

Captain Obvious

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/76403951) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/76403951>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Heated Rivalry (TV)
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov , Scott Hunter (Game Changers) , Svetlana Vetrova , Jackie Pike , David Hollander , Yuna Hollander , Hayden Pike
Additional Tags:	Enemies to Fuckbuddies to Life Partners , Idiots in Love , Gay Sex , Explicit Sexual Content , Explicit Language , Mutual Pining , POV Outsider , Problem Drinking of Russian Vodka , Athletic Sex , 5 + 1 Things , Closeted Character , Angst and Fluff and Smut , Implicit Homophobia , POV Scott Hunter (Game Changers) , POV Svetlana Vetrova , POV Jackie Pike , POV David Hollander , POV Yuna Hollander , POV Shane Hollander , Coming Out , Being Walked In On , Caught , Anal Sex , Blow Jobs , Hand Jobs , Frottage , Top Ilya Rozanov , Bottom Shane Hollander , Dry Humping , Fighting As Foreplay , Romance , Humor , Love Confessions , Canon Compliant , POV Ilya Rozanov , Hollanov - Freeform , And One Olivier to Rule Them All
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of Hollanov From the Outside In
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-25 Completed: 2026-01-10 Words: 11,356 Chapters: 6/6

Captain Obvious

by [Llamafarm](#)

Summary

As she watched Rozanov skate half circles around Shane's unconscious body in the unnatural quiet of the Boston arena, Jackie Pike's heart raced. Her whole body shook as her brain struggled to make sense of what was happening. A few moments later, she recognized the Russian's expression. She'd seen it on the faces of other WAGs when their men went down hard. It was the physical manifestation of her recurring nightmare - Hayden motionless and bleeding after a hit, thinking she was about to lose the love of her life. Nothing else existed but that body lying on the ice.

This was exactly how Rozanov looked at him now, and the only possible explanation was love.

Or,

A 5 + 1 story about five people who observe the relationship between Shane and Ilya unfold in real time and come to their own conclusions about what's going on.

Plus, a bonus chapter featuring the family dinner that Shane's parents invite themselves to right after meeting Ilya for the first time.

Notes

The story will earn its explicit rating in the final chapter and tags will be added as necessary. It starts off pretty angsty and becomes a bit lighter as we go.

This is my first fic for this fandom so please clap if you believe in Tinkerbell. And Happy Holidays!

Chapter 1: Scott Hunter

“Where’s your boy Rozanov?”

Scott hadn't meant anything by it.

From the moment Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov burst onto the scene and into the league, Scott noticed they had some kind of frenemy thing going. It figured because they were both such hot shit on the ice. Or as countless sports commentators rhapsodized, Hollander and Rozanov were spectacularly controlled powerhouses who brought an unprecedented level of skill and precision to the sport. Once in a generation talent that miraculously struck twice in the same season. Game changers you couldn't take your eyes off whenever they laced up.

Part of Scott hated them for it. They were too young, too good, too beautiful. And he wasn't alone in this sentiment. Rookies and old-timers alike resented the pair of golden boys who gobbled up the spotlight and left scraps for the rest of them. The way the fans and media raved and gushed, you'd think no one else existed when Hollander and Rozanov were playing. Some of their teammates probably handled it better than others, but that kind of talent created an impenetrable barrier between them and everyone else in their orbit.

Greatness and loneliness often walked hand in hand. Scott knew something about that. He'd never reached the stratosphere that Hollander and Rozanov currently inhabited, but at the height of his career he'd been close. Living as a closeted gay man in professional sports was its own special kind of hell, and Scott felt a kinship with other players who were isolated, regardless of the reason. Whenever he bumped into Hollander off the ice, Scott could feel the anxiety rolling off the kid in waves. Clearly, Hollander wasn't enjoying any part of the celebrity sideshow. Out of his Metros uniform, he seemed like he might shatter into pieces if someone looked at him sideways.

Motivated mostly by good intentions and a bit of idle curiosity about the two elusive wunderkinds, Scott took it upon himself to act as an ambassador for the veteran players. Inviting them to do celebratory shots at the MLH Awards was his way of offering an olive branch to Hollander, and by extension, Rozanov. He'd spotted them together often enough and assumed they had an easier time relating to each other than to anyone on their own teams. It wasn't like he knew either of them well, but figured they knew each other and thought nothing of asking Hollander to relay the message to Rozanov. Scott expected Hollander to respond to his friendly overture by accepting the gesture for what it was, maybe even show a little gratitude. The kid was strung as tight as a tripwire, but he'd always been polite.

Until now.

As soon as Rozanov's name left Scott's mouth, Hollander's jaw dropped and his eyes popped wide. It was like he'd just spotted a freight train seconds away from running him down. Completely baffled, Scott watched in silence as dozens of different emotions flashed across

Hollander's face, most of them variations of panic and terror. When Hollander started sputtering about how he barely knew Rozanov, Scott exhaled the long breath he hadn't realized he'd been holding. Carefully searching the kid's dark eyes, he saw an expression so familiar it was like a punch to the gut. Scott Hunter had been in the closet way too long not to recognize that look. Scrambling to remember what he'd said to provoke such a response, it occurred to Scott that Hollander was freaking out about the implied link between himself and Rozanov.

Hollander and Rozanov.

Oh.

Shit.

There was no way to know the extent of his involvement with Rozanov, but the fact that the two men *were* involved was as clear as the flush spreading across Hollander's pretty face. Unfortunately, it was also obvious that the boy was ass over teakettle for the Russian. *Poor kid*, Scott thought to himself. Rozanov was a force of nature and his reputation as an unrepentant fuckboy had been firmly established over the past year. Hollander, on the other hand... well, if Rozanov was the jaded Casanova in this star-crossed tragedy, Hollander was the ingenue on a collision course with humiliation and heartbreak.

Overcome by a rush of protectiveness for the vulnerable young man, Scott did everything in his power to reassure Hollander. He acted as if he was none the wiser about the rookie's covert detour from the straight and narrow path of a heterosexual sports god. Eventually, when the kid calmed down enough to do that shot with him and the other vets, Scott put his hand on Hollander's shoulder like a supportive big brother. *It's all good. Nothing to see here.*

Rozanov did not partake in the celebratory group drink that night. In fact, the man was nowhere to be seen. Scott pretended not to notice when Hollander snuck out of the party early, and made a vow to himself to take the kid's secret to the grave. It was a promise he managed to keep for many years, guarding it closely until that soul-killing shitshow of a game. The wound Kip left after walking out of Scott's life was still gaping and when Hollander chirped something cutting about his performance, he couldn't stop himself from spitting venom back.

Scott went for the jugular, calling Hollander out for imitating his obnoxious lover, and Hollander completely lost his shit. The kid never spoke a civil word to him again and that stung. Carrying the same secret burden bonded him to Hollander, even if Scott was the only one who knew it. He'd never meant to create such animosity between them, but it had happened during one of the worst moments in his life when he was at his lowest.

This was why, during the best moment of his life, he spared a thought for Hollander... and Rozanov. Out on the ice after winning the Cup and holding the man he loved in his arms as thousands of fans cheered, Scott Hunter prayed that Shane and Ilya were watching. And if they *were* watching, he hoped seeing him and Kip together gave them hope.

At the very least, they'd know they weren't the only ones. They weren't alone.

Chapter 2: Svetlana Vetrova

Chapter Summary

Svetlana catches Ilya in an unguarded moment and has a life-changing revelation.

Chapter Notes

All non-English words are italicized and translated in the End Notes.

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

Svetlana Vetrova had known Ilya Rozanov since they were children, and she harbored no illusions about who he was. She loved him for who he was, despite his well-deserved reputation as the most obnoxious player in the NHL. She'd also mostly forgiven him for continually breaking her heart since her very first kiss.

