawa Centaurs owners. After Cromwell had made his wants known, a phone call to Ilya had been made by the owners. Ilya explained the situation and to his surprise, had only gotten sympathy and understanding. They approved of him staying on the team but he was expected back again within the next week.

Ilya had wanted more but Shane reassured him that he'd be all right. Yuna and he had discussed his options and had asked to be transferred to the Ottawa hospital so he could be closer to his family. Ilya finally agreed to go back to playing when Shane said he wanted to move in with him. It made logistical sense but more than that, they were mates now. It was the right thing to do.

And although the commissioner and Mr. Lewis had recoiled from Shane and Ilya's mate status, that was the exact opposite for Yuna and David. When they finally saw each other at the end of the week, there had been joyous tears and hugs. They had discussed maybe

holding a small mating ceremony but in the end, Shane wanted to wait until after the baby was born. Ilya was happy to oblige his beloved omega.

Shane was still processing that he was growing a new life. And that his career was on hold and possibly over. But knowing that the people he loved most were there for him was what really mattered and it made all the difference when the sadness threatened to overwhelm him.

February 2026

Ilya approached Shane from behind and gently embraced him. He laid a soft kiss on Shane's mating bite scar and looked over his shoulders.

“So what's for dinner?” Ilya asked.

“Pasta salad and garlic bread.”

“Ooh, double carb. Is the baby hungry?”

Shane laughed. “You have no idea.”

Shane was in his third trimester and finally showing a bulge. Ilya was absolutely obsessed with it. Any excuse he could have to touch and caress it, he did. Not to mention the sex was still amazing, although Ilya was very careful in his administration. Sometimes so careful that Shane would yell out in frustration to *fuck him harder*.

They had been scared that Shane's injury from hockey could affect the baby but so far, the pregnancy was going along well. Other than the usual exhaustion and discomfort that accompanied growing a human being, Shane was doing surprisingly good. Somehow he had escaped being a puking nauseous mess, to the ire of his friends who had not escaped that fate. Jackie in particular had some serious horror stories about her pregnancies and Shane had given Hayden a whole lot of shit about it.

Just as Ilya was about to fill the large pot with water, he heard the doorbell ring. He exchanged a look with Shane, who shrugged in confusion.

“I'll get the door,” Ilya said and wiped his hands on the kitchen towel.

He unlocked the door and the moment it swung open-

“Surprise!”

Ilya was indeed surprised. The last thing they had expected was a small crowd of friends at their door. Specifically, J.J. and Hayden from the Voyageurs and Troy, Wyatt and Harris from the Centaurs.

He looked at all of the packages and bags in their hands. “Uh...I thought we already had the baby shower last month?”

And what a baby shower it had been. Jackie had coordinated it with Yuna and it had become a small but joyous celebration.

Hayden ignored Ilya's question and just came right inside. “This is different. We're here for something else.”

Ilya sighed and welcomed the rest of the friends in, getting a big hug from Wyatt and Harris to boot.

“Hey, what's the commotion?” Shane asked as he came out of the kitchen. Then his face lit up when he saw they had company. “Hi guys. I didn't know we were getting visitors today.”

J.J. held up some take out bags and deposited them onto the dining table. “We came to surprise you with something. And food! Gotta keep feeding the little nugget!”

Harris and Troy held up their bags as well, full of presents. Wyatt was holding a giant teddy bear dressed up in an Ottawa Centaur jersey. He put that in a place of honour in the living room, much to Hayden's annoyance, who had brought a stuffed dog in a Montreal Voyageur jersey.

Ilya eyed the many bags that J.J. had brought. “We were just about to make dinner but I'll never say no to free food.”

Troy pulled out a chair and insisted that Shane sit down. “The person of honour gets to rest. We'll get things sorted.”

Between all of them, the work was done quickly and the food was distributed and plated. Hayden knew that Shane had been craving Thai food lately and the sheer amount and variations of noodles on the table was a sight to behold. Shane immediately grabbed the pad kee mow and dived in.

“So what do we owe the pleasure?” Shane asked.

Hayden was chewing a mouthful of basil fried rice. He swallowed before trying to look all innocent. “What, I can't just come to see my bestie?”

Ilya groaned. “Did your daughters teach you that word? You sound very cringe.”

“Don't worry, Rozanov. I didn't come to see your ugly mug.”

Harris pointed to the bags of presents and the stuffed animals. “Actually we're here to deliver gifts from the teams and staff. Some fanmail too.”

Ilya stopped stuffing his face to arch an eyebrow inquisitively. “Fanmail?”

Wyatt reached over and grabbed a few cards, all covered in hearts. “Oh yeah, we've been getting *tons* of mail from fans who want to congratulate you two. You're a regular Romeo and

Juliette story to them. Or maybe it's more accurate to say hockey rpf?"

Ilya was puzzled. "What's hockey rpf?"

