Dinner With Our Exes

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/76297776.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV), Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationships:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov, Shane Hollander & Rose Landry, Ilya Rozanov & Svetlana Vetrova
Characters:	Shane Hollander, Ilya Rozanov, Rose Landry, Svetlana Vetrova
Additional Tags:	Svetlana figures out Ilya's secret, Double Date, Rose and Svetlana meet, Svetlana interrogates Shane, Takes place between Heated Rivalry and The Long Game, Slice of Life, Post-Book 2: Heated Rivalry (Game Changers), Canon Divergent (minor), POV Shane Hollander
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-26 Words: 2,342 Chapters: 1/1

Dinner With Our Exes

by LizardRunClub

Summary

Svetlana watches the joint press conference announcing the Irina Foundation and she just *knows*. She confronts Ilya and tells him she wants to meet Shane. She needs to make sure Shane is good enough for her friend.

Shane is a nervous wreck to meet Svetlana. He knows how important she is to Ilya, so he calls on his own female bestie to go on a double date during the All Star break.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

November 2018

“I need to tell you something, but you cannot get angry,” Ilya said, looking very serious over the FaceTime connection.

“What the fuck, Ilya? How am I supposed to promise that without knowing what you're going to tell me?” Shane responded, but when he saw the concern in Ilya’s eyes, he quickly added, “I’ll try.”

“Okay.” Ilya swallowed. “Svetlana knows.”

Shane waited for Ilya to elaborate, but only silence filled the air.

“Svetlana knows what?” Shane asked, frustration crept into his voice even as he reminded himself to stay calm.

“About us,” Ilya clarified. “She called me last night after the press conference and she asked if we were together. I could not lie. I am not liar.”

“She guessed from just the press conference? Shit!” Shane exclaimed, eyes blown wide with fear.

“Do not worry. She is… how do you say… she notices things,” Ilya explained.

“Perceptive?” Shane supplied.

“Yes, perceptive. She is like her father.”

“Her father?” Shane’s eyebrows scrunched with confusion.

“Da. Yes. I told you he was goalie for Boston. Very good goalie. Very perceptive.” Ilya stumbled over the last word and he repeated it quietly to himself a few more times as Shane just stared at him. “Are you angry with me?”

“No. No. Of course not. I’m just…” Shane swallowed nervously, looking around like someone might overhear him in his apartment. “I’m just a little freaked out. Do you think anyone else will figure us out?”

“Besides Hayden?” Ilya asked.

Shane pulled his bottom lip between his teeth. His best friend *had* guessed, but he also roomed with him on the road so Hayden knew him better than anyone else did. Had Ilya even seen Svetlana since leaving Boston?

“Yeah. I guess. I don’t know. Shit, do you think Drapeau knows?”

“No. I do not think your goalie knows. He is not good goalie.”

“Fuck off. Drapeau is a great goalie,” Shane blew out a shaky breath. “Okay. This will be okay.”

“She wants to meet you,” Ilya added. “Take you to dinner or…” Ilya waved his hand in front of him.

“Oh. Um. Like a date?”

“Yes, Shane. And then she wants to have disappointing sex with you,” Ilya stared into the camera unsmiling, but his eyes danced with mischief.

Shane blushed and looked down which made Ilya laugh.

“Don’t be a dick,” Shane said, but his own lips curved into a smile. After Ilya stopped laughing, Shane added, “How would that even work?”

“You have had sex with women before,” Ilya started, but was stopped by his own laughter.

“That’s *not* what I meant,” Shane groaned. “How would I even meet her?”

“You will play Boston several times this season or—”

“It would be too distracting,” Shane interrupted.

“This is important to me,” Ilya sighed.

“No. That didn’t come out right. Fuck. I meant that I want to be able to focus on her. I don’t want to be distracted by the game or stealing an hour out of the team’s schedule. I *know* she’s important to you. I want her to like me.” Shane smiled nervously.

“I could probably convince her to come to LA,” Ilya mused. “For the All Star Game.”

“Oh. That’s a great idea. Maybe I could bring Rose and the four of us could go out?”

“Yes. This would be fun. A double date,” Ilya smiled softly.

January 2019 - Los Angeles

●●●oo Bell LTE
6:24 PM
81%
Messages
Rose
Details
Are we still on for dinner tomorrow night?
Of course. I can't wait to be your beard again 😌
That's not why I asked you to come!
I know
You need me to protect you from Lily's big bad Russian ex 😉
Thanks for this
😘
8pm at Chateau Marmont
You'll love it. It's very private.
iMessage

●●●oo Bell LTE
6:42 PM
81%
Messages
Lily
Details
We are all set for tomorrow night. 8pm at Chateau Marmont.
I googled it. Swanky Hollywood place. Very private.
I will tell Svetlana.
When do you land?
11:30. You?
Just after 1.
Come find me by the pool
I miss you
I miss you too
iMessage

“LA traffic is even worse than Montreal,” Shane blew out a breath, his knee bouncing up and down in the SUV. He wanted, no *needed*, to make a good impression and now they were going to be late because of stupid LA traffic.