Right before she'd turned thirteen, their families had forced them both to attend some boring political dinner hosted by a député in the State Duma. While their fathers were off smoking cigars and acting like Big Important Men, she and Ilya stole sips of premium Russian vodka straight from the bottle and stuffed their faces full of Medovik. Drunk and laughing, Ilya had pulled her into a cloakroom and placed his hands on her hips.

"You look very pretty, Sveta," he'd said, slurring his words. "Kiss me."

Then he'd pressed his wet mouth against hers and Svetlana melted. The kiss was substandard at best because Ilya had no idea what to do with his tongue, but he was beautiful - flushed from the liquor and eyes shining with mischief. Reliving the moment in her head the next morning, Svetlana fancied herself in love with her best friend. It was a fancy that flourished as they matured and continued to explore each other's bodies.

"Let me fuck you, Sveta," Ilya asked a year later. "We should be each other's firsts."

As she watched Ilya rise to meteoric heights with his skating, Svetlana studied ice hockey until she could rattle statistics and strategies off by heart. This and their shared childhood were the points of connection between them, and Svetlana made herself indispensable to Ilya by becoming his confidante in all things professional and personal. No matter how many pretty girls and boys he chased, no matter how many lovers he took, she was the only one, apart from his family, that he always returned to.

"You are my person," he told her on a lazy afternoon as they watched a stupid American rom com Ilya pretended to hate.

This was a statement Ilya repeated on occasions when he drank so much that he lapsed into overwrought sentimentality, and it never failed to leave a mark. Not prone to swooning, Svetlana knew that regardless of these declarations, what Ilya felt for her was more brotherly than passionate or romantic. But whenever they fucked, he was exceptionally tender and considerate which made it difficult for her to separate the sex from true intimacy.

"You must come twice before I can finish," Ilya proclaimed before making good on it.

Needless to say, by this time Ilya had learned what to do with his tongue, and none of her other partners compared. Svetlana couldn't help wishing that her oldest and dearest friend would wake up beside her one morning to discover that she was his match in every way. But she never revealed the contents of her heart to Ilya and kept her options wide open, fearing that too much pressure might crack their relationship into pieces.

The moment their relationship shifted irrevocably came in the middle of Ilya's sixth season with Boston. It was almost banal. On her way out of the bedroom, dance heels dangling from her fingers, Svetlana caught Ilya watching TV—the blue light casting an eerie glow on his slack jaw, gaping like a landed fish, wholly absorbed in what was onscreen.

By itself, this was nothing unusual. After weeks of strenuous training and traveling for away games, Ilya often spaced out like that, falling into a trance state born of physical exhaustion and unrelenting mental stress. But there was something in his expression, a sort of avid longing that didn't fit the picture of a man dressed to party the night away with hedonistic abandon. Pausing in her tracks, Svetlana pivoted towards the screen.

"It's my favorite place on earth. And my parents' cottage, the one where I grew up spending my summers, is ten minutes away..." a male voice narrated in the background as the young man pictured moved gracefully through a series of yoga poses.

The guy was undeniably gorgeous, and familiar, Svetlana realized as she continued to watch. Before the name was spoken, she knew exactly who it was. Shane Hollander, Ilya's archrival, official nemesis and the current object of his ravenous gaze and conspicuous erection. *O Bozhe*, Svetlana breathed to herself, as she did the math at lightning speed. Her hands went numb and she almost dropped her shoes as it dawned on her that she was no longer competing for Ilya's attention - she was losing.

"I'm ready. Unless you've decided we should stay in and watch... whatever this is," she said, scrutinizing Ilya's reaction to gauge whether she'd calculated correctly.

Something dangerous flashed in his eyes before he replied, "Sorry. It's so fucking boring I almost fell into a coma."

"Mmm. He's fucking hot, though," she pressed, wondering if Ilya even realized he was hard.

When he shrugged dismissively and cut the power to the TV, Svetlana turned away from him, blinking back tears. Ilya never lied about being attracted to other people, especially men. It

was a sort of game they played, testing to see if they had similar taste, competing with each other to seduce the same guy. And she knew better than anyone what Ilya was like when he feigned apathy to conceal the depth of his emotions.

Later, in the backseat of the car on the way to the club, Ilya ignored her in favor of texting someone. His energy felt chaotic, unsettled. Was this about Shane Hollander? Imagining Ilya with Shane was as easy as breathing. Two exquisite young men at their physical peak, naked and wrapped tightly together, moving in sync. Their lovemaking would be like a piece of performance art, an exhibit she'd choose to avoid at all costs to spare herself the visual of Ilya fucking someone who could put that look on his face.

Svetlana gave in to her impulse to poke at him. "Are you seeing anyone these days?"

"Are you jealous?" he asked, still staring at his phone.

She laughed it off. "No. I think you know me better than that."

"So there's no one serious?" she added when it was evident that Ilya had no intention of conversing with her about this or anything else.

"Nope."

Svetlana stopped circling and went in for the kill. "Not even... Jane?"

Her head was down, but she could feel Ilya's eyes on her for the first time that night. *Score. Direct hit.* A pyrrhic victory. *Shane. Jane.* Fucking stupid. Obvious. The infantile hope she'd nurtured about the nature of Ilya's feelings for her guttered like a dying flame.

It wasn't fully extinguished until the following spring when Ilya's father died. She'd stood by his side at the funeral, holding his hand while his so-called family tried to carve him into pieces and sell him for parts. At dinner that night, she'd hoped to rescue him from his predatory thug of a brother, but it was Ilya who slammed Andrei against a wall after he called her a whore.

"I don't deserve you," he'd said to her once Andrei slunk off, leaving them alone.

The paths she could take were laid out before her in stark relief: tell him he was right, or give him her blessing to pursue the one he loved. And that was the moment when Svetlana finally rose to the challenge of her life and became the friend Ilya Rozanov deserved.

"I hope Jane realizes how lucky he is," she whispered, speaking the words to set them all free.

Ilya's silence was the only confirmation she needed. Her boy was in love. Touching his face, she kissed his cheek once and walked away.

Russian to English translation:

"O Bozhe" = "Oh my God"

Chapter 3: Jackie Pike

Chapter Summary

Hayden Pike thinks he knows what Shane's hiding, but it's his wife who has the scoop. Lucky for Shane, Jackie likes him enough to feed him the most boring food in the world, water him with ginger ale, and keep his nuclear-grade secrets on lockdown.

Chapter Notes

All non-English words are italicized and translated in the End Notes.

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

Jackie was sitting up in bed nursing Amber when Hayden shuffled into the room, staring at his phone like it contained the answers to life's great mysteries. He seemed pretty upset about something.

“What’s wrong, babe?” she asked, yawning.

Hayden looked up, his muddled expression clearing as he beamed at her and their newborn. Then his eyes dropped to his phone again.

“Do you think Shane’s blowing me off?” he replied, eyebrows furrowed.

Ah. The BFF. She should’ve known. Hayden had been lowkey obsessed with Shane Hollander since he was drafted by the Metros at the beginning of his rookie season. To be fair, everyone was obsessed with Shane. The phenom from Ottawa, the greatest Canadian player since Gretzky. Jackie had never met anyone like Shane and the buzz around him was something none of the older WAGs had seen either.

According to Hayden, most of the other players kept their distance from Shane when he first joined the team. Some were intimidated by him and the power he held over their professional destiny. For others, it was a bitter pill to swallow that a 19-year-old boy was now the shining sun around which their universe revolved, almost totally eclipsing the rest of them. Not her husband, though.

Hayden made it his mission to befriend the new guy, a socially awkward kid who just happened to be the best hockey player in North America. Maybe the world. Hayden’s huge heart and bone-deep loyalty were the main reasons she’d married him and a big part of what made him such a great dad. Except for the days when every other word out of his mouth was

a swear. Or he referred to their children as tiny terrorists. Or lost a couple of them at the Biodome. Shane had ratted Hayden out for that last one and Jackie was still giving him shit about it.