"Well, rpf stands for-"

Troy reached over to close a hand over Wyatt's mouth. "We don't need to educate Rozanov in hockey rpf. He's insufferable enough."

"Wait, I want to know," Shane chirped up.

Hayden shook his head. "Fans are writing lovey dovey stories about you two. I honestly don't see the appeal, seeing as Rozanov is such an ass and you can do better."

Wyatt threw a napkin at Hayden's head. "Don't listen to him, Shane. Hayden's just jealous because before the news broke, you and he were the main Montreal Voyageurs couple!"

"Hey, I'm a married man!"

"The fans don't care!"

Harris turned to Wyatt in slight awe. "How do you know about this stuff? I'm the social media coordinator and even this is news to me."

"Oh well, I volunteer at the local community center and that's what all the kids told me."

Ilya looked intrigued. "Are the stories good?"

"I haven't read any of them," said Wyatt. "But the kids told me there's this website called AO3-"

Troy closed his hand over Wyatt's mouth again. "Nope, nope. We're not doing this. We're going to enjoy this meal without anyone else mentioning anything else."

"The lady doth protest too much, methinks." J.J. grinned. "Maybe Mr. Barrett here has read a few."

Troy's face turned red and his boyfriend Harris started cackling out loud. Luckily for him, Shane came to his rescue and changed the subject.

"How's the locker room doing?"

Hayden and J.J. both turned a little grim. "I don't think we're going to make the playoffs," Hayden replied. "But Shane, we don't want you to think that's your fault. If we can't get there just because we're down one player, we obviously didn't deserve it in the first place."

"Do the rest of the team feel that way?"

J.J. grimaced. "Shane, you know there's always going to be a few whiners. But seriously, most of the team has your back and so do the fans. The Centaurs aren't the only ones getting

messages saying they're excited to see you after your break.”

Ilya laid a comforting hand on Shane's tight shoulders. “It's okay. It's going to be okay.”

Shane nodded, even though he still felt distraught that his absence was causing a negative impact. It reminded him of the commissioner's harsh words.

Harris checked his phone. “Oh hey, it's almost time.”

Ilya asked, “Time for what?”

Hayden got up and nudged Shane to get up as well. “The surprise. Let's go to the living room.”

After everyone was seated comfortably around the various couches, Hayden found the remote and turned on the television. He found the right channel and sat down beside Shane. Ilya was on Shane's other side, both looking curious.

“So...” Ilya looked around the gathered men. “We're watching TV now?”

Hayden rolled his eyes and waved towards the screen. “Just have some patience.”

There were a few commercial breaks before the television screen lit up with Scott Hunter standing at a podium and surrounded by reporters. His expression was serious but not harsh. He looked determined. Shane and Ilya looked around their friends again but they all gestured to the television, urging them to pay attention.

After a moment, the camera was pointed fully at Scott's face. Then he started speaking.

“Hello and thank you for coming to my press conference. I realize it feels like it was done on short notice but I assure you it was not.”

There were murmurs of dim voices of the media in the background. A few flashes went off, taking pictures of Scott at the podium.

“There have been troubling reports in the league concerning two particular players that have been heavily on my mind. I'm speaking of Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov. Since the news had leaked of their status, specifically the second gender of Hollander, the league has been broiled in discourse. And I think I've held my silence long enough. Because just like Hollander, I too, am an omega.”

There was a collective gasp in the conference room and also from Shane and Ilya.

Scott let his words sink in before continuing.

“I also feared for my hockey career and have pretended to be a beta. I'm not proud of it but the past and current culture of hockey didn't make me feel safe to live out my truth. Despite the many studies and real life everyday proof that an omega can work and function as well as any gender, we've been barred many times from achieving our dreams due to outdated social

constructs. The few omega players in the league are lucky if they even get any ice time, relegated to being token players in the leagues' weak attempt at diversity."

"My status as an omega, although hidden, didn't stop me from playing hockey at the highest level. It didn't stop me from being a Captain of my team and proudly leading us to a championship. And the same qualifications go to Hollander, who have also done the same. All of the league's players have received word from commissioner Roger Cromwell that he is being benched permanently, for being a pregnant omega. But that is also unfair. If an alpha or beta player were to have a long term medical situation, they would be given the proper leave and be welcomed back when they returned."

"This isn't really about caring for Hollander's health. If it was, then Rozanov wouldn't be facing the same scrutiny and threat of benching when he is able and is currently playing. This is about the optics that the league has built and their very existence threatens it. And I think it's time I join that discourse."

Scott held up a leather binder and opened it to show a formal letter with many signatures inside.

"This is a letter written to commissioner Roger Cromwell to stop his continued persecution of players based on their secondary gender. It's been signed by many players, owners, GMs, and staff. We will stand by the right of every player of the league, present and future, to be allowed the same rights, dignity, and the chance to play as any others would do. I ask you all, the fans and the hockey community, to join us in making this sport truly for everyone. Thank you."

