Paradigm Shifts

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Paradigm Shifts

by TuppingLiberty

Summary

Post-Long Game

On the first day of training camp with the Centaurs, Shane has a hard time coping with the differences between his old and new teams. Ilya helps him.

Notes

I've only read the books once and then dove directly into fic, so I may be getting things messed up with the epilogue from the actual book and fic I've read since then. If so, then this is less canon compliant and more canon divergent, but it's supposed to be canon compliant. My apologies for major errors from canon!

Also all the Russian comes from Google translate, so.

See the end of the work for more notes

Chapter 1

Shane isn't dumb. He may be obtuse about his feelings, especially where Ilya is concerned, but he's not dumb. *Especially* about hockey. The upcoming first week at training camp with the Centaurs kind of makes him feel dumb about hockey, though, and he is maybe having a hard time dealing with that.

And his husband has maybe noticed, because Ilya is *much* better at noticing feelings than he is, even in himself. Maybe especially in himself.

Shane wakes before his alarm on the first day of training camp and takes Anya for a run, because if he takes the dog, he won't push himself until his legs are jelly. He will do a very reasonable two k down to the dog park, let Anya run around and sniff to her heart's content while he does some stretches in the grass, then the two k home.

He is *not* expecting to see Ilya on the front porch, leaning against the banister with one hip and sipping what is probably his regular black coffee on this crisp fall morning. Anya pulls at her leash to race to him despite all her training, and Shane can't help but feel exactly like the dog, pulled into Ilya's orbit any time he sees him.

Ilya greets Anya first, rubbing over her head and scruffing her ears and murmuring, "Хороший пёсик," *(Good girl),* so quietly that Shane thinks maybe he's not supposed to hear. The whole damn display makes Shane's heart melt.

And then all of Ilya's attention is on greeting Shane, and Shane decides he is absolutely no better than their dog, that if he had a tail it would be wagging as surely as Anya's is right now. Ilya pulls Shane in for a kiss in greeting, and it's thorough enough that Shane tastes the coffee, savoring it on Ilya's tongue. Ilya's free hand slides down Shane's side, making his sweaty compression shirt stick even worse to his skin. He used to not like when Ilya touched him after a run, used to not like Ilya to touch him when he was all sweaty, preferred meeting up with Ilya after they'd showered in those anonymous hotel rooms. But his tolerance has changed. It helps that Ilya seems to have an affinity for Shane all sweaty and wrecked.

"доброе утро," *(Good morning),* Shane murmurs against Ilya's lips. He's trying to be better about using more Russian around the house.

In reply, Ilya squeezes his hip with *intent* and kisses him again, setting his mug aside so he can pull Shane fully into the embrace. "доброе утро, любовь моя. *(Good morning, my love.)* You are nervous this morning."

He lifts an eyebrow, but the inflection offers a statement rather than a question. He knows, he always knows. "No, of course not," Shane deflects, because he has to, to not give into it. Why the fuck would he be nervous about hockey camp?

Ilya looks pointedly out at the early morning light, then down at his designer watch. "So, you run at this early for fun? Could do more fun things in bed, with me."

“Couldn’t sleep. Doesn’t mean anything.”

“Mhmm.” Ilya doesn’t need English to express his doubt, ever.

“I’ve done this for over a decade.”

“With Voyageurs, da. Not with Centaurs. Is…different experience. Understandable to be nervous, котенок. *(Kitten)*.”

“I’m *not* nervous.” Shane rolls his eyes despite how fuzzy the pet name makes him feel and steps away to let Anya in the house, intent on showering and going through the rest of his morning routine.

“Mhmm,” Ilya hums again, just as doubtful as before. He catches Shane’s hand before he can make it completely inside, and pulls him back for another brain-melting kiss. “Do not worry. The Centaurs are used to hockey stars. They have me, after all.”

“Such an asshole,” Shane replies against Ilya’s lips with a laugh, but the cocky boast does make him feel better. Ilya is being completely normal about this, so he can, too.

It’s just training camp. He can do this.

“I n-need a break, one sec-” Shane mumbles in Coach’s direction about halfway through practice that morning.

Ilya watches his husband skate off the ice, panic clear on his face. At least, the panic is clear to him. He’s become something of an expert at interpreting Shane’s various masks. He has to give Shane credit, he’d been thinking Shane would ‘need a break’ much sooner.

He should never underestimate his husband, this much is clear.