When Hayden dragged Shane home one day like a stray puppy, Jackie quickly sensed her only choice was to learn how to cook macrobiotic food and stock the fridge with ginger ale. It was a small price to pay. Compared to the other players, Shane was a saint. He didn't drink, smoke, swear within earshot of the kids, or hook up with a different puck bunny every night. And though he was confused by Hayden's choice to get married and start a family so young, Shane allowed himself to be adopted by the entire Pike clan. Eventually. He'd even changed a poop diaper or two.

Most importantly, Hayden needed Shane. The professional lives of NHL hockey players were brutally short and competitive. Camaraderie was a big part of team culture, but true friendship among teammates was hard to come by, and Hayden didn't have time to make friends with anyone else. When Shane disappeared into long stretches of social hibernation without warning or explanation, her husband took it personally. She and Hayden had both come from large families and thrived in that chaos. He couldn't fathom why his closest friend would choose to spend so much time alone.

"He's probably just decompressing," Jackie said, switching the baby to her other breast.

"But Amber was born two weeks ago and he hasn't texted once."

"Our parents have barely texted, babe. She's our fourth. After the third, it's like, 'Haven't you people heard of birth control?'"

"I think he's got someone with him," Hayden muttered as he walked over to the bed and leaned down to touch Jackie's cheek and kiss the crown of Amber's head.

"Who?"

"No idea. I just called him and he was acting weird. It sounded like someone else was there, coughing... or choking."

"Maybe he was watching TV."

Hayden looked skeptical. "Maybe he's got a girl with him. Like Lily. I don't know why he won't just fucking admit it. You think she's underage or something?"

"Seriously, Hayden?" Jackie complained, shaking her head. "If the first word out of this baby's mouth is an F-bomb, I'm leaving you for J.J."

"For fuck's sake, Jackie!"

"Hayden!"

"Sorry, sorry," he stammered, red-faced. "But you can't say shi... stuff like that, Jacks. You're gonna give me a heart attack."

The thing was, Jackie knew Shane Hollander didn't have a girl hidden away at his lake house. But she couldn't tell her husband because he'd demand to know how she knew. And that was a secret. Even from Shane. It wasn't like he'd confided in her or anything. She'd just figured it out over the years as she got to know Shane better and learned a few of his quirks. Like his raging case of OCD, and the way his voice went even flatter when he didn't want to answer a particular question.

The first time she'd observed anything noteworthy was when some of the Metros and WAGs went out to party together after making it into the playoffs. Within seconds of entering the club, Shane was completely surrounded by girls, some of them drop-dead gorgeous, all of them dying to get a piece of the hottest player in the NHL. Standing stone-faced and silent in the middle of the mayhem, Shane seemed to be praying for a sinkhole to open up directly beneath his feet.

Granted, a few of the women were downright nasty, pushing into Shane's space to grope his chest and arms. One even squeezed his ass. She'd seen women like this hit on Hayden, either unaware or unconcerned that Jackie was right there. And though her husband was faithful to his core, he gobbled up the attention like candy. He never encouraged it, but he also didn't act as if he wanted to shake the women off like bugs and run for the door.

Poor Shane.

He'd always been shy. It'd taken almost a year for him to warm up to Jackie. The only time she'd clocked him showing interest in anyone was at some trendy new restaurant downtown when a hot bartender winked at him. Blushing, Shane stuffed the napkin with the bartender's name and number into his pocket when he thought no one was looking. *Anthony. 514-663-2757.* She hadn't seen that coming.

When Hayden begged Jackie to set Shane up with one of her friends, she talked herself into believing there was a chance he might be attracted to women too. She scrolled through all of her contacts trying to find someone sexy and sweet, grounded and confident enough to withstand Shane's initial coldness. She finally decided on Lisa, a stunning yoga instructor studying for her master's in physical therapy to pursue her goal of working with disabled children.

It was like watching a balloon deflate in slow motion. Lisa had been crushing on Shane for years and pulled out all the stops to prepare something he'd actually eat. Jackie served the meal with the same bottle of rosé Shane always brought but never drank a drop of. When her friend finally threw in the towel after countless failed attempts to engage Shane in conversation, he stood up from the table to walk her to the door. Jackie held her breath, waiting to see if things were about to heat up.

"Thank you for dinner tonight. It was delicious," he said. "And best of luck with your studies."

Jesus fucking Christ, Shane. Swear jar three times. Poor Lisa.

No matter how many times Hayden pleaded with her to try it again or how much expensive jewelry he bribed her with, Jackie refused to subject another friend to her husband's

criminally adorable bestie. Because Shane Hollander was gay, and so deep in the closet he might as well have been Narnian. Unfortunately, this wasn't the only secret of his she was keeping, and she truly wished she didn't know what she knew and could unsee what she'd seen. It was the worst kind of secret, one with the potential to destroy the connection between her, Hayden, and Shane.

Ilya Rozanov. Jackie must've heard that name thousands of times since Shane's rookie season, always in the company of an F-bomb or two. Sometimes she wondered if the man's birth certificate actually read *Fucking Rozanov*. Or her personal favorite, *Cocksucking Russian Motherfucker*. Jackie got it. The guy was like a cartoon villain - constantly talking shit in that OTT accent, peacocking around like he was God's gift to women, and making outrageously arrogant claims about his skills.

The real kicker, though, was that Rozanov backed it all up. On the ice, he was every bit as good as he claimed to be. Insufferable, yes. But also untouchable by anyone other than Shane. The competition between them was legendary and their celebrated hatred for each other was the hottest merch the NHL had on sale. A matched pair of ridiculously beautiful, talented guys locked in a blood feud to see who would come out on top - it was catnip for sports fans all over the globe.

Too delicious to resist, Jackie had swallowed the whole thing down, hook, line, and sinker. Plus, Shane's passionate loathing for Rozanov seemed to be the real deal. The fire in his eyes whenever they settled on the Russian could not be faked. Jackie had never questioned the party line until the night Shane lost focus during a home game against Boston and unwittingly put himself directly in Cliff Marlow's line of fire. He ended up curled on his side, still as death. The whole arena held its breath as the medics rushed onto the ice and the Metros looked on in horror, fearing the worst for their captain. Consumed by panic for her friend, Jackie didn't notice the lone Boston Raider lingering on the ice until J.J.'s girlfriend nudged her shoulder.

"Que fait Rozanov?" Camille asked.

Undoubtedly, this was the billion dollar question. Turning her eyes to the Russian, Jackie watched him skate small half circles around Shane, hovering by the ring of medics attending to the fallen player. He'd taken his helmet off, presumably to get a better look at his injured opponent.

"Probablement espérer qu'il soit mort," a Montreal fan seated behind them sniped.

But from where she sat, that fan had gotten hold of the wrong end of the stick because Jackie couldn't detect a trace of smugness or satisfaction from the Boston captain. If anything, he seemed shaken. Terrified. Lost. As she continued to track Rozanov, Jackie's heart raced. Her whole body shook as her brain struggled to make sense of what was happening. A few moments later, she recognized his expression. She'd seen it on the faces of other WAGs when their men went down hard. It was the physical manifestation of her recurring nightmare - Hayden motionless and bleeding after a hit, thinking she was about to lose the love of her life. Nothing else existed but that body lying on the ice.

This was exactly how Rozanov looked at Shane now, and the only possible explanation was love.

Rozanov was in love with Shane.

Holy shit.

Ilya Rozanov was Lily.

Chapter End Notes

French to English translation:

"Que fait Rozanov?" = "What is Rozanov doing?"

"Probablement espérer qu'il soit mort" = "Probably hoping he's dead"

Chapter 4: David Hollander

Chapter Summary

David Hollander shows up at Shane's place unannounced and gets an eyeful, triggering identity crises all around. Who says nothing exciting happens in Canada? And why does that man not have his own charger?