The conference ended by Scott leaving the podium amid a rush of questions. As the camera panned away from the tall figure going offstage, Hayden turned off the television and looked expectedly at Shane and Ilya.

"Well, what do you guys think?" Hayden asked, looking a bit nervous.

Shane was shocked. So was Ilya. They had never suspected that Scott Hunter was an omega and him coming out this way was huge news. Especially for his reasoning behind it.

"Wait..." Shane looked at his friends in confusion. "So you all knew about this? That's why you came today?"

All of their friends nodded.

Troy pointed to the screen in acknowledgement of the monumental information. "We knew since this all blew up, it's been incredibly hard on you both. And we were talking about how we can push back against the unfair treatment. We started out by reaching out to all the team captains and well, Scott had a really great idea."

J.J. scratched his chin and shook his head, as though recalling a past memory. "I was still surprised though when he told us he was an omega. It really hit me, how many players could be hiding their truth and suffering under that weight."

Ilya squeezed Shane's hand and gave him a slightly teary smile. "Then this letter, you've signed it?"

All of their friends present, raised their hands in solidarity.

"Of course we signed it," replied Wyatt. "There was no way we could just do nothing while Cromwell treated you two like garbage. You're our friends."

Shane wanted to blame his pregnancy hormones but he knew it wasn't that. He could feel tears run down his cheeks. The love he felt in the room was almost too much but just right.

Ilya was wiping away tears as well. "Thank you, everyone. This means so much."

"Don't get all sappy on me, Rozanov." Hayden joked. "I prefer you being your usual asshole self although it's probably not good for my blood pressure."

"Oh good. Because I told Shane that Hayden is a stupid name and we'll never name our child after you."

"What? Hayden is a perfectly great name!"

Harris waved his hand enthusiastically. "Hey if you're taking suggestions, I think my name is much better."

As their friends devolved into an intense debate over the merits of various baby names, Ilya and Shane gave each other a sweet kiss and thanked their lucky stars for such great friends.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the delay everyone! Real life has been a bit busy! But we're almost to the end!

I thought about making Shane suffer from all the usual pregnancy ailments but that poor guy has already been through the wringer so I decided not to lol. Instead he got to move in with Ilya and be pampered as he deserves!

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

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

March 2026

“Isn't she the most beautiful baby you've ever seen?”

Ilya smiled down at his daughter, who they had named after his mother Irina, and nodded his head to Yuna. “Yes. She is the most beautiful darling.”

David was hovering near Yuna's shoulder, trying to get his own good look at his granddaughter. All three adults were enthralled at the tiny human being that Shane had given birth to after a grueling long labor. His doctor, just to be cautious because he had an unusual pregnancy journey, had ordered him to stay at the hospital for a week. It was almost near the end and he was itching to get home.

But until then, he was having the best time watching his most loved ones shine adoration at their precious daughter. Shane was still on pain meds but was already starting to feel like himself. Jackie and Hayden had come by and he got an earful about how lucky he had been in his delivery, despite the length. He already had a notebook with all of the nurses and doctors names that he planned to personally write a thank you card.

Shane waved at Ilya. “Hey, can I have a turn too please? I miss her.”

Pouting slightly, Ilya begrudgingly handed Irina to Shane's waiting arms. Shane hadn't imagined, couldn't have imagined, how right this feeling would be. To hold something so small and yet so wondrous. Everything in his life that he held dear or had felt problematic was put into a different perspective. His world, and Ilya's, was forever irrevocably changed.

Ilya caressed the baby's soft dark curly hair. She had Shane's colouring but Ilya's features. Her little mouth was a perfect cupid bow and her long lashes brushed her rosy cheeks.

“What are you thinking about?” Ilya asked Shane.

“I'm thinking about how so many things in my life seem so small compared to her. She's so... I just want to do everything for her.”

“I feel the same. I think I would burn down the world for her.”

Shane laughed. “Well hopefully we don't have to go that far.”

Shane looked up when he heard a sniffle and saw his mother looking teary-eyed. It had definitely been a complicated way to get here but Shane had no regrets.

Their admiration of Irina was interrupted by a soft knock.

“Mr. Hollander? Shane Hollander?”

Shane called out. “Yes, that's me. Please come in.”

“Could we get a little help with the door?”

Ilya's face perked up. “Oh, I think I know what this is.”

He opened the door and ushered in two men carrying...a giant sushi boat.

Laughing in glee, Ilya pointed to the boat and exclaimed, “Surprise!”

“Holy shit!” Shane yelled. Then he remembered he was holding a sleeping baby and winced. “What is going on?”

Ilya brought over the bedside table and helped the delivery men drop off the boat. They had also brought a case of cold ginger ale along with utensils and condiments. Shane's eyes couldn't stop taking in the beautiful array of sashimi, nigiri and maki in all different colours.