Still, it’s not as Shane’s husband, but as his captain that Ilya gives him a few minutes, then shares a nod with Coach and heads off after him, pulling skate guards on. He’s done this before, with Luca, with Wyatt. Doesn’t matter much if you’re a rook or a vet, everyone gets the shakes at some point.

He finds Shane pacing back and forth in the locker room sans skates, his socks likely picking up moisture from the floor which Ilya happens to know he hates, so something is irritating him that is bigger than wet socks. He’s also chewing aggressively on his mouth guard, and doing the thing with his hands that he thinks no one knows about. It is entirely possible that no one else knows about the hand thing besides Ilya, to be fair. When Shane is especially nervous, they tremor, and he hates that feeling, so he shakes them out.

Shane gives a start when he turns around to pace back and sees Ilya there, then continues his pacing, not meeting Ilya’s eyes. “I just need a couple more minutes,” he mumbles around the guard that is sticking out of his mouth.

“Is fine. Take time you need. We are just doing game.”

Shane *growls* at that, and that gives Ilya some clue as to what may be happening here.

“You have problem with game?”

Shane’s eyebrows raise nearly to his bangs. “You don’t?”

Sometimes, Shane needs a push to express himself, and Ilya is always fucking happy to be that push. He gives the most nonchalant shrug. “Is fun.”

Shane snorts, then turns back around, pacing again while shaking his hands. “That’s the problem.”

“Fun is problem? This seems incorrect.”

“Hockey isn’t a game!” Shane exclaims, whirling in his spot and meeting Ilya’s eyes now, his shining bright with barely tamed fury.

“Hockey is literally a game, Hollander.” Instead of matching Shane’s energy, Ilya continues to play it cool, knowing just how much that will irritate Shane.

“It’s- it’s- I fucking *know* it’s a game, Rozanov.” Shane collapses on the locker room bench, running his trembling hands through his hair. Ilya will stop him if he starts to pull, but he knows the motion is soothing for Shane.

He clomps over in his skates, sitting next to Shane so their thighs touch. “The Bears…they were no fun. Fun when we win, yes. But not just…fun. Hard work. Annoying work. Enough work that you might need to take your frustration out on perfect hockey god Shane Hollander when he lets you.”

Shane laughs a little at that, and rubs over his face.

“Yes, I win on the Bears. Three *fucking* cups. Beautiful. But also, sweetheart, Bears missing something.”

Shane looks over at him. “Don’t tell me you’re going to say ‘me.’ You’re not that corny.” Ilya frowns at the unfamiliar word until Shane corrects, “Like, uh. Overly sentimental. Uh. Predictable, even.”

“Ah. No. But maybe? The Bears missing…heart. You can win without heart, but the win will be without heart.” Ilya shrugs. It’s the best he can do to describe how playing with the Centaurs, the heart, the family they’ve built here the last few seasons, means so much more to him than 8 years on the Bears ever did. “Centaurs are family. Playing is different with family. I think maybe you are experiencing this for the first time, too.”

“You thought it was weird, too?”

And oh, how Ilya’s heart tugs at Shane clinging to that fact like a lifeline, desperate to know that what he’s experiencing isn’t strange. How much he hates being different, and he is, just because he is...who he is.

“I…was start to hate hockey. Both on Bears and here, too,” Ilya admits quietly, saying it aloud to someone besides his therapist for the first time.

“Seriously?” Shane asks, incredulity obvious both in his voice and in the way his brows have risen again. He reaches out, tentatively at first, and then more steadily when Ilya makes no move to block it. Why would he want to stop Shane from cupping his cheek so tenderly and rubbing his skin with his thumb?

Ilya thinks of the small pill he took this morning, the one Shane has a reminder on his phone for. “Was not good time for me.”

Shane nods before leaning in to brush their lips together. “I remember. I’m sorry…for my part in that,” he adds when Ilya makes a dismissive motion.

Ilya isn’t quite sure how to reply, how to assuage the guilt Shane still seems to carry about the choices Ilya made for their life together, so he lets the moment sit. When Shane seems steadier, he smiles. “Besides, hockey is fun again. Hockey is good again. With you, yes, but also, Centaurs make hockey good again. Good room, good hockey.”

“The Voyageurs play good hockey.” Shane frowns, his brows drawing together in the adorable angry kitten expression Ilya loves. He’s still not understanding, apparently, what Ilya is trying to say.