Chapter Notes

I hadn't read the books when I wrote this, so this opinion is based purely on my interpretation of the show.

I'm gonna be real here. Shane's parents are not supportive when they first discover their son's secret. I'll give them partial credit because like all non-Boston fans, they're afflicted with Rozanov Derangement Syndrome. Also, they do manage to turn things around by the end of the episode. But the fact that they make their only child think he has to apologize for being gay is 100% bad parenting.

P.S. Courtesy of a wonderful reader, here is some Canadian context about cottages that I did not know: the term 'cottage' is an Eastern Canada regionalism for a summer home (usually a lake house). Where I'm from, it would be absurd to call Shane's lake house a cottage.

While pulling into Shane's driveway, David noticed the new metal sculpture out front. Modern art, his son's new passion. The corners of his mouth curled up affectionately and he wondered how he'd raised a son so different from himself. "Nesting," Yuna called it. And their boy sure did love to nest. Shane had designed this place from the foundation up, devoting most of his free time to turning it into the sanctuary he'd envisioned.

It was 5,000 square feet of custom-built waterfront luxury with three bedrooms and floor-to-ceiling windows. Meticulously appointed to Shane's exact specifications, the house practically overflowed with amenities. He'd sweated every detail, diving down rabbit holes on construction and real estate sites and interviewing at least eight architectural and interior design firms before he was satisfied.

For most of his life, Shane had eaten, slept, and breathed hockey and David was relieved to watch his son develop interests outside of the game. He liked that Shane was expanding beyond the insular world of professional sports, even if his new hobbies weren't ones David shared. While Yuna was obsessed with hockey and struggled to see past Shane's NHL career,

David worried about what would happen when their son was forced to retire because of injury, age, or both.

Having his own place was good for Shane. Much as he loved spending time with his son, David knew Shane needed a refuge where he could hide away from everyone, including his parents. Since he was a little boy, he'd been a highly sensitive person, easily overwhelmed in social situations and always trying to put on a brave face to avoid causing any trouble. David chalked this up to his son being an only child, with a mile-wide perfectionist streak inherited from Yuna.

Beneath the thin veneer of forced calm, Shane had visible fault lines in danger of cracking everywhere but on the ice. In the arena, the timid, anxious boy he'd raised was a different creature altogether - confident, dominant, masterful. It was a strange and wonderful thing to see and after all these years, David still hadn't fully adjusted to Shane's ability to transform himself this way. But he was grateful for the opportunities his son found to relax and feel safe in his own skin. And because the cottage was one of the few places where Shane felt completely at home, as his father, David loved it more than any house he'd owned himself.

Using his key to open the front door, David called Shane's name. Not too loudly, though. He didn't want to disturb his son if he was napping. The meditation story was bullshit, of course, but if all went well, he'd find the charger quickly and Shane would be none the wiser. Normally, David wouldn't drop by unannounced, especially when his son had specifically asked for privacy. But his cell was about to die and Shane wasn't answering his own phone which left him little choice.

"Aha," he crowed quietly when he located the charger in the first place he checked.

While closing the kitchen drawer where Shane stored batteries and a heavy duty flashlight, David heard two male voices approaching from the lake. He squinted through the glass window, spotting his son in swim trunks and a towel followed closely by another young man. Hm. He was sure Shane had told him and Yuna he'd be alone for the whole two weeks. And that man with him wasn't Hayden. He was taller than his son's best friend, and bigger. His hair was almost the same color, but curly, not straight.

As Shane and his companion climbed the stone stairs, David knew he should make his exit before being seen, but he stood rooted to the expensive concrete floor, simply staring at them. If that guy wasn't Hayden, then who the hell was he? Shane only allowed a handful of people inside his cottage and... wait. He recognized that man's face, the distinctive mole on his left cheek. Wasn't that... no, it couldn't be.

'My mind went blank' was an expression David had understood only in theory until the moment he saw Shane reach for the captain of the Boston Raiders and pull him into an open-mouthed kiss. Maybe it was more accurate to say his mind churned with so many thoughts they canceled each other out. He wasn't sure what shocked him more: that his son was passionately kissing another man, or that the man was a Russian hockey player and Shane's archrival. The one player they'd all been rooting against for nearly a decade was now pushing David's only child up against a window in a possessive, unmistakably intimate embrace.

He tasted bile in his throat and felt the pulse in his left temple throbbing. Time to leave.

Unfortunately, making a silent exit was not in the cards. Just as David remembered how to move his legs, the Russian looked up at him. Then Shane turned around, his face transfigured into a rigid mask of shock and horror. A part of David wanted to wrap his boy in his arms and comfort him—to say the things Shane needed to hear, to let him know that everything was okay and he had no reason to be afraid. It was all true. Nothing his son did could make David love him any less.

But the words wouldn't come, and as he fled Shane's house like a thief in broad daylight, David wondered how on earth he could fix this. Was he a coward? What else would you call a father who abandoned his terrified child because he couldn't wrap his head around his son's choice of partners? Not a lovely girl like Rose, or any girl at all. He and Yuna had discussed the possibility that their son might be gay, and they'd agreed to support him no matter what.

After seeing Shane embrace a physically imposing man famous for his promiscuity, David realized that he didn't know himself as well as he'd thought. Wondering whether it might have been easier to accept his son with a less masculine partner was pointless. That person existed only in David's imagination, not in his son's real life. Shane had picked the unlikeliest of lovers: a trash-talking womanizer and his only real competition. Ilya Rozanov.

It dawned on David that this must be serious, at least for Shane. His son was an obsessive rule-follower and loathed notoriety of any kind. He'd avoid taking a risk like this unless he cared too much to stop. Rozanov, on the other hand, had branded himself as an international playboy and it galled David to trust Shane's heart to a man like that.

Damn it all to hell. How was he going to break the news to his wife? Practicing a skill he'd learned from Shane, David spent most of the drive home trying to visualize a peaceful forest and slow his breathing. Making a pit stop at the local liquor store, he bought two bottles of imported vodka. The good kind. He had a feeling they'd come in handy very soon.

Chapter 5: Yuna Hollander

Chapter Summary

Ever wonder what's running through Yuna Hollander's mind when she finds out her son has been sleeping with the enemy for years? I'm guessing it goes something like this...

Or,

Shane introduces Yuna to his first boyfriend and she makes her case for Mother of the Year. Or *Mommie Dearest*. Depends on how you look at it. Lucky for her, Shane is the forgiving type and Ilya loves pasta.

Chapter Notes

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

Leaning against the kitchen counter, Yuna refreshed her screen for the fifth time. Her husband should've been home thirty minutes ago. They hadn't seen or spoken to their son in ten days and her maternal Spidey senses were working overtime. Silent meditation for two weeks? Did Shane really expect her to buy that? She opened the fridge to check if she had all the ingredients for spaghetti pomodoro and spotted a cereal box on the top shelf where the milk should've been. Sure enough, the milk carton sat sweating in the cereal drawer. This was getting out of hand. She was just about to text David when she heard the front door open.

"What took you so long?" she called out.

David staggered into the room like a zombie, his face pasty white and hairline soaked with sweat. He hadn't looked this bad since last summer when his mother was rushed to the hospital. Also, she noticed that he had a bottle of Beluga Noble clutched in each hand. Not a good sign. She put her phone down and searched her husband's face, breathing in through her nose deep and slow.

"It's Shane..." he said and fell silent.

Yuna's knees gave out and she slid to the floor.

Rushing to help her up, David assured her, "He's ok, Yuna. He's ok."

"Then what in God's name..." she gasped as she struggled to her feet, glaring at her husband.

"There was somebody with him at the house."

Yuna continued to stare at her husband, waiting for him to elaborate.

“So?” she prompted after several long moments of silence.

David closed his eyes briefly before fixing them on her. “He was with a man.”

“And?” she asked, twisting her hands impatiently.