“Hollander,” Ilya murmured. “It will be okay. Svetlana will like you.”

“Yeah. I know.” Shane wiped his hands on his pant legs, before he rested his left hand on the seat and propped his right elbow against the car door.

Ilya slowly reached across the seat separating them and intertwined his pinky with Shane’s. Shane looked down at their joined fingers and smiled softly. His knee stopped its incessant bouncing and he let out a slow exhale.

Ilya’s phone pinged with a message and he withdrew his hand to check it.

“Svetlana and Rose are both at the restaurant,” Ilya said.

“We are almost there,” the driver chimed in from the front seat as the car crept forward toward a green light. Shane was pretty sure they could walk faster than this.

“Thank you,” Ilya responded.

A few minutes later the black SUV pulled up to the large cream-colored building surrounded by lush vegetation. Shane and Ilya slid out of the car and Shane felt like he stepped back in time when they entered the low-lit restaurant. The hostess led them to a corner table where Rose and Svetlana were already seated sharing a cocktail. As they approached, Shane thought it looked like Svetlana’s shoulders were shaking with laughter, but her back was to them. Rose smiled broadly when she saw them.

“Hey handsome!” Rose greeted, standing up and giving Shane a hug. “Ilya, I absolutely adore Svetlana!”

Ilya smiled warmly. “Yes. I do too.”

Svetlana stood up and turned to face Shane, raking an assessing gaze over him before smiling tightly. “It is nice to meet you, Shane Hollander.” Shane could have sworn that when she said his first name, it sounded more like Jane than Shane.

“Hi.” Shane raised his right hand in an awkward wave. “Thanks for coming.” Shane slid into the bench seat next to Rose while Ilya took the seat beside Svetlana. Shane glanced around the restaurant and noticed that there were a few famous faces seated around the room and no one seemed to be paying attention to them.

“So,” Svetlana started, staring across the table at Shane, “are you in love?”

Shane’s cheeks flushed and a broad smile broke across his face. “Yes,” he sighed. “Very much so.

Ilya’s eyes were soft and he was smiling as he looked at Shane. “Da.”

Svetlana took a sip of her cocktail before asking, “Why do you think you deserve him?”

Shane’s gaze flicked between Ilya and Svetlana. “I don’t,” he replied, shaking his head. “I’m not sure anyone does.” Shane felt Ilya’s foot tap lightly against his under the table. That tiny moment of contact settled his nerves. “He means everything to me,” Shane added in a low voice.

Ilya’s cheeks reddened ever so slightly.

“You are blushing,” Svetlana noted, with surprise in her voice. “I do not think I have ever seen you blush before.”

“Never in life have I blushed. Russians do not do this.” Ilya retorted, pressing his lips together to hide his smile.

“Ерунда,” Svetlana said, rolling her eyes and gave him a playful knock with her shoulder. “And what about women?” her eyes glanced between Shane and Rose.

“Oh. I’m not. I’m gay. I thought it would be easier if I wasn’t and I tried, but women aren’t, um, the right fit for me.” Shane felt like his face had never been redder as he struggled to hold her gaze.

She seemed satisfied with Shane’s response, glancing between Shane and Ilya before taking Ilya’s hand and smiling.

Shane felt a stab of jealousy that Svetlana could opening hold Ilya’s hand in public. His eyes stared at their hands until he felt Ilya tap his foot again. His eyes snapped up to Ilya’s and he saw a sad smile on Ilya’s face.

“The league seems to be embracing your friendship,” Svetlana pointed between Shane and Ilya, “making you co-captains for the All Star game.”

“Yeah.” Shane chuckled. “If only they knew.”

“Maybe it would be okay,” Ilya suggested.

Svetlana patted Ilya’s hand and she smiled sadly. “It would be better than in Russia, but I do not think the league would accept you.”

The waiter came and took Shane and Ilya’s drink orders. Shane getting a beer and Ilya getting vodka on the rocks.

“So,” Rose broke the tension at the table, “what is your costume for the breakaway challenge this year, Ilya?”

“Is perfect.” Ilya grinned. “Is half beaver, half horse.”

Rose and Svetlana laughed while Shane shook his head chuckling. “Why?” Rose squeaked out.

“For Ottawa. I represent my team,” Ilya responded with a grin.

“Did you steal the beaver head from the team mascot?” Shane huffed out.

“I did not steal. The mascot is here for the kids. I am borrowing the beaver head for a few minutes,” Ilya explained. “We will be careful. No one will see the headless beaver.”

“You’re ridiculous.” Shane snorted.

“What about you, Shane?” Rose asked.

“Oh, um. I have a hoodie and a Shore jersey from the Sudbury Blueberry Bulldogs that I was going to throw on.” Shane smiled.

“You are wearing a hockey jersey as your costume?” Svetlana asked, her eyebrow raised.

“It’s probably a Canadian thing,” Shane replied, blushing. “It’s from a TV show up in Canada. It’s really popular.”

“I do not know this,” Ilya said, shrugging his shoulders.