Ilya shrugs. “More than one way to play good hockey.”

Shane looks at him, his hand still cupping Ilya’s cheek, before he bursts into a laugh. Sadly, that makes him withdraw his hand to cover his mouth, but the hand doesn’t quite stifle the absurd giggle Shane lets out.

“What?” Ilya asks, searching back over his words for what he could have translated incorrectly.

“No, just. No, sorry, it wasn’t you. God.” Shane wipes a tear of mirth away from his eye. “When I was little, I remember getting really frustrated with something. Some math problem or something. I took it to my dad, and he showed me a different way to do it, and he said, ‘more than one way to skin a cat,’ as if that made *any* sense at all, and I remember being so horrified. Like, why are we skinning cats all of a sudden?”

Try as he might to get the joke, Ilya is still completely lost. *“What?”*

“Fuck, sorry. It’s a stupid English expression, I don’t know if there’s an equivalent in Russian. There’s more than one way to do something, essentially. Like what you said. There’s more than one way to play good hockey. You and my dad, trying to teach me the same lesson spanning decades. It’s just-” His husband lets out a frustrated huff, the sound making Ilya want to drag him to the nearest secluded corner and make out with him. “I get stuck in my ways, you know? I won with the Voyageurs, so obviously that’s the way to do it. Stupid of me.”

“Not stupid, no. Never stupid, котенок.And we are not skinning you, okay?”

Shane laughs again, the sound lifting Ilya's heart. "Thanks for that, I think."

"Yes, should thank me always. I am most amazing husband and captain. Best in league."

This time, Shane punches him in the shoulder, though it doesn't hurt at all through their practice gear. "Sorry for freaking out on you."

"What is that thing your mom is always saying? 'Ah, guess we'll keep him.' Guess we will keep you. C'mon. Strap back in. The ice will make you feel better, and when I left, Troy and Luca were betting who could skate around rink faster. Go kick their asses. Show them why we pay big bucks for you." Ilya stands, pulling Shane up with him.

Shane grins, then reaches out to squeeze his hand. "я тебя люблю." *(I love you.)*

Chapter 2: Coach Wiebe

Chapter Summary

The coaching staff is super different, too.

Chapter Notes

Red, white and royal blue pipeline:

Alex being called "too much" is to Shane being called "boring" and I love both of my boys for this.

Have I made Coach Wiebe into Ted Lasso? Probably.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“You got tickets to Fabian’s show, right? They’re already sold out. I think Ryan’s going to try and drag Fabian to a game, too, but if not that, at least we can go to dinner afterwards-“ Wyatt continues for several more minutes, asking questions and answering them for himself without needing input from Shane. It kind of reminds Shane of Hayden, which makes him miss his best friend, but also it's comforting to find someone similar here when everything seems so different. At the very least, Shane gets why Ryan and Wyatt are best friends: It’s an extremely similar dynamic to him and Hayden, or hell, him and Ilya, even.

He likes being with someone who talks a lot, because that means he has less of a chance to open his mouth and reveal how boring he is.

“Hollander, can you stop by my office before I leave? I wanted to run something by you.” Coach Wiebe gives him a friendly smile, so it’s probably not supposed to feel like a visit to the principal’s office, but still, he starts running his mind through all of his plays against Seattle last night. They’d won, and Ilya had taken him home and edged him as many times as the goals he’d scored. It had been a really, really good night.

Shane frowns at the unprofessional turn his mind has taken and rushes through the rest of dressing - Ilya is at his appointment with the massage therapist, a rib issue they’re working on, so he’d been going to catch a ride home with Troy. Maybe now he and Shane can ride back home together instead. Shane fires off a quick text to his husband and tries to not make it sound like he feels: like he’s about to get reamed out by Coach but he’s not sure for what.

By the time he's making his way to Coach's office, he has a list several bullet points long of things he needs to improve on that Coach could be talking about, and counters for all of them, promises to work harder. He knocks with feigned confidence on the door, then pushes in when Coach tells him to enter.

"Shane, good, good. Great game last night."

"I should've made that shot in the third quarter."

Coach lifts his brows. "I don't think anyone could've made that shot, Shane. It's impressive you came as close as you did."

"Still, I'll work harder. My shot percentage has slipped a little, new line, you know, but I'll work on it."

"That's...sure, that's great, Hollander. Don't overwork yourself in practice when we need you sharp, it's only the first month of the season."