“They were kissing,” he added.

Well. This was a surprise. But not entirely out of the blue.

“Honey, we’ve talked about this. I didn’t think you minded that Shane might be gay.”

“That’s not what this is about,” he insisted.

“Are you sure? I mean hypotheticals are one thing, but reality is...”

“It was Rozanov.”

“What?”

“The man Shane was with.”

Yuna crossed her arms and pursed her lips. “You’re wrong. That’s impossible.”

“I know what I saw,” he said. “They were less than twenty feet away from me.”

“Did you have your contacts in?”

“For Christ’s sake, Yuna. I was driving. What do you think?”

“I think you’re confused and jumping to conclusions,” she replied.

“I’m not confused,” he snapped. “In shock, maybe. I was there to pick up a goddamn charger. It never crossed my mind that I’d see Rozanov’s hands all over our son.”

Yuna felt the bile rising in her throat. “This can’t be happening.”

David’s voice softened a little. “It’s happening, sweetheart. And if I know Shane, he’ll be here any minute in a total panic. We have to pull it together.”

Yuna turned and walked into the living room, sinking onto the leather couch and burying her face in her hands. After pouring himself a glass of water, David joined her. They sat there without speaking until the sound of gravel under tires pierced the stillness. She looked out the window and saw that there were two people in Shane’s car. What in heaven’s name was she going to say to her son? He was about to come out to them, an event she’d spent years preparing for. She’d planned to open her arms as soon as the words were spoken, leaving no room for doubt that he had her full support. And love.

Yet when Shane stood in the hallway vibrating with panic, Rozanov flanking him like a protective right wing, all Yuna could think about was hockey. Images of the two of them facing off on the ice, game after game, were superimposed over the two men standing in front

of her now. As Shane told them he was gay and made the ridiculously unnecessary introduction of the young man beside him, she fixated on that man's shirt. The Boston Raiders.

"But you hate him," she blurted without thinking after the Russian confirmed that he and Shane were lovers.

"No," Shane responded firmly. "I mean I get that. But no, I actually, uh... I love him."

Love? Yuna looked at Rozanov, who returned her gaze evenly. He gave no ground, but had his hands clasped in front of him like an obedient schoolboy. It occurred to her that she'd never seen him so still, so quiet. It was disorienting. The whole scene was surreal and her brain did its glitching thing, slipping some random image into her stream of consciousness and playing it on a loop. Right now it was Dorothy getting sucked into the tornado that would take her to Oz.

Yuna was thankful for the momentary reprieve when Shane asked if they could sit down because she had no idea what to do next. Coffee. She could make coffee for everybody to buy herself some time. While she moved through the familiar steps on autopilot, Yuna attempted to sift through the jumble of questions in her head. Shooting them rapid fire at her son was her first instinct, but Shane would snap shut like a bivalve if she gave into that impulse. Better to start with something encouraging, less threatening.

"I think we thought maybe you were gay," she said, distributing the coffee cups among the three men.

"You did?" Shane replied.

Her son's face was impassive, but there was a note of curiosity in his voice. That was promising. David took the ball, echoing Yuna's sentiment and providing fatherly support in that way of his, blunt but gentle. Then he bit the bullet, asking what the hell their son was doing with Rozanov. He used nicer language, of course, but it unleashed the tide of questions she'd barely managed to stem. And they were off.

For Yuna, the first order of business was determining just how long this situation had been going on. It was deeply unpleasant to learn that the early years of Shane's relationship with Rozanov had been limited to casual sex, but not half as devastating as finding out they'd been involved since their rookie seasons. She was angry to discover the extent of her son's dishonesty, and the way she grilled Rozanov bordered on sadistic. Catching herself before things got ugly, she decided alcohol was necessary to smooth some of the edges.

Russian vodka, she chuckled to herself, remembering the two brand-new bottles now chilling in the freezer. David had an interesting sense of humor. He was also made of strong stuff, doing a lot of the heavy lifting in this powder keg of a conversation. Wincing inwardly when her husband called Rozanov a "ladies' man," Yuna was still very grateful that David confronted the Russian about his prolific sex life. After dealing with the current disaster, they'd need to talk about updating his vocabulary for the 21st century. But the point stood.

Rozanov's response to David's challenge was direct and unexpectedly romantic.

“It’s true I’ve been with many women, but I have only been in love with one person,” he said solemnly, turning towards Shane.

Her son colored a bit and returned Rozanov’s intense gaze. “Same here. Only one.”

Yuna’s eyes widened as she watched the two young men make their cautious, earnest declarations. Shane and Ilya had just confessed their love for each other in front of them, but she and David were only witnesses, intruders in their own home. It was a wonderful, terrible thing to see, and crushing to realize how much of himself Shane had hidden from her.

Sensing the tell-tale pressure behind her eyes, Yuna got up from the table and eventually made her way outside. Like David had said, she needed to pull it together. She didn’t get that chance because Shane followed her out of the house and began to speak.

“Mom, um, I need you to know that I did really try. I tried really hard, but um,” he said with a small wobble in his voice, “I just can’t help it.”

What kind of mother am I? she asked herself as the pressure gave way to tears. *I’ve made him think he has to apologize for being gay.* A starburst of clarity burned through the self-involved fog she’d been stumbling through all morning. She turned towards her son and finally did what she was supposed to do, assuring him that he had nothing to be sorry about, and begging forgiveness for her inexcusable behavior. Holding Shane in her arms, she could feel him trembling. She choked back her shame in order to tell him how much she loved him, and how proud he made her.

Once Shane seemed steadier, Yuna sprang into full momager mode, demanding to know what the plan was. Back in familiar territory, she started pumping her son for information. When he didn’t have the answers Yuna required, she began to supply them herself. Then she noticed Shane looking at her like a cornered animal and mentally kicked herself. Again.

“Have you two eaten lunch?” she asked, changing tack.

It just so happened that the answer was no, and as soon as she filled Rozanov’s bowl with spaghetti, he attacked the noodles like he hadn’t seen food in days. She wondered what Shane was feeding the poor boy, and how long he’d been at the cottage. Clearing her throat, Yuna launched into PR strategy, thinking aloud as she brainstormed about how Shane could announce this new development in his life. There were opportunities for endorsements here. Some sponsors might balk, but...

“Mom, can you just take three steps back please?” Shane said, interrupting her reveries about limited edition rainbow-themed Reeboks. “I’m not going to come out or anything yet.”

Ok then. Yuna stopped short and trained her eyes on the man sitting beside him sprinkling parmesan over his third helping of spaghetti.

“You’ll play in Ottawa?” she asked, frowning.

Hearing Rozanov declare, unequivocally, that he would leave Boston for her son was simultaneously relieving and disappointing.

“Loyalty is important,” she asserted, giving voice only to her disapproval.

Shane immediately went on the offensive, but Rozanov handled it more gracefully, making a humorous observation about the similarities between mother and son. He was a sharp one, this kid, and Yuna was impressed despite herself. She felt it again when Rozanov said he’d talked to Scott Hunter at the MLH Awards, and even caught herself agreeing with him about how brave the Admirals captain had been. Maybe this wasn’t such a catastrophe after all.

And then Shane fell apart.

As she watched Rozanov talk her son down from a full-blown panic attack, Yuna realized that he was doing her job. And if she was being honest, he was better at it. Like David, he spoke from a solid core of faith in their son, and his faith in Shane seemed absolute. He was generous enough to include her and David in the tight circle he’d drawn around Shane and himself. It was an elegant way to announce his wish to become a member of their family, gently declaring his intentions towards her son.

She also noticed how Shane poked his head up when he heard the word “boyfriend.” It was rather amusing considering their very recent professions of love and all the risks they’d taken to be together. Rozanov, for his part, seemed to recognize this and fought a fond smile as he answered her son’s question in his understated manner. He was so tender with Shane, so patient. In a flash, Yuna saw their whole dynamic unreel like a film. This relationship, once unthinkable to her, had been nearly a decade in the making. It was clear to anyone paying attention that Rozanov *knew* Shane.