“Well, remember when you complained how you couldn't eat sushi? I wanted to fix that.”

Looking slightly in awe at the sheer amount of food, Shane nodded. “And you remembered?”

Ilya gently took the baby, who had woken up, and moved the table closer to Shane. “Don't worry if you can't finish it. Just eat.”

David approached the table and picked up the chopsticks to hand to Shane. “If you need help putting a dent in that, I certainly can help.”

“No way,” Shane grabbed the soy sauce packets and plate. “I'm going to totally finish this.”

Shane immediately dug into his food and moaned with each morsel that passed his lips. The otoro was heavenly and simply melted in his mouth. The unagi was the perfect level of salty and sweet. Every tempura maki was crunchy with just the right amount of batter.

Shane momentarily forgot everyone in the room as he stuffed his face.

Ilya watched his mate and almost purred in satisfaction at the happy omega pheromones pumping through the room. Irina seemed to pick up the happy mood as well and she waved her little arms at Shane.

“Shhh, little one. You have to wait. Your papa is refueling.”

Which was an understatement. Irina was little but she had a healthy appetite. It was challenging at first but Shane was slowly getting the hang of breastfeeding his demanding child. That was one job that Ilya couldn't help with but he had been an extremely attentive partner in other ways. After the nurses had shown them a few times, Ilya considered himself a fair hand at changing diapers and swaddling.

“Now remember,” David said, “if you need *any* help, please don't hesitate to ask. We're never far away.”

Ilya nodded in gratitude. He didn't miss the days of doing long distance hiding between Boston and Montreal. Living with Shane and having Yuna and David nearby felt like the first year he billeted with them but even better. Now they weren't just roommates. They were family.

“Oh!” Yuna exclaimed. “Gotta catch the updates!”

She turned on the TV and started channel surfing to find the right one. Ilya couldn't help but laugh that even with their new granddaughter around, Yuna Hollander would never give up getting her hockey information.

“And in the latest news, there has been a widespread movement to support omega players across all skill levels and positions. The momentum started in the NHL but now other leagues such as the NFL and MLB have players demanding updated policies and to do away with long standing discrimination.”

Yuna turned gleefully at Ilya and Shane at the news. “You hear that! You two are pioneers!”

Shane finished chewing his mouthful and shook his head. “I don't feel like I did anything drastic. If anything, the credit should go to Scott Hunter.”

“Don't say that,” Ilya replied. “Scott might have started the petition but you came out with statements first. You're very brave.”

They turned back to the television as the anchor continued talking.

“There have also been calls for NHL Commissioner Roger Cromwell to step down from his position. Under his management, the NHL has been recording eroding ticket sales and no tangible initiative to bring in new fans. There have been reports that his behavior towards omegas, specifically to Shane Hollander, infringed upon discrimination laws. The NHL legal team has responded by saying he has not broken league conduct but critics have claimed that in itself does not absolve him due to outdated policies.”

This news was met with grim satisfaction by everyone in the hospital room. Roger Cromwell's behaviour had been reprehensible and absolutely unacceptable. Both Shane and Ilya's agents and lawyers had been busy behind the scene to make sure their clients best interests were respected, although with limited success for Shane. But they had to a certain point expected some bad news.

Yuna changed the channel to another network.

“The playoffs are now out of the reach of the Montreal Voyageurs. Last night's game sealed their fate. There's been a lot of discussion around how successful they might have been if not for Shane Hollander being unexpectedly unavailable but-”

In disgust, Yuna turned the television off. “Fuck those guys. Shane, don't listen to them. They had plenty of time to make adjustments.”

Shane took a sip of his ginger ale and thoughtfully shook his head. “I don't know about that. I know I could have made a difference. But it's too late to know now.”

And it was a bit too late. After the Voyageurs' loss and ousting from the playoffs, Shane received a call from Mr. Lewis, the owner. He was very apologetic and went on and on about how he appreciated Shane's contribution to the team but ultimately they were destined for different directions. Shane had thought he'd be more angry. More indignant that all of his years of sacrifice and bringing a championship to the team would have ended like this.

But for some reason, there was a sense of relief. The thought that the owner of his team thought so little of him left a sour taste in his mouth. Not to mention that there were still Voyageur teammates who had openly expressed their disappointment in him hiding his second gender. The thought of going back to a locker room where the people he needed to trust on the ice was dissatisfied with him being an omega was extremely offputting.

He knew he was still young and healthy. His agent had reassured him that there should be interested parties so he held on to some hope for still having a hockey career again.

One point of happy news was that Ilya was still gainfully employed by the Ottawa Centaurs. They too, had lost their chance at the playoffs but the news had been better received all around. Perhaps it was that Ottawa was not really a contending team yet or just that their organization was built differently. They all loved Ilya and supported him enthusiastically. Shane could admit that at times he felt a little jealous but those feelings were fleeting and brief. He was proud of Ilya and glad that he was appreciated for the amazing player he was.