Shane nods at the directive just as he has nodded at every directive a coach has ever given him; he's nothing if not extremely coachable.

"That's not actually why I called you in, though. Please, take a seat." Coach Wiebe gestures to the side of his office, where a small table with four chairs rests in front of a bank of various monitors for watching and analyzing tape. Right now, they're all paused on the goalie from Seattle right after one of the goals Shane had made last night. Coach Wiebe sees him looking at the screens, then grins. "That was a hell of a shot, kid. Like you knew he'd be open there."

Shane shrugs. "I watched a lot of tape on him. He has a blind spot, just there. A weakness. If I was the goalie coach for Seattle, I'd- well. You probably don't care about that."

Coach grins, teepling his fingers and tapping his lips with them. "Well, actually. That's why I called you in here. Listen, Hollander, I don't know if you want the A, I don't know what your dynamics are with Rozanov, but we can keep that to a different conversation. I just know that if I didn't use the most brilliant analytical hockey mind of this generation, I'd be a fucking dumbass. Call it assistant captain, call it nothing, I need you leading our guys on film. No one sees this game like you do and we're fucking lucky to have you. Pardon my language."

Shane tries not to gape at Coach. He's not sure he's ever had a coach, head or assistant or otherwise, *apologize* for cursing, not even back when he'd been like, eight.

"I'm not sure an A would be appropriate right now. The team barely knows me, I- Ilya-" His anxiety is branching off into like eight different panic spirals of how this all could go, the worst of which has Shane missing some dynamic with Ilya where Ilya is so rightfully upset at him- *"Would you give it up?" "I already did."*

"Does it help to know Rozanov suggested it in the first place? He told me you keep a whole mental book of every opponent in your brain. I believe his exact wording was, 'he has brilliant annoying hockey god encyclopedia instead of brain.'" Coach does an actually passable impression of Ilya's accent, making Shane laugh.

The joke also manages to relax Shane somewhat. “Oh, yeah. I like watching film. Ilya’s always chirping me. ‘Why can’t we watch trashy English show about sexy people on island.’” One would think Shane’s Ilya impression would be better after this many years, but it’s truly not.

“Perfect. I’ll add it into your schedule, then. It’ll show up as ‘film coach meeting’ on the invite and the other coaches will be here.”

“Great, yeah.” Shane just stares at Coach, expecting more, expecting *something,* but Coach just pats him on the shoulder and gestures for the door.

“Keep up the good work, Hollander. I’m glad you’re here with us.” When Shane opens the office door to reveal Ilya passing by, looking blatantly curious, Coach adds, “We need *someone* whose Rosanov tolerance is high.”

“Is that what it is?” Ilya asks, holding out a hand for Shane to grasp with a grin. “Tolerance? Like you tolerate seam in toe sock or chin strap that’s too long?”

Shane shudders, because he’s unable to tolerate either of those things, which Ilya knows. “No, like…spice levels in food. You can work your way up over time.”

“He uses this example because he makes fun of me for my ramen order, Coach. Is domestic abuse. Shane Hollander should be jailed.”

“All right you two, stop flirting in my office and go home, would ya? Christ.” Coach is grinning, though, as he shoos them through the door and closes it behind them.

Shane shakes his head as they walk toward the parking garage - Ilya had driven them in his truck, today.

“What’s on your mind, котенок?”

“Just…Coach Wiebe is different. Than like, every other coach I’ve had before. Except maybe Mom back on my first team.”

Ilya just smiles, reaching across the gear shift to take Shane’s hand as he navigates their way home.

Ilya should probably have anticipated this. Shane had had his first film meeting this morning with the coaches after practice, and Ilya had stuck around, preferring always to drive home with his husband when he can. He did some extra cardio (ugh, cardio much better when he’s working up a sweat with Shane), flirted with Harris (much fun because flirting with Harris means he gets puppy photos, and because they both love to flirt and both love their partners deeply), and even filmed a few TikToks for the social media account. He keeps himself busy while Shane’s meeting goes on…and on…and on, much longer than the little box on their shared calendar (that Hollander set up, of course) says it should.

He's about to strap his skates back on and do some goal shooting practice when he hears his husband's excited voice.