If she hadn’t been completely certain that the person seated at her kitchen table was Ilya Rozanov, she wouldn’t have recognized him. The narcissistic showman who seemed dead set on provoking everyone had been replaced by a serious young man. His watchful blue eyes studied her and David, trying to work them out so he didn’t misstep. He was uncommonly thoughtful for a man his age, and ready to sacrifice his captaincy on the second-best team in the league for Shane. That he loved Shane was undeniable.

After Ilya managed to soothe her son, he pressed a soft kiss to Shane’s mouth, meant purely for comfort. Instead of being awkward or off-putting, Yuna felt her eyes filling again at the surprisingly sweet gesture.

“Since rookie season,” she said, smiling at her husband.

David smiled back, his eyes soft. “The summer before.”

In unison, they turned towards the couple sitting across from them and invited themselves over for dinner. Being married for almost thirty years had its advantages. Shane and Ilya nodded, exchanging wary looks like there was a secret agenda hidden in the invitation. Then Shane said he’d grill some steaks and David volunteered to bring the alcohol - the rest of the vodka, she assumed. Even Ilya chimed in, politely offering to make a Russian salad. As the boys were on their way out, David and Shane kicked up a fuss until she promised to text before they arrived. For the life of her, Yuna couldn’t understand why. She didn’t push, though.

There'd been enough revelations for one day.

Chapter End Notes

Did you catch the look in David Hollander's eyes near the end of Episode 6? They were twinkling.

Chapter 6: Ilya & Shane

Chapter Summary

Shane and Ilya just came out to the Hollanders, so the hard part is over, right? It's time to eat, drink, and be merry, but first Shane needs to work off a little existential angst. Luckily, Ilya is the man with a plan.

Chapter Notes

WARNING: This chapter contains explicit sexual content. If that's not your thing, the first five chapters can stand alone as a complete story.

This takes place immediately after the season finale of the show. Buckle up! It's the longest one yet.

All non-English words are italicized and translated in the End Notes.

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

They held hands and grinned for most of the ride back to the cottage. At one point, Shane nearly drove them into a ditch because he kept sneaking peeks at his newly official boyfriend.

"Would be a shame to die now," Ilya quipped when Shane got the car under control again. "Also, we need to go to market. Is one close?"

"Yes," Shane said.

"We will go there now?" Ilya asked, resting his hand on Shane's thigh.

"No. We're going home first."

"Why?"

"Priorities, Ilya."

"Ah yes," Ilya said, giving Shane's thigh a gentle squeeze. "I know this word. It is good word."

As soon as they pulled into the driveway, Shane turned off the car and raced to the front entrance. Hustling to keep up, Ilya had barely made it through the threshold when Shane pushed him against the door and used his body weight to keep him there.

"You have me," Ilya purred, shoving a knee between Shane's legs. "What will you do with me?"

"It's what I'm going to do *to* you," Shane said and leaned in to suck on Ilya's Adam's apple.

"You are cheating," Ilya whined as he struggled to free himself.

"Mmmph," Shane grunted into Ilya's neck, refusing to budge.

Aroused by Shane's show of strength, Ilya pushed in closer and rubbed against him.

"You will be sorry," he threatened, rotating his hips in a slow circle so Shane could feel every hard inch of him.

"*Fuck*," Shane gasped, relaxing his grip a little.

Ilya exploited Shane's momentary lapse of concentration to break free of his hold and reverse their positions. Before Shane knew what was happening, he found himself facing the door with Ilya plastered to his back.

"You're such a dick," Shane complained, thrusting his ass back to grind it up and down the length of Ilya's cock.

Ilya groaned, but ceded no territory. "You fight dirty, Hollander."

Shane bucked against Ilya more aggressively. "Look who's talking."

They started grappling in earnest. Ilya was slightly taller, but Shane was just as strong, so the wrestling match dragged on until they were both red-faced and sweating. With a sudden burst of effort, Ilya shoved Shane onto his back, straddled him, and pinned his hands above his head. Shane arched up immediately, trying to dislodge him, but Ilya bore down to maintain his position.

Ilya made a low, frustrated sound in his throat. "Why are we doing this?"

Shane tried to scowl ferociously, but his efforts to intimidate failed spectacularly. The pissed-off version of Shane made Ilya even harder and he was mesmerized by his boyfriend's rosy, freckled cheeks. Mastering his desire to kiss Shane's pout required most of Ilya's mental discipline, and he considered his next words carefully.

"You want to fight, I think," Ilya teased. "Is like foreplay for you."

Shane seemed unimpressed. "Shut up and fuck me."

"On the floor?"

"On my bed."

"You will be good if I let you up?"

"I guess you'll have to take your chances."

Raising both hands in surrender, Ilya dismounted and got to his feet. They were now facing each other again and panting hard. Seizing the moment, Shane dove tongue-first into Ilya's open mouth, apparently deciding oxygen was overrated. Then he jammed his hand down the front of Ilya's pants and started pulling on his cock, quick and rough.

Ilya grunted. Without lubrication, Shane's hand on him chafed, but it was good, so good. They moaned as they kissed, sucking and biting at each other's lips. Lowering his mouth to Ilya's jawline, Shane licked and nipped at the salty flesh. An overachiever in all things, he jerked Ilya's cock with the same level of precision he showed on the ice. It was exactly how Ilya touched himself, and he was on the verge of coming way too soon.

Grabbing Shane's hand to still it, Ilya murmured, "Easy, easy. What are you doing?"

"You need to fucking ask?" Shane growled, agitated by the interruption. "I'm trying to get you off."

"Something is different," Ilya said. "You have been like crazy man since we get back. It is about your parents, yes?"

Shane took a deep breath and then deflated like a souffle.

"I don't know," he answered. "I wanted to tell them a long time ago, and it went better than I expected. But now I feel... um... weird, I guess," he sighed. "I don't understand why I'm like this. It's so fucked up."

"No," Ilya asserted, stepping back to cup Shane's face in his hands and thumb his cheekbones. "This is first time we are together in your home. We tell each other 'I love you.' Your father sees us and our big secret is not secret anymore. It's..."

"A lot," Shane supplied.

"But it is good *a lot*," Ilya stated, though it was clearly a question.

"Very good," Shane confirmed.

"So we celebrate," Ilya said. "But there is no big rush. We take our time to savor. Ok?"

"Ok."

Now that they were on the same page, Ilya leaned in and ran the tip of his tongue along the seam of Shane's lips, slow and delicate. Pulling back a fraction, Ilya licked his own lips, noting Shane's sharp intake of breath. Dropping to his knees, Ilya looked up at Shane's face and reveled in his boyfriend's expression. When Ilya nuzzled his balls through the fabric and inhaled deeply, Shane closed his eyes and moaned.

"You're leaking," Ilya said before sucking on the wet spot by the head of Shane's cock.

Ilya pulled Shane's underwear down and his cock sprang free, smacking against his stomach and drooling precome there. As he lapped up the fluid, Ilya carefully avoided touching Shane's dick.

"Oh god," Shane groaned like he was being tortured.

"You are so fucking sexy," Ilya growled and sucked Shane into his mouth, swirling his tongue around the head to get it sloppy wet.

When Shane tried to push deeper into his throat, Ilya held his hips still and started suckling the tip. The sight of Ilya nursing on his dick nearly finished Shane.

"Holy shit," he mewled and grabbed Ilya's shoulders to stay upright. "Jesus fucking Christ."

Ilya answered Shane's prayer by swallowing his entire cock from tip to root.

"Oh fuck. Please," Shane sobbed, twisting his fingers in Ilya's curls.