“Ask your Canadian teammates,” Shane suggested. “They’ll love it. Hayden helped me with it.”

“Hayden helped you with a hoodie and a hockey jersey?” Ilya asked, lips curling into a smile. “This is not something you could do by yourself?” Ilya raised an eyebrow at Shane.

“Shut up,” Shane replied. “I just meant he helped me come up with the idea.”

Rose held her hand up to her mouth to hide her laugh.

“Oh, not you too! Seriously?” Shane turned to her with feigned outrage on his face.
“Whatever,” Shane muttered. “Ilya won’t even be able to see with the beaver head on.”

“What are you talking about? Theo can see fine,” Ilya said. “There are holes.” Ilya gestures in front of his eyes with his index and middle finger.

“Theo?” Shane asked.

“The guy in the suit.” Ilya smiled playfully at Shane. “You *do* know there’s someone in that suit, right?”

“Of course I do!” Shane insisted. “Maybe not when I went to games as a kid, but I do *now*.”

“Okay, Shane.” Ilya’s eyes danced as he looked at Shane.

The waiter brought their drinks and took their food orders. Shane felt less anxious ordering his meal than he had in a long time, opting to get the salmon without any modifications even though he was worried about the sauce. Rose smiled when she ordered a burger with a double order of truffle fries. After the waiter left, she laughed when Shane looked at her with his

mouth popped open. “I have to gain 30 pounds for my next role so I feel like I am eating all the time. It’s the best—guilt-free binging.”

“Maybe I’ll get to do that when I retire,” Shane huffed.

“So what is the plan?” Svetlana asked.

Shane just stared at her for a minute before responding, “Um, you kind of saw it already.”

“This is not a plan.” She waved her hand between Shane and Ilya. “You cannot hide forever.”

“It’s better than before at least. We have summers now and mutual days off. Before it was…” Shane trailed off with a grimace.

“Stolen hours,” Ilya supplied. “Was not enough, still isn’t.”

“Yes. This is why you need a plan.”

“We are changing the narrative. Showing the league and the fans that we can be friends. And then when we retire…” Shane trailed off again when he saw Svetlana scowling at him.

“That is a very long time to delay your happiness,” Svetlana reasoned.

“Not to mention that there is still a risk that others will connect the dots,” Rose chimed in. “You should at least have a back up plan.”

“This is starting to sound like an intervention,” Shane muttered. “It will take time. We both know that, but we are making progress. My teammates know I am gay and only Hayden guessed we were together and he’s special.”

“Hayden is jealous of me. He is not special.” Ilya smirked.

“I don’t think anyone else will guess,” Shane insisted. “It would have happened already.”

“I guessed,” Svetlana chimed in.

“Ilya told me that you are special. You know him better than anyone else. Like Hayden knows me. Luckily for us, the only other people like that are my parents and they already know.”

“I hope you are right,” Svetlana said, reaching to pat Ilya’s hand again.

Before Shane could say anything further, the food arrived. Shane felt Ilya tap his foot under the table and when he looked up, Ilya was giving Shane what Hayden called his “heart eyes.” Shane smiled and his mind settled. He felt like he could do anything as long as Ilya kept looking at him like that. He even risked stealing a fry from Rose's plate.

Shane’s phone pinged from the nightstand as he laid with his head on Ilya’s chest later that night.

“Tonight was good, yes?” Ilya asked, kissing Shane’s temple. “Svetlana liked you.”

“Are you sure? It didn’t seem like it to me.”

“She is Russian. Very tough. But yes.”

“I think she liked Rose more than me. She laughed at everything Rose said!” Shane huffed.

“Do not take it personally, моя любовь. Rose is not boring.”

“What’s that supposed to mean? I’m boring?”

“Yes. You know this.” Ilya smiled against Shane’s hair.

Ilya’s phone pinged and he reached over to grab it off the nightstand.

“Hockey’s Enemies to Friends Seen on a Double Date in Hollywood,” Ilya read before showing his phone screen to Shane. The headline was paired with a couple of photos of the foursome walking out of the restaurant earlier that night—Shane holding Rose’s hand and Ilya with an arm around Svetlana. “Was good plan and restaurant was good. Very private. No cameras inside.”

“Rose says she’s practically a professional beard,” Shane chuckled. “This was all her plan.”

“Beard? I do not understand.” Ilya scrunched his brow in confusion.

“You know what. It doesn’t matter. There are a lot of things I would rather be doing than talking about our ex-girlfriends.” Shane rolled over onto Ilya and kissed him deeply.

End Notes

This fic isn't strictly compliant with the full book series (I changed the location of this All Star game and ignored an event from Tough Guy), but I really wanted Svetlana and Rose to meet soon after the cottage.

I hope you enjoyed reading! This is my first fic for this fandom even though I read these books first over a year ago and have had Shane and Ilya on my brain ever since. Please let me know in the comments if you like it! I have a few more ideas that I am hoping to play around with soon. ☺

ерунда translates to nonsense/bullshit
моя любовь translates to my love 🥰

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