"And that'll work, especially if Troy drops back. Cleveland won't know what hit them." Shane's talking with his hands at Coach Wiebe, and Ilya's heart does a double beat at the adorable sight and then positively melts. Because he's rarely gotten this glimpse at Shane and he's *married* to the man for Christ's sake. This is a Shane that has realized he has found an audience for his hyperfixation - the ins and outs of hockey - and is spilling over without reservation.

It is maybe one of the most beautiful ways he has ever seen his Shane, eyes bright with excitement and cheeks flushed as he finishes his talk with Coach Wiebe and greets Ilya. Ilya wonders if Coach realizes how lucky he is to see this side of his husband. Ninety-nine percent of the world continues to think that Shane is an untouchable hockey god-robot. Ilya has known differently for a long, long time. But he hasn't always been the safest space for Shane to let this side of himself go, and he knows that. Now it's an old joke, but he knows the 'boring' label cut Shane deeply, back when he'd first used it. He's tried to make space for this instead, but it's truly beautiful to watch Shane open up to Coach Wiebe in the same way, and to see that Coach Wiebe is not just humoring Shane, but truly enjoying the intellectual discussion on the sport that defines all their lives.

"I can't wait to practice some of these ideas and plays. Thanks, Hollander. Rest up for the game tonight, yeah?"

Considering Ilya can feel Shane nearly vibrating out of his skin with happiness, he imagines he'll have to take a hand in helping Shane rest. 'Rest.' For now, he gently guides a still gesturing and talking Shane slowly to the garage, one hand on the small of his back. When they're at the truck, though, he presses his husband against the passenger door and kisses him soundly.

Shane melts under his kiss, some of the vibrating excitement easing, morphing into desire as he returns Ilya's fervor. "What was that for?" Shane breathes out when Ilya pulls back, tenderly running his thumb over Shane's cheek instead.

"I love you, sweetheart. I love seeing you be yourself."

Shane's excited flush deepens into a full-on blush. "I just- the coaches were really receptive to some of my analysis."

"As they should be. You have the most brilliant brain. Makes me want to eat you up." He punctuates the silly statement with a kiss, capturing Shane's incredulous laugh.

"Let's go home," Shane offers instead, his eyes darkening now.

"Let's."

The thrill of Shane calling their Ottawa house, originally *his* Ottawa house, 'home,' never gets old. The deed is in both their names now, their legal names - Hollander-Rozanov.

They’re not changing their jerseys, but everything else…Ilya had grinned like a child when he’d changed his instagram name.

“So it went well?”

“Yeah,” Shane murmurs as he clicks his seatbelt in. “Yeah, I think that-“

And with that, he’s off, talking with his hands again as Ilya drives them home.

Chapter End Notes

Still planning on doing an E chapter at some point! But this idea wouldn't leave my brain. :)

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Ilya helps Shane relax before the first game with Montreal. The rating changed to E, heads up. :D

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

In some ways, Ilya has been waiting for Shane to ask for it. Or maybe, he'd been *hoping* his husband would be self-aware enough to ask for it tonight. But, as he watches Shane obsessively clean the kitchen, then the living room, then start reorganizing the pantry, he realizes he needs to take a firmer hand.

He pauses Shane in the act of checking the best-by dates of all of their canned goods and organizing them on the shelves so they'll use the oldest first. A worthy task, yes, but not one that will help Shane relax for the game tomorrow, his first match against the Montreal Voyageurs as a Centaur. He sets his hand on Shane's shoulder, squeezing at his nape until he feels some of the muscles relax.

He also happens to know that that particular grip puts Shane in the right headspace to float away.

"Fuck, Ilya-" Shane groans, blinking at the can of green beans he's holding in his hand.

"Set the can down, Shane."

The blush that paints over Shane's cheeks is beautiful, art. It belongs in Canada's grandest museum, Ilya thinks. Except he wants to keep it only to himself, so oh well. The rest of the world gets to lose out.

"I don't need you to do this," Shane manages, though he still sets the can down.

"That's a lie. If you don't want me to do this, you know what words to use. But *need?* Sweetheart, don't lie to yourself, or to me." Ilya moves his fingers up to the long wisps of black hair at Shane's neck, tugging slightly. Enough to hurt just a little, enough to get Shane's eyes to close, to get his pearly white teeth to sink into his luscious pink bottom lip. He's sitting on a stepping stool in their pantry, smelling faintly of bathroom cleaner, and ready to submit to Ilya at a moment's notice. Blood rushes to Ilya's already stiffening cock, and the power of that submission flows through his veins, heady.