Shane's melancholy was interrupted by Irina's cry. She wiggled in Ilya's arms, waving her chubby tiny hands towards Shane. He moved the bedside table aside and motioned that he wanted the baby.

Ilya carefully deposited the baby back into Shane's embrace, her little face smoothing out in pleasure. Placing a kiss on Shane's head, Ilya's chest rumbled in a protective alpha growl.

“I'm sorry they did you wrong.”

Shane shook his head and smiled down at Irina. “It's really okay. I have my most important and precious people with me. It's worth more than anything.”

Tilting his head up, Shane kissed Ilya and gave him a beaming smile.

“I love you, Ilya.”

“And I love you.”

June 2026

“Jackie, are you sure this is okay? I feel terrible asking on such short notice.”

Jackie was holding three months old Irina in her arms like she'd never let her go. “Are you kidding me? Jade and Ruby are so happy to help me babysit. Don't you worry and go have your heat in peace.”

Shane looked nervous and was hovering. “Still, I'm so sorry to ask when you already got a houseful. My parents had a last minute work thing they couldn't cancel.”

Hayden took the bag of Irina's things from Ilya and gave Shane a comforting pat on the shoulder. “Hey, what are friends for? Besides, no offense to your parents but pretty sure Jackie and I have more recent experience with handling babies.”

Ilya smirked. “That's because you can't stop having them.”

Jackie laughed and pointed a knowing finger at Ilya. “You say that now but just you wait. This sweet thing is going to grow and pretty soon you're going to want another.”

“That is entirely up to Shane,” answered Ilya. He leered at his mate and wiggled his eyebrows. “I have no complaints about *making* them.”

“Ugh gross,” said Hayden, sticking his tongue out to pantomime throwing up. “I don't want to hear about your sex lives.”

“Well, little Hayden, when two people really love each other-”

Hayden gave a playful shove to shut Ilya up. “I don't want to hear it. Now get out of here.”

Shane and Ilya both gave goodbye kisses to Irina. Ilya ended up having to drag Shane away, reminding him that he didn't want to start his heat at the Pike's driveway. She gave a little wail that cut through both their hearts but they had to go.

Ilya was doing the driving, laying a comforting hand on Shane's leg. The other man was quietly crying into a tissue.

“I feel stupid,” Shane grumbled. “I know she's going to be okay but I can't stop crying.”

“Don't feel stupid. She's been attached to us non stop. Of course you feel sad.”

“Then how come you're not crying?”

“Because I'm Russian.”

Shane glared at Ilya until he finally caved in.

“Okay, okay. I cried in the shower this morning.”

“I knew it. You were taking extra time in there.”

“Oh? Maybe I was jerking off?”

It was Shane's turn to leer back. “I would have smelled it on you or the bathroom if you had come. And pay attention to the road.”

Ilya wanted to say he could make this drive like the back of his hand but he dutifully turned his attention to the road fully. They were going to the cottage and even though he missed his daughter, the idea of a week break where he could ravish his mate got him very excited. He could smell just the beginning of pre-heat coming from Shane and the caramel sweet notes were already so enticing.

Shane had wanted to set an hourly alarm to text Hayden but luckily for everyone's sanity, Jackie had talked him out of it. She reminded him that he most likely wouldn't be in the state of mind anyway.

About half an hour from the cottage, they made a quick pitstop at a grocery store to get all the food and drink essentials they would need. Easy to prepare meals or grab and go things like granola bars for a quick calorie boost. Ilya didn't feel a rut coming on but it was better safe than sorry.

Once they arrived at the cottage, they stayed seated in the car for a moment, enjoying the calm silence that always permeated the scenery. A distant loon call reminded Ilya of his first reaction to their sound and he grinned.

He took up Shane's hand, lifted it up to give it a kiss.

“Welcome back, sweetheart.”

“Glad to be back.”

They made quick work of unloading their bags and putting away the groceries. Shane hired a cleaning service to maintain the cottage when it was not in use and everything was immaculately in place. Even the cleaning supplies were restocked, which would be essential later when they were done with the heat.

Although their heat nest by the lake was no longer a secret to family and friends, it still felt like a place for just the two of them. Perhaps once Irina was older they would bring her here but for now, it was still their private dwelling. A place to feel safe and where they could let everything go.

That's what Shane had to remind himself as he looked through the extra omega bedding in the closet. This was their safe place and he didn't have to feel self conscious. But this was also the first time they'd be having sex since Irina was born and Shane was feeling insecure. His body was almost back to normal except for his belly still being a bit soft and covered in stretch marks. Ilya had kissed every stripe reverently, whispering how much he adored them.

Right. There was nothing to be nervous about. Ilya loved him and he had gotten the go ahead from his doctor to have his heat. Everything would be fine.

“I can see your gears clicking.”