Seconds later, Shane grunted like he was dying and emptied his balls down Ilya's throat. It was so hot Ilya had to squeeze himself to stop from coming. Neither one of them moved for a while, stunned that they could still wreck each other like this after so many years. Eventually, Shane bellyflopped onto his bed and buried his head under a pillow, frustrated because he'd come so quickly.

Amused, aroused, and determined, Ilya climbed on top of him and slotted his dick between Shane's asscheeks. It was impossible for Shane to ignore Ilya's cock when it was this close to his hole, and his own dick started chubbing up again. Ilya rolled his hips like a pole dancer, and the pressure on Shane's cock and balls was just right as his boyfriend humped him into the mattress.

"I'm gonna come if you don't fuck me," Shane warned, too far gone to realize how ridiculous that sounded.

Instead of responding in words, Ilya coated his cock with lube and pulled Shane up onto his hands and knees. They'd had sex that morning, so Ilya didn't need to spend much time fingering him open. His entire body shivered with tension as he pushed into Shane like he was caught in a rip tide and trying not to drown. Shane's ass sucked him in, clenching around his cock with a tight, hot grip.

"Hollander," he moaned, pulling out to roll Shane onto his back. "I want to see you."

This didn't feel like fucking anymore. Ilya was making love to Shane, soft and sweet, gently bringing them both back to the brink. His eyes were glued to Shane's face, tracking every change so he wouldn't miss anything. And Shane didn't hide how good he felt, arching into each thrust and digging his fingers into Ilya's lower back to get him deeper. When they finally collapsed in a pile of tangled limbs, Shane climbed on top of Ilya so he could feel his boyfriend's heart beating against his chest.



Later, lying together and listening to the sounds of the lake, Shane noticed the afternoon light had started to wane. A quick glance at the clock on his nightstand confirmed they were behind schedule. They dragged themselves out of bed, and Shane texted his mother to ask for an extra hour to give them enough breathing room to prepare dinner.

Once they'd showered and dressed as quickly as they could, Ilya searched the fridge to compile a shopping list for his dish. Eyeballing the items, Shane was tempted to question Ilya's judgment (and recipe), but bit his tongue because the sun was setting and they were running out of time. He did, however, call Ilya out for the chocolate mint chip ice cream.

"Why is this on the list?"

"It is my favorite."

"But I'm buying a fresh fruit platter for dessert."

"Yes?"

"Mint chocolate chip doesn't go with fruit."

Ilya rolled his eyes. "So buy your boring vanilla too. More mint chip for me."

The local market didn't carry chocolate mint chip ice cream, a fact Ilya discovered when Shane returned with the groceries and unpacked them on the counter. He narrowed his eyes at Shane, clearly suspecting him of foul play. As a peace offering, Shane cued up Ilya's Russian Disco playlist, then asked himself how he could love someone with such appalling taste in music. Watching Ilya bop around the kitchen, shake his perfect ass and sing off-key for the next forty-five minutes answered the question.

While Shane heated the grill and seasoned the steaks, Ilya prepared his special salad. This was quite a production and involved boiling eggs and potatoes, assembling piles of ham, carrots, pickles, and peas, and chopping everything up into uniform squares. Once he'd completed the necessary prep, Ilya threw the ingredients into a large glass bowl and added liberal sprinkles of salt, pepper, and fresh dill. Finally, he dumped half a jar of mayo over the whole thing and looked down at his creation, apparently satisfied. As Ilya tossed and mixed the strange concoction, Shane prayed he wouldn't be too upset if no one ate it.



"The Irina Foundation?" Yuna repeated.

They were halfway through dinner and Shane had just explained the details of The Plan to his parents.

"Yes," Ilya said. "For my mother."

Yuna nodded. "Have you talked to her about this?"

"Ilya's mother is dead, Mom."

"Oh," she breathed. "I'm so sorry."

Ilya shrugged diplomatically. "It was a long time ago. This is your son's idea," he added, turning his head towards Shane. "To name our foundation for my mother."

Shane put his hand over Ilya's.

"That's a lovely gesture," Yuna said, beaming at her son. Then she looked at Ilya. "I'm sure she'd be very proud of you," she added and dabbed at the corners of her eyes with a napkin.

Ilya cleared his throat. "You have not tried Russian salad."

Yuna looked down at the untouched glob of mayonnaise-drenched stuff next to the remnants of her steak. She speared a potato cube with her fork and slowly brought it to her mouth, eyeing it skeptically. As soon as she started chewing, her eyes widened in amazement.

"This is delicious!" she said through a mouthful of potato.

"Thank you," Ilya replied, pink blooming across his cheeks. "It is called 'Olivier.' My mother taught me to make it."

David nodded absently, deep in thought. "You know, I'd be happy to help you get this project of yours off the ground. We can collaborate on a mission statement and business plan, and I'll put you in touch with the people who handle registration for new charities. If you'd like."

"That would be great!" Shane answered, grinning with surprised delight.

"Yes. Thank you, Mr. Hollander," Ilya said, smiling at him gratefully and refilling his glass with the Beluga Noble.

"Call me David," he said, returning Ilya's smile.

Then David glanced at his wife who was busy ignoring the conversation and stuffing heaping forkfuls of Olivier into her mouth.

"Are you gonna share any of that with the rest of us?" David asked Yuna when she reached for the salad bowl.

"No," she said flatly and served herself more. "I need the recipe for this, Ilya."

Ilya nodded enthusiastically. "Yes. You must first give me recipe for spaghetti."

"Deal," Yuna agreed, chewing happily. "You're quite the catch, aren't you?" she asked, winking at him.

Shane groaned, but Ilya ignored him. "What is 'catch?'"

“It means our son better not mess this up.”

Ilya smirked, though his face was even redder now.

“Mom!” Shane whined. “Gross.”

“What?” she said, defiant. “He’s handsome, he can cook, and he plays hockey as well as you do.”

“Thanks for the loyalty,” Shane muttered, rolling his eyes. “Why don’t you trade me for him next season?”

Ilya looked smug. “I would like to play for Montreal.”

Shane punched him in the arm, hard.

“Shane!” Yuna scolded.

“Don’t worry,” Ilya said. “I am used to this. Your son is a very violent, scary person.”

David looked back and forth between the two of them. “I’m pretty sure you can hold your own, Ilya.”

“Me?” Ilya said, pointing at himself. “I am very peaceful. I would not hurt even a flea.”

“A fly,” Shane corrected.

“What?” Ilya asked.

“It’s ‘fly’ not ‘flea.’”

“Yes. Thank you. Shane is always teaching me to speak proper English.”

David raised an eyebrow at Ilya. “I’ve been watching you play for years. You’ve started your fair share of fights.”

“Yes. I am different on the ice,” Ilya acknowledged. “But I am trying to be less...”

“Of an asshole?” Shane chimed in.

Yuna looked at her son, appalled.

“I don’t need to give you the ‘talk’ do I?” David said, addressing Ilya. “Do you know what that means?”

“Yes,” Ilya acknowledged. “This means you will hire monster like Ryan Price to murder me if I do not make Shane happy.”

David laughed. “Just so we’re clear.”

Ilya nodded solemnly. “We are.”

"Is everyone finished threatening each other now?" Shane asked peevishly. "Can I get the fruit platter?"



After all the plates had been cleared and the bottle of vodka sat empty underneath Ilya's chair, Shane's parents stood to say their goodbyes. They both hugged Shane, and when Yuna opened her arms to Ilya, he smiled shyly and stepped right into them. Seeing his mother and boyfriend embracing made Shane feel warm and dizzy. He figured he'd probably had too much to drink. As soon as Yuna released him, Ilya turned to David with an expectant look. *Your turn.* Chuckling, David patted Ilya on the shoulder and held out his hand.

"*Spasibo*," he said to Ilya in a passable Russian accent.

Ilya couldn't hide how chuffed he was and shook David's hand a little more vigorously than he'd intended.

"Will we see you two again?" Yuna asked as she and David walked to their car.