He expects Shane to put up more of a fight. Sometimes, his submission is like that, something that must be fought for and won, leaving Ilya feeling victorious. But more often,

Shane offers it up freely, and in those times, Ilya mostly feels protective. Well, and horny, but also, mostly, honored that Shane has chosen him for this safeguarding of his body and heart when he's in this vulnerable position.

Shane blinks up at him, then shifts his eyes to the obvious tent in Ilya's athletic pants. He licks his lips, then looks up at Ilya again, giving Ilya those puppy dog eyes. Ilya knows exactly what he wants, and since it lines up with what Ilya wants for Shane - to shut his brain off and distract him from tomorrow's game - well, Ilya is happy to indulge him.

"Join me in the living room?"

He phrases it as a question, and wants to intentionally change their location, because he always wants Shane to have plenty of opportunity to opt out before they get started. It's one of the things he's learned over the years - he's always prided himself on being a king of consent, yeah, but when they'd first started, neither he nor Shane really understood the dynamic that they so naturally fell into. He thinks of the years of missed aftercare, of sub and dom drop, of stupid choices. He will be making those years up for the rest of his life, he thinks.

Shane nods, then gives a verbal assent too, as he slides his fingers into Ilya's proffered hand and lets himself be led away from the obsessive cleaning.

If Shane is going to give into obsessions tonight, Ilya'd much rather it be his oral fixation.

Their feet make soft sounds on the floor. Anya's off sleeping somewhere. The gas fireplace has warmed the room up to a temperature where Shane will be comfortable without his shirt and Ilya without his pants, both of them preferring skin-on-skin for moments like this. Ilya leads Shane quietly to the coach, throwing down one of the pillows to the floor and widening his legs so Shane can kneel in between.

"If you want to stop, what do you say?"

"Red. Or tap your thigh twice."

"Good, good boy." Ilya brushes through Shane's choppy bangs, brushing them back and placing a kiss on his forehead. "You are going to keep me warm. I have trashy reality television to catch up on. You just keep me nice and warm, and when I'm ready, I'll use your mouth. Yes, котенок?"

"Yes," Shane breathes out, letting Ilya pull his shirt up over his head, then helping Ilya with his athletic pants. He's singularly focused on getting Ilya's cock out, it seems, following it with his eyes, his tongue already slipping between his lips.

It makes something - love, desire, devotion - swim in his gut, his breast, as Shane looks at his cock almost reverently, utterly fixated on the hard, flushed length. Ilya's not sure how long he'll be able to let Shane just warm him, he's already dangerously close to the edge.

Shane's lips wrap around him with little ceremony; it's not supposed to be a blow job, after all. Just some cockwarming to get Shane out of his brain. Still, Ilya's hand finds Shane's hair,

his fingers clenching in the locks as Shane's tongue lolls around the head of his cock. His husband is nothing if not an expert in his cock, in knowing exactly what Ilya loves.

He blows out a breath and wills himself to relax, wills himself to hold off and give Shane this quiet time he needs. All he has to do is see the blissed-out look on his sub's face to know the good this is doing him. That knowledge brings him back from the brink. He searches for the remote with his free hand, making good on his promise to turn on the last Love is Blind episode he'd forced Shane to watch and choose the next one on the list.

Shane's mouth feels fucking amazing, so Ilya focuses on every single thing in the room beside his husband's face, his lips stretched around his hard-as-steel cock. After some deep breathing that would make Shane proud any other day, and after 10 minutes of love angst on the tv, he finally feels like he has himself under control.

He finally looks down at Shane, running fingers through his soft bangs. It's beautiful. Beyond beautiful. Breathtaking, really, how well Shane goes under for him. He was made for this, maybe even more than Ilya was meant to be dominant. Ilya feels dominant because Shane brings it out of him, brings him to his best. He likes who he is when he has to take care of Shane.

He likes who he is regardless (when his brain is not attacking him), but that's beside the point.

"Ты такой красивый для меня, мой котенок," he murmurs, rubbing his thumb over Shane's freckles.

You are so beautiful to me, my kitten.

Shane's eyelashes flutter against his cheeks, but he doesn't open his eyes at Ilya's soft words. He is completely and utterly at peace, the exact opposite of how Ilya had found him in the pantry.