Shane turned around to see Ilya leaning by the bedroom doorframe. His arms were crossed, and his sleeveless shirt showed off his gorgeous biceps.

“What gears?”

Ilya pointed to his own temple. “I can see you thinking too hard. What's wrong?”

“Nothing. Nothing. Just...it's been a while.”

“Yes. But we've waited longer in the past.”

That was an understatement. Waiting once a year for Ilya to see him had been torture. Shane fidgeted with the blanket in his hands.

“I don't know, I just...what if it's different. From before.”

Ilya stopped leaning against the wall and pulled his mate into a tight embrace. He then rubbed his groin against Shane and the other man gasped at the hard-on that was already there.

“You...” Ilya gently bit Shane's earlobe and then tugged on it with his teeth. “Have nothing to worry about. I've been thinking about this for *months*. I'm going to fuck you so hard.”

Then Ilya stepped away and Shane whimpered, chasing after the warmth.

“But first, we need to eat before your heat hits. I can smell it on you and it's close.”

Shane wanted to pull Ilya towards the bed but he knew his mate was right. It would be a lot harder to eat and deal with other logistics once the heat started.

They made spaghetti with a generous side of salad and bread sticks. It would also be easy to reheat in a hurry. As the sun slowly set over the lake, they enjoyed each other's company and talked about everything and nothing at all.

As they finished up putting away the food and cleaning up, Shane's phone rang. For a second, they looked at each other, fearing the worst. But the number was not one that Shane recognized. He picked up the phone with some trepidation.

“Hello?”

“Hello! Is this Mr. Shane Hollander? I was given this number by his agent.”

“Yes, that's me.”

“My name is Patrick Fieldman. I'm the GM of the Ottawa Centaurs. How are you doing this evening?”

“Uhh, I'm doing fine, thank you. Did you mean to call Ilya by any chance?”

Mr. Fieldman laughed on the other side of the line. “Oh no no. I mean to call you. Our organization has spoken to your agent but I wanted to speak to you personally. Do you have any plans to come back to hockey?”

Shane could feel a hot flush go across his body like a wave. Was this what he thought it could be?

“Ah, yes I do. My doctor has given me the all clear to start practices at any time.”

Shane swallowed down his nervousness. He was getting his hopes up but he didn't want to be dishonest. Not anymore.

“I want to be transparent that I'm not back at my 100% since I gave birth in March but I have a really good support system and I can be back in my prime again in no time.”

“Of course. You know your body best and you're a top athlete. I trust that you'd know what needs to be done to be back in the game. And that's why I wanted to speak to you personally. I realize that your end with the Voyageurs must have been a disappointment but the Centaurs see a lot of opportunity for you. I realize our team is not rated as highly as Montreal but we have big plans. Would you be interested in being part of that?”

Shane felt like he couldn't breathe. Adrenaline and excitement was coursing through his veins and he could barely sit down. He rightfully stood up from the dining chair and started walking in a loop around the table.

“I'm- wow, I'd be so honoured. I'd love to play for Ottawa. You were my favourite team when I was growing up. It's my hometown.”

“Excellent. And since you've been transparent with me, I'll do the same. The chances are you're going to get some other offers, with a possible higher salary. As much as it hurts to say this, we can't quite afford you at your former rate. But if we can negotiate something that makes you satisfied, I feel we can offer you some tangible things that no other teams can.”

That was an understatement. Playing for Ottawa meant neither Ilya or Shane would be separated. They can live together under the same roof like any family. Also the idea of playing *together* with Ilya again was exhilarating. He missed the old days when they had been teammates for the Thunderclaps. If he accepted this deal, they would be so much further along than when they had first met. No longer only teammates. No longer only roommates. But just *mates*.

“Mr. Fieldman, of course I need to speak to my agent but I know in my heart, no other team will do.”

“That's extremely encouraging. Let me send the contract offer to you and your agent and let's make a deal, shall we?”

“Yes, I'd like that. Thank you. Have a good evening.”

Shane hung up and stared at Ilya in shock. The alpha was grinning wide, his pheromones pumping out happiness.

“Did you-” Shane pointed to the phone. “Did you know anything about this?”

Ilya gave a casual shrug but looked a bit smug. “I *maybe* told my coach that you're doing fantastic. And want to play more hockey.”

“Ilya!” Shane threw his arms around Ilya and kissed him firmly on the mouth. “I can't believe this is happening! We could be on the same team together again!”

“Yes, it's very good news. Now call your agent. I'll finish up cleaning.”

Shane nodded and ran to the small office he had installed in the cottage. Although this was a place of relaxation, it had made sense to have a place to do some work, just in case. He turned on the computer and saw that his email folder already had an Ottawa offer in place.

He immediately called his agent and discussed his options. Mr. Fieldman had been honest that the salary was not competitive but it wasn't bad at all. He'd still be making millions over the course of the contract timeline *and* he could play with Ilya. He gave his approval to his agent and let her know he was about to go into heat. Any minor details, he knew he could trust her not to under sell him.