Shane answered for both of them. "Yeah. Ilya's gonna stay for a few more weeks."

"Glad to hear it," David said. "We'll take you to this great seafood place Yuna and I discovered."

"I like fish," Ilya declared and looked confused when the other three laughed at him. "What? Is true."

"Good night, boys," Yuna called over her shoulder before getting into the car.

Shane took Ilya's hand as they watched the Hollanders drive away.

"Was it ok?" Ilya asked in a quiet voice.

"Yes," Shane answered, interlacing their fingers. "I think my mom likes you more than me."

"No," Ilya said, shaking his head. "They love you most. But it is good they like me. This means I can stay."

Lifting Ilya's hand to kiss it, Shane murmured into the dark, "For as long as you want."



Later that night while Shane pattered around in his kitchen cleaning up after dinner, Ilya was sprawled out on the living room couch, fighting to stay awake. He had plans for the rest of the night, and they didn't involve sleeping. Being accepted by Shane's parents was a total sea change, and Ilya wanted to cement his new status physically.

"Move over," Shane said when he finally joined Ilya on the couch.

Rousing himself, Ilya sat up and made grabby hands at his boyfriend until he scooted closer for a kiss. One kiss turned into many, and things escalated quickly before Ilya pulled back to blink at Shane with his most alluring bedroom eyes. It was time to launch phase one of his plan.

“Mmm,” Ilya hummed, licking his lips. “You taste like my cooking.”

“You taste like *my* cooking,” Shane protested.

“I do,” Ilya agreed, nuzzling Shane’s nose. “I wish you spoke Russian like your father. I am too full of vodka and steak for English.”

“*Ya tebya lyublyu. A teper otsosee moy chlen,*” Shane said in a perfect accent.

Ilya's jaw dropped for a few beats, then he closed his mouth and smirked. “That was very good, *moya lyubov'*. You should have a reward, I think,” he purred with a wicked smile. “*Snachala ya pozvolyu tebe otsosat' moy chlen.*”

Shane recognized enough of those words to react accordingly, smacking his boyfriend in the chest. “You’re such an asshole.”

“Again with hitting! This is your love language, I think,” Ilya said, pressing both hands to his chest as if he’d been mortally wounded. “Now who will suck who?”

“Let’s flip for it,” Shane suggested.

“I have better idea. That beautiful tuna melt I prepared for you, do you remember? Before you throw tantrum and run away?”

“Yes. Fuck off.”

“What we did on my couch. Do you remember?”

“Yes.”

“I want to do that again.”

“Only if you stop dropping your articles. Your English is a lot better than this.”

“I told you already. My brain is too tired for English.”

“Frotting,” Shane said. “After the tuna melts. That’s what we did. It’s called ‘frotting.’”

“Yes. I know this.”

“Of course you do.”

“Priorities, Hollander.”

Shane quirked an eyebrow. “So I’m Hollander again?”

"No," Ilya replied. "You are *moya lyubov*'. Always."

Shane smiled and rose to his feet. "When I get back, you better be naked."

"Yes, Sir," Ilya said, standing and saluting.

True to his word, Ilya stripped naked and left his clothes where he dropped them. Then he sat down in the middle of the couch to wait. Less than a minute later, Shane walked back into the room carrying a meticulously folded beach towel and the lube.

"Get up," Shane ordered, frowning at the pile of clothes on the floor.

When Ilya obeyed, Shane spread the towel over the entire surface of the couch and smoothed it carefully with his hands.

Ilya furrowed his brows. "You are weird."

"This is an expensive couch," Shane replied, glaring at Ilya.

Ilya shook his head in amusement as he sat down again. "Yes. You are weird *and* boring. Now take off your clothes so we can do frotting."

After the day they'd had, Shane wasn't in the mood to argue anymore. Plus, he was very much on board with Ilya's agenda. Situating himself so they were chest to chest, Shane squirted some lube into his palm and gripped Ilya's cock firmly. Eyes laser-focused on Ilya's face, he started pumping his boyfriend the way he liked it.

Ilya cried out and threw his head back against the wall. "You are too good at this."

Using one arm to brace himself on the couch, Shane ignored his own cock until Ilya reached for it, too turned on to wait anymore.

"Shane. Do us together," he pleaded, leaning forward to tongue and suck on one of Shane's nipples.

"Fuck," Shane groaned and widened his grip to jerk their cocks together.

At the first touch of skin on skin, Ilya knew why he'd needed this. It felt intimate in a way fucking didn't. For Shane, it was some of the best sex of his life. He was addicted to Ilya's cock. Watching it slip and slide against his in the tight, slick circle of his own fist was unbelievably hot. Being with women could never compare. Ilya was all muscle - sculpted, solid, powerful - and his hard, leaking cock proved how much he wanted Shane. Their mouths were so close together they were breathing each other's air. Shane closed the gap and kissed Ilya, stealing the breath he had left.

"Yes," Ilya moaned when he surfaced for oxygen. "Fuck our cocks together."

"Ilya," Shane panted, pumping them faster and harder.

Leaning in for another kiss, Shane and Ilya kept their mouths pressed together as they climaxed, one right after the other, swallowing each other's noises.

"Fuck," Shane groaned. "You're gonna kill me."

Ilya winked at him. "We die happy."



"I can't believe you fucked women," Ilya said as he graciously allowed Shane to attack his chest hair with baby wipes. "You love cock too much."

"Shut up!" Shane snapped, remembering the hurt and confusion on Rose's face. "It was humiliating. I couldn't get hard without thinking about you."

"Hey," Ilya said, tipping Shane's chin up to look into his eyes. "I love that you are desperate for me. Do you realize how hot it is to see this?"

Shane's gaze drifted to the window above Ilya's head. "Yeah. It's good for your ego."

Ilya took Shane's right hand and kissed each knuckle. "You suck my cock like it is the most delicious thing," he began. "You drop to your knees like you can't wait to taste me. You come untouched while sucking me. You look like you are in heaven when I fuck you, no matter how many times we do this. You fly into my arms after we are separated – so fast you almost knock me down," he said, eyes shining. "But I don't mind," he added quickly, squeezing Shane's hand. "No one has ever wanted me like this. I pray it will never change."

"It probably won't," Shane muttered.

Ilya's face turned somber. "How do you know?"

"It's been seven years, Ilya. I still get hard when you look at me," Shane said. "I can't control myself around you, even when I'm on the phone with my best friend."

Ilya chuckled. "Yes. This was naughty of me."

"But you won't stop," Shane stated like it wasn't a question.

"Do you want me to?" Ilya asked, releasing Shane's hand and leaning away.

Closing his eyes, Shane breathed in. "No. I *never* want you to *ever* stop."

Ilya reached for him then, murmuring, "*Ya tebya lyublyu.*"

Shane exhaled. "I love you, too, *moya lyubov'. Navsegda.*"

Chapter End Notes

Russian to English translation:

"Spasibo" = "Thank you"

"Ya tebya lyublyu" = "I love you."

"A teper otsosee moy chlen" = "Now suck my dick"

"moya lyubov" = "my love"

"Snachala ya pozvolyu tebe otsosat' moy chlen" = "I'll let you suck my dick first"

"Navsegda" = "Forever"

RUSSIAN CULTURE CORRECTION: According to a Russian-speaking reader, no true Russian puts mustard seed in the Olivier. Ever. The offending ingredient has been replaced by fresh dill. I've also been told by two readers that adding apples to the Olivier is a crime against humanity. So, the apple is history too. Finally, it's considered bad luck to leave empty vodka bottles on the table. Ilya would've put any empties under his chair. I've made that correction too. Thank you to everyone who is offering concrit on the language and culture of French Canada, Russia, and Eastern Europe. I want to get this right, and I'm learning a lot. Win win.

Thanks for reading! And my infinite gratitude to everyone who's sent kudos and/or comments.

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