The episode continues to play along, but Ilya can't take his eyes from Shane's face again. He's just so alluring. Ilya could spend every second of every day watching Shane do everything. He loves watching him cook in their kitchen, and change the sheets after delicious sex, and play the best fucking hockey to raise the Cup.

"я тебя люблю, я тебя люблю, я тебя люблю," Ilya mumbles over and over. *I love you, I love you, I love you.*

Eventually, Ilya threads his fingers once again through Shane's hair, then pulls him off slowly. Shane blinks up at him, eyes gorgeous and blurry.

"Color, мой котенок?"

Shane swallows and licks his swollen, red lips. "Green," he answers after a moment, adding a cute little nod.

“Your mouth is so good, too good. I want to finish inside you, but elsewhere.” He grins, and Shane reflects it, the desire in his eyes sending Ilya’s blood aflame.

He pulls Shane up into his lap and into a deep kiss, cupping his jaw, his neck, his pec. He tweaks Shane’s nipple just to feel his husband shiver and squirm against his hard cock. Still kissing, he gets them the rest of the way naked, and throws down a spare blanket on the couch to save clean up later. The lube is tucked away inside the coffee table, because Yuna and David visit way too often for Shane’s peace of mind. But soon enough, his kitten is back in his lap, their lips nipping together, and Ilya is working lubed fingers into Shane’s hole.

Shane whimpers, burying his face in Ilya’s shoulder.

“Soon, мой любимый. I promise. But I must not have you limping tomorrow. Captain’s orders.”

Shane snorts against his skin, and the giggle turns into a moan as Ilya’s fingers slide over his prostate. “Aye, aye, Captain.”

“Condom?”

Shane wrinkles his nose and nods rapidly, and Ilya pulls him down for another kiss. He loves going bare, but he loves even more than Shane feels comfortable expressing his boundaries, especially when he’s deep under for Ilya. It’s no more work to grab the condom he’d gotten out just in case, slip it on, and slick himself up. He takes Shane’s hips in his hands and guides him up, cherishing the O of Shane’s lips as he slides down on Ilya’s cock.

“Ride, мой любимый, ride.” He accents the order with a playful slap on Shane’s hip.

Shane takes the direction beautifully, throwing his head back, showing off the long line of his neck down to his glorious tits and his fucking magnificent belly, the hard roundness of it that belies the core strength beneath. God, Ilya loves his husband.

Shane’s hips roll in a steady motion, grinding in Ilya’s lap. He feels fucking perfectly slick and tight around Ilya’s cock, and Ilya throws his own head back so he can watch his husband work. He continues to murmur encouragement and praise just to feel Shane shudder above him.

“‘M sorry,” Shane whimpers, sitting back on his thighs and squeezing his eyes shut.

“No, no, why, sweetheart?” Ilya rubs his hands over Shane’s quads. “You are perfect, everything is fine. What do you need?”

Shane opens his eyes, looking down at Ilya, then dipping down to kiss him lovingly. “No, sorry, everything *is* fine. Was just gonna come. Had to stop for a sec.”

Ilya’s heart picks up beating again, and he laughs along with Shane. “Come whenever you want, Shane. I promise I am going to make you come again and again and again tonight.”

“God, don’t forget I have to skate tomorrow. *You* have to skate tomorrow.”

“Sure, but I would much rather have you coming your brains out over and over again than worrying your brains out in our pantry.”

Shane’s smile is bright and holds no anxiety, making Ilya’s heart thump again. “Well, then I guess I’ll get us going again.”

“You set the pace, sweetheart. I want to see you come so hard, so beautiful.”

Shane starts back up the pace with renewed vigor, and his face is so, so joyful, Ilya nearly feels tears come to his eyes.

Several sessions and a long aftercare cuddle session and bath later, Shane has finally been able to fall asleep. Ilya stays awake for a half an hour or so, making sure Shane stays that way, before letting himself surrender to sleep, too. The morning will bring a healthy breakfast, a walk with Anya around the neighborhood, and probably more than one more orgasm for Shane to keep him distracted before they go to the rink. They will face it all together. They will face Montreal together and no matter the outcome, they will survive.

But who is he kidding? They are going to fucking kick Montreal ass.

Chapter End Notes

This one needed to end, so it did, so I'm sorry if it's unsatisfying.

End Notes

I may write a follow up to this that is Ilya taking Shane under to subspace before his first big game with Montreal. If you want it and/or have ideas, let me know!

Comments and kudos are always appreciated!

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