As soon as he finished his phone call, he ran out to find Ilya. The alpha was relaxing outside with the firepit going. He had a blanket waiting for Shane and as soon as the omega sat down, wrapped him in its soft warmth.

“How did the phone call go?”

Shane sighed happily into Ilya's arms. He watched the sun disappear fully over the horizon as everything in his world clicked into place. “It went well. It was still a pretty good deal. And well, no guarantees that any other teams would want me so...”

“Nonsense. Ottawa was just first because I gave them a heads up. You're an awesome player, Shane.”

“And now we're going to need someone to watch Irina for us.”

“Think we can hire Jackie? Wait no, never mind. I don't want Hayden that close to our baby.”

Shane smacked Ilya on the thigh playfully. His mate could sometimes go a bit overboard in teasing his best friend but he knew they meant well.

Ilya pulled Shane closer, cozying up in front of the fire.

“Well it's a good thing we got the call before your heat started. Are you happy?”

“So happy.”

“Then welcome to the team, Shane! And remember that I'm *your* captain now.”

Shane smiled so hard his cheeks hurt. He kissed his alpha and snuggled in for the night.

When the heat finally started, it hit hard and fast.

It was around 4 am, with the sun still not up when Shane bolted awake. His body had the telltale fever and all of his senses were screaming out for his mate. He could hear Ilya's soft snore in the dark.

Without turning on the lights, Shane reached over and went under the covers. Ilya was naked, just like him, and already half hard. When his hand closed around Ilya's dick and gave a soft tug, it twitched in interest. Shane leaned over and without any hesitation, he engulfed the round head into his hot mouth.

Ilya woke up in an instant and started cursing in Russian. Then Shane's heat pheromones entered his senses and he knew exactly what to do.

The moonlight was enough to illuminate the room and Ilya groaned at the sight of his mate, so eagerly swallowing down his erection. Shane's wet lips were wrapped around Ilya's hot flesh and sucking like his life depended on it. Ilya tangled his fingers into Shane's hair and tugged, each pull making his omega moan back in response.

“Shane, Shane. Get on top of me and turn around. I want to taste you.”

Shane immediately obeyed, got on top and juttied his ass toward Ilya's face. The slick was gushing out, so sweet and shiny against the puckered rim. Ilya took a big breath and then buried his face into Shane's delectable ass.

Shane reciprocated by taking Ilya's dick back into his mouth. The sound of their licking was absolutely filthy in the dark. Ilya couldn't get enough. He put two fingers into Shane and found him already feeling loose from the heat. His tongue joined his fingers as he enthusiastically licked every drop of slick.

His legs trembling from the onslaught of pleasure, Shane wailed, the sound slightly muffled from how full his mouth was from Ilya's cock. He pushed up and looked back at his alpha.

“Ilya...I want to ride you.”

The alpha almost came just from the sound of Shane's ragged voice. But he gestured toward the bedside table and Shane got with the program. The last time they had heat sex, they had both been on suppressants and shots and it still hadn't been enough. Luckily, Ilya had packed a whole box of alpha condoms to hopefully double barrier them from another unplanned pregnancy.

His hands slightly shaking, Ilya ripped the foil and carefully rolled it down his aching cock. When it was in place, Shane climbed up and hovered over the erection. Then slowly, he sank down, inch by inch.

Both groaned in unison as the tightness enveloped both of them. It had been a while since Shane had ridden his mate and he had almost forgotten how good it felt. Ilya placed his big hands on Shane's waist and rocked his hips until he was fully encased.

“Oh, fuck...alpha...this feels...ahhh-!”

Shane yelled out as Ilya thrust up and again into his warmth. Matching his rhythm, Shane used his formidable thigh muscles to piston himself up and down on to Ilya's dick. He couldn't contain his cries and kept yelling out Ilya's name.

Swiftly, Ilya grabbed Shane by the ass and rolled him over onto his back. He grabbed the legs, bent Shane back and started pumping hard and fast into Shane's slick filled hole. He could feel his knot catching the rim as he thrust faster and deeper.

“Shane...Shane! Fuck, you were made for me.”

He leaned down and kissed Shane, their tongues tangling as Ilya's knot grew larger. Soon, the slick wasn't flowing out because Ilya's dick had plugged Shane full.

Shane came first, his cock spurting untouched with white stripes painting his stomach and chest. With a yell, Ilya bit down into Shane's shoulder as he came, his come hot and thick inside his mate.

Panting, Ilya slowly untangled their limbs until he could properly cradle Shane into his arms. Shane sighed happily sitting in Ilya's embrace and they kissed again.

They knew this was just the start of a glorious week.

Ilya woke up, his mouth feeling like a desert.

It had been a long week and he was thirsty and hungry. Perhaps due to how long it had been since they last had sex, Shane had been insatiable in his heat. By the end of it, he had been coming basically dry.

Feeling a bit disoriented, he felt for Shane and found the other side of the bed cold. Not too much of a surprise. The sun was up and Ilya could smell that the heat was over. His muscles sore, Ilya slowly trudged to the shower to get cleaned up. The hot water felt like a personal massage on his worn out body and he made a mental note to redo the main bathroom in their house to replicate the cottage's decadence.

Wearing just a towel slung low over his hip, Ilya went out to find Shane and found him in the kitchen. He was making something with eggs and it smelled delicious.

Kissing the mating scar lightly, Ilya wrapped his arms around Shane's waist.

"I thought I told you to sleep in so I can cook for you?"

Shane smiled and gave a little shrug. "Sorry but I woke up starving. I didn't think you'd mind if we swapped out cooking duties, since you took care of most of that during my heat. You even helped me pump for Irina."

"Hmm. Okay. But you still need rest." Ilya kissed Shane's shoulders. "I'll get dressed."

When he came back out dressed in a t-shirt and shorts, Shane had already laid out the food on the dining table. Fresh coffee hit Ilya's olfactory and he made a beeline to put together a cup for himself.

"Thank you, Shane."

"Of course. Mind if I get started?"

Ilya waved his yes while he went to find the cream and sugar. After adding a heap of both to his giant coffee mug, he sat down and started in on the eggs as well.

"How are you feeling?" Ilya asked.

Shane gave a long stretch and popped his joints. "Feeling pretty damn good actually. I was worried but I guess I didn't have to be. You took such good care of me, as always."

Ilya smiled, happy to hear that his mate was doing well. It made him think of mating ceremonies, weddings, honeymoons, and everything after. His daydream must have given off notice to Shane because he scented the air and gave a questioning look.

"What are you thinking of?"

"Nothing." Ilya smiled that familiar crooked grin and took a bite out of his toast.

Shane shook his head, his own scents mingling happily with his alpha. He took a gulp of his own coffee and then remembered to check his phone. He wanted to let Jackie and Hayden know that the heat had passed safely and they would be home in the next day or two.

He checked his notifications and saw texts from Hayden with many pictures of a happy Irina. One particular one where she was cradled by Ruby was especially darling. He saved all the images and forwarded them to Ilya.

Ilya could hear his own phone ringing with notifications. “Are you sending me something?”

“Yeah, Hayden sent me a bunch of pictures of Irina.”

Ilya checked his phone and smiled at his beautiful daughter. After all the pictures were done being sent, Shane put down his phone to finish his meal.

But just as they thought they were done with their phones, a ping chirped simultaneously on both of their phones. Then the notifications kept coming and coming.

“What’s going on?” Ilya wondered out loud. “Did something happen?”

“Uh...yeah, I think *this* happened.”

Shane turned his phone to face Ilya and there was a text message from Harris that said, “*Check the Centaurs’ accounts*”.

And sure enough, on every single Ottawa Centaurs’ social media feed, there was a picture of a black and red Hollander 24 jersey captioned with the words “Welcome to the team, Shane Hollander!”

“Oh wow...” Shane whispered. “It’s happening. It’s real.”

Ilya got up from the table and hugged Shane, dropping a kiss on top of his head.

“Congratulations baby! You did it!”

Shane laughed, tears of joy streaming down his face. He got up to give a proper hug to his alpha and they kissed passionately. He softly cradled Ilya’s face and smiled widely. “No, we did this together. I couldn’t have gotten this far without you. Thank you.”

Ilya could feel his own tears spring forth. They hugged again, not wanting to let each other go. Their phones kept vibrating, probably with congratulations and well wishes from their friends and family.

When they checked their phones again, they were getting absolutely flooded. There was no way they could respond to everyone.

“What do you think?” Shane asked.

“Maybe we should post something in our joint account?”

It was the same account they had made after their relationship had been discovered and released their first statement. They both periodically updated it with cute and funny things from their lives. It was the right move.

Shane scrolled through his photo gallery until he found the perfect picture. Yuna had taken it just a few weeks ago and it had Ilya, Shane and Irina all sitting on a picnic blanket in their back yard. The sun was shining and everyone was happily smiling into the camera.

Logging into their account, Shane framed the picture along with a simple message.

“Looking forward to new beginnings.”

Ilya hit the post button. Then Shane put away the phone and kissed his mate. The moment was too perfect and he wasn't going to let it slip away.

“I love you,” Shane whispered, his lips ghosting the words on Ilya's mouth.

“And I love you too.”

They kissed again and knew that it was the start of an unforgettable life together.

Chapter End Notes

And that's the end! Thank you so much for all the wonderful comments and kudos! Thank you to my friends who encouraged me when I was stuck in a writing pause and all the hockey knowledge!

You can find me on [Tumblr](#). Thank you for reading